



# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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## Meeting Summary

259th Plenary Session  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
April 6-9, 2022  
Hybrid – Hilton Hotel and Zoom Webinar

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### Attachments

- 1) Time Log
- 2) Newsletter

The time log is included as a reference attachment for names, dates and times of each agenda item, and the newsletter is included to provide details of the agenda items and the meeting as a whole. All documents and information related to the meeting are accessible online at:

<https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/2854>

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council met April 6-9, 2022 at the Hilton Anchorage Hotel. The following Council members, Council staff, SSC, and AP members attended the meetings either in person or virtually.

### **Council Members**

Jon Kurland <i>National Marine Fisheries Service</i>	Simon Kinneen, <b>Chair</b> <i>Appointed</i>
Rachel Baker/Karla Bush (for Doug Vincent-Lang) <i>Alaska Department Fish and Game</i>	Steve Marx (for Curt Melcher) <i>Oregon Department of Fish &amp; Wildlife</i>
Cora Campbell <i>Appointed</i>	David Moore <i>U.S. Department of State</i>
Kenny Down <i>Appointed</i>	RADM Nathan Moore/CAPT Brennell <i>United States Coast Guard</i>
Peter Fasbender (for Sara Boario) <i>US Fish &amp; Wildlife Service</i>	Andy Mezirow <i>Appointed</i>
Dave Hanson <i>Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission</i>	Bill Tweit (for Kelly Susewind), <b>Vice Chair</b> <i>Washington Department Fish &amp; Wildlife</i>
John Jensen <i>Appointed</i>	Anne Vanderhoeven <i>Appointed</i>
Nicole Kimball <i>Appointed</i>	

### **Council Staff**

Cleaver, Sara	Haapala, Kate	Rheinsmith, Sarah
Cunningham, Sam	Henry, Anna	Schmidt, Nicole
Davis, Maria	Hillary, Kaylah (contractor)	Stram, Diana
Evans, Diana (DD)	La Belle, Sarah	Witherell, Dave (ED)
Fey, Mike (PSMFC)	Marrinan, Sarah	
Gleason, Shannon	McCracken, Jon	

## Scientific and Statistical Committee

The SSC met April 4-5, 2022, at the Hilton Anchorage Hotel. The following members were present for all or part of the meetings.

Sherri Dressel, Co-Chair  
*Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game*

Kathryn Meyer  
*Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife*

Curry Cunningham  
*University of Alaska Fairbanks*

Dana Hanselman  
*NOAA Fisheries—AFSC*

Andrew Munro  
*Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game*

Kailin Kroetz  
*Arizona State University*

Franz Mueter, Co-Chair  
*University of Alaska Fairbanks*

Ian Stewart  
*Intl. Pacific Halibut Commission*

Mike Downs  
*Wislow Research*

Brad Harris  
*Alaska Pacific University*

Chris Anderson  
*University of Washington*

Patrick Sullivan  
*Cornell University*

Alison Whitman, Vice Chair  
*Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife*

Amy Bishop  
*Alaska Sea Life Center*

Jason Gasper  
*NOAA Fisheries – Alaska Region*

George Hunt  
*University of Washington*

Chris Siddon  
*ADF&G*

Robert Foy  
*Alaska Fishery Science Center*

## Advisory Panel

The Advisory Panel met April 5-8, 2022, at the Hilton Anchorage Hotel. The following members were present for all or part of the meetings (absent members are ~~stricken~~):

Briggie, Tamara  
Christiansen, Ruth (Co-Vice Chair)  
Drobnica, Angel (Chair)  
Gudmundsson, Gretar  
Johnson, Jim  
Johnson, Mellisa

Kauffman, Jeff  
Kavanaugh, Julie  
Mann, Heather  
Mitchell, Lauren  
O'Donnell, Paddy  
~~O'Neil, Megan~~

Ritchie, Brian  
Upton, Matt (Co-Vice Chair)  
Wilkins, Paul  
Wilt, Sinclair  
Zagorski, Suzie

## A1 Call Meeting to Order

The Council approved the agenda without objection.

## B Reports

The following reports were provided in writing and discussed. In addition, Stephanie Madsen, Austin Estabrooks, John Gruver, Beth Concepcion, and Julie Bonney gave an overview of their annual Cooperative Reports under the B8 agenda item.

**B1 Executive Director’s Report** – David Witherell

- Update on Executive Committee Report – Diana Evans

**B2 NMFS Management Report** – Glenn Merrill, Dr. Anne Marie Eich, and Alicia Miller

- B2 EFH report – Gretchen Harrington

**B3 NOAA GC Report** – written only

**B4 ADFG Report** – written only

**B5 USCG Report** – CAPT Jason Brennell and LCDR Jedediah Raskie

**B6 USFWS Report** – written only

**B7 NIOSH Report** – written only

**B8 Cooperative Reports** – NPFMC staff, Jon McCracken and Sarah Marrinan

- B8 APA report – Stephanie Madsen and Austin Estabrooks
- B8 AFA report – John Gruver
- B8 AM 80 report – Beth Concepcion
- B8 Central GOA Rockfish report – Julie Bonney

**B10 SSC Report** – Dr. Franz Mueter (SSC Co-Chair)

**B11 AP Report** – Ruth Christiansen and Matt Upton (AP Co-Vice Chairs)

## C1 IFQ Omnibus Amendments – Final Action

**Council Staff:** Sara Cleaver

**Other Presenters:** Abby Jahn (NMFS AKRO SF), Alicia M. Miller (NMFS AKRO SF), Jon McCracken (NPFMC – Enforcement Committee)

**Action Required:**

1. Review the EA/RIR draft for final action and select a preferred alternative
2. Review Enforcement Committee Report

***Summary:** The Council will propose revisions to parts of the IFQ/CDQ Programs. The revisions cover changes to pot gear requirements, pot limits, the ability to use jig gear to harvest sablefish, and to residency requirements for those looking to harvest IFQ held by the Adak CQE.*

After staff presentations and public comment, the following actions were taken:

**Ms. Campbell made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Down:**

The council adopts alternative 2: Revise IFQ program regulations to the address the following regulatory clarifications

Element 1: Clarify that “slinky pots” are a legal gear for the IFQ fishery and CDQ fisheries, and revise regulations to allow the use of biodegradable twine in the door latch or pot tunnel.

Element 2: Remove buoy configuration, radar reflector, and flagpole requirements in regulation but retain “LP” marking requirement.

Element 3: Authorize jig gear as a legal gear type for the harvest of sablefish IFQ and CDQ.

Element 4: Revise the pot gear configuration requirements to remove the nine-inch maximum width of tunnel opening so it does not apply when a vessel begins a trip with unfished halibut IFQ onboard.

~~Option: Remove the nine-inch maximum width of the tunnel opening for vessels targeting IFQ sablefish.~~

Element 5: Pot Limits

Option 1: Change the Pot Limit for Western Yakutat ~~and/or Southeast Outside to~~

~~Suboption a) 160 pots per vessel~~

~~Suboption b) 200 pots per vessel~~

~~Suboption c) 300 pots per vessel~~

Element 6: Gear Retrieval requirements

~~Option 1: Remove the gear retrieval requirement~~

Option 2: Modify the gear retrieval requirement to 7 days for the ~~CG all GOA~~ areas.

~~Suboption: 3 5 days in SEO~~

Alternative 3: Remove Adak CQE residency requirement for a period of five years.

~~Note: Alternatives 2 and 3 are not mutually exclusive~~

**Mr. Tweit made the following deeming amendment which was seconded by Ms. Vanderhoeven:**

The Council deems proposed regulations that clearly and directly flow from the provisions of this motion to be necessary and appropriate in accordance with section 303(c).

The Council authorizes the Executive Director and the Chairman to review the draft proposed regulations when provided by NMFS to ensure that the proposed regulations to be submitted to the Secretary under section 303(c) are consistent with these instructions.

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT:** Amendment passed with no objection on April 6, 2022, at 5:05 p.m.

**VOTE ON AMENDED MAIN MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously 11/0 on April 6, 2022, at 5:05 p.m.

## **C2 RQE Fee Collection Program – Final Action**

**Council Staff:** Sarah Marrinan

**Other Presenters:** Kurt Iverson (NMFS)

**Action Required:**

1. Review analysis
2. Receive staff presentation on the analysis including Charter Halibut Management Committee recommendations
3. Possibly determine final action

**Summary:** *The Council will consider whether or not to establish a Federal Charter Halibut Stamp Program that will fund an association called the “Recreational Quota Entity” (RQE). The Council may identify additional important program attributes.*

After staff presentations and public comment, the following actions were taken:

**Mr. Mezirow made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Jensen:**

The Council recommends Alternative 2, with additions shown in underline, as its preferred alternative:

Alternative 2:

Establish a fee collection program for Charter Vessel Operators to fund the Recreational Quota Entity.

Option 1: Charter Halibut Stamp

### Administration

- NMFS will develop regulations to establish the fee requirement for a Charter Halibut Stamp and contract with the RQE to develop the fee collection system ( Consistent with any legal requirements) .
- The Charter Halibut Stamp will be required for charter vessel anglers 18 years of age and older for each day they intend to harvest halibut on a charter vessel fishing trip in regulatory areas 2C and 3A. This includes charter halibut vessels operated and permitted under the Community Quota Entity (CQE) and Military Morale and Welfare (MWR) programs.

### Fee amount

- Stamp fees in the first three-years after the implementation of the program cannot exceed the following amounts:
  - A) One-day stamp - \$20.00
  - B) Three-day Stamp – \$40.00
  - C) Seven-day Stamp – \$60.00
- After the first three years of implementation, the RQE may increase the fee amounts in each category by up to 10% annually. NMFS will provide the Council with an update on fee increases to the Council.

#### Fee payment

- The Sportfishing Guide Business Owner or their designee (as defined by ADF&G) will be responsible for paying all required fees.
- Charter Vessel Guides (as defined by NMFS) will be responsible for ensuring there is a validated halibut stamp on the vessel for each angler subject to the fee for each day of halibut fishing.
- Fee payment and charter halibut stamp validation would need to occur prior to departure prior to start of each fishing day.

In developing these regulations, it is the intent of the Council that NMFS coordinate with the Charter Halibut Committee and the RQE in the development of the stamp requirements and fee collection system and update the Council as appropriate.

#### **Mr. Kurland made the following amendment which was seconded by Mr. Down:**

(Under the second bullet under Fee Amount ~~strike~~ the following and add the following language in red)

#### Fee amount

- Stamp fees in the first three-years after the implementation of the program cannot exceed the following amounts:
  - D) One-day stamp - \$20.00
  - E) Three-day Stamp – \$40.00
  - F) Seven-day Stamp – \$60.00
- After the first three years of implementation, the RQE may **recommend that NMFS** increase the fee amounts in each category by up to 10% annually. NMFS will provide the Council with an update on fee increases ~~to the Council.~~

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT:** Amendment passed 9/2 (Ms. Kimball and Ms. Campbell voting in opposition) on April 7, 2022, at 11:10 a.m.

**VOTE ON AMENDED MAIN MOTION:** Motion passed 11/0 on April 7, 2022, at 11:38 a.m.

### **C3 Scallops – SAFE report, ABC/OFL, Plan Team Report**

**Staff:** Sarah Rheinsmith

**Other Presenters:** Tyler Jackson (ADF&G, Scallop Plan Team Chair) & Scott Miller (NMFS Juneau)

**Action Required:**

1. Specify OFL/ABC
2. Scallop Plan Team Report – review

**Summary:** *The Scallop Plan Team met virtually in February to discuss the status and appropriate harvest level for weathervane scallops off Alaska. The Council’s Scientific and Statistical Committee and the Council will review the Plan Team’s report and set appropriate harvest limits for the 2022/2023 scallop season..*

After staff presentations and public comment, the following action was taken:

**Ms. Bush made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Jensen:**

The Council approves the scallop SAFE report and adopts the OFL of 1.284 million pounds (582 t) and the ABC of 1.156 million pounds (524 t), as recommended by the SSC.

The Council initiates an analysis to amend the Scallop FMP to provide flexibility for non-annual assessments.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on April 7, 2022, at 1:55 p.m.

## **C4 Central GOA Rockfish Adjustments**

**Council Staff:** Jon McCracken

**Action Required:**

1. Review the Initial Review Draft of the RIR and determine whether to release for final action
2. Consider whether to select a Preliminary Preferred Alternative

***Summary:** The Council will review a paper that analyzes changes intended to improve the Rockfish Program. The changes are to better ensure the total catch for rockfish is fully harvested and landed in Kodiak.*

After staff presentations and public comment, the following action was taken:

**Ms. Campbell made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Jensen:**

The Council recommends releasing the analysis for final action and identifies the following preliminary preferred alternative in **bold**. Additions are shown in underline and deletions are shown in ~~strike through~~. Staff should consider and address comments from the SSC to the extent practicable.

Alternative 1: Status Quo

**Alternative 2 (PPA): Change the season start date and modify the harvesting, processing, and cooperative holding caps (options are not mutually exclusive).**

**Option 1: Change the Rockfish Program season start date from May 1 to April 1.**

**Option 2: Eliminate the CV cooperative holding cap (30% ~~QSCQ~~ assigned to CV sector).**

**Option 3: Increase the processing cap to 35 – 40% of the CV quota share pool for sablefish, Pacific cod, and/or primary rockfish.**

**Option 4: Revise the vessel aggregated rockfish (POP, northern rockfish and dusky rockfish) harvesting cap by capping only POP harvests at 8% of the CV POP quota share pool.**

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on April 7, 2022, at 3:18 p.m.



## D1 Bristol Bay Red King Crab Management

- Council Staff:** Sam Cunningham
- Other Presenters:** Dr. Kelly Cates (NMFS AKRO SF); Dr. Ben Daly (ADF&G)
- Action Required:**
1. Review discussion paper
  2. Determine whether to initiate further action.

**Summary:** *The Council will review a paper covering topics that might inform the Council or other Federal/State agencies as they consider strategies around the BBRKC stock decline. The topics include crab biology, management/assessment boundaries, bottom contact by trawl gear, and flexible management tools.*

After staff presentations and public comment, the following action was taken:

**Ms. Baker made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Mezirow:**

The Council requests that each Bering Sea sector with crab mortality (directed crab fishery, Pacific cod sectors, AFA pollock, and A80) present the following to the Council in October 2022 as applicable:

- voluntary measures for implementation in 2023 and beyond to avoid BBRKC and reduce crab mortality in the non-directed fisheries
- measures in the directed crab fishery to reduce discard mortality of BBRKC
- description of research that would inform development of more flexible and effective spatial management measures; gear modifications to reduce impacts on the BBRKC stock, or to evaluate unobserved mortality in the trawl sector

The Council requests an expanded discussion paper that includes:

1. Analysis of the impacts of annual or seasonal closures to pelagic trawl, groundfish pot, and longline gear in the RKCSA including impacts on target catch, fishery timing relative to crab mating/molting, crab avoidance, and other PSC and non-target species.
2. Tables for all sources of BBRKC mortality across federal fisheries:
  - for the pot, longline and trawl groundfish fisheries, total estimated PSC in Registration Area T in numbers, proportion of total PSC in Zone 1, proportion of total PSC in RKCSA, estimated PSC mortality, and estimated proportion of the PSC that are female. Information should also be provided on fishery timing in relation to BBRKC molting and mating, estimated bottom contact of the gear, observer coverage rates, and assumed discard mortality rates.
  - for the directed BBRKC fishery and the Tanner fishery in the eastern subdistrict, estimated mortality presented in a revised version of Table 3-3 from the April 2022 discussion paper that contains total retained catch, total discards, discard mortality, proportion of discards that are female, observer coverage rate, and assumed discard mortality rate.
3. A discussion of scientific information needed to create dynamic closed areas, such as seasonal or annual shifting closed areas, to protect mature female BBRKC.

4. Information needed to allow the A80 sector to create rolling hotspot closure systems to avoid and reduce BBRKC PSC as well as the potential tradeoffs of doing so on encounter rates of halibut.
5. Provide information on the impact of groundfish predation on BBRKC.
6. Analysis of the impacts of:
  - prohibiting fishing for Pacific cod with pot gear in Area 512
  - establishing a PSC hard cap for the under 60' fixed gear sector and over 60' pot sector

The council requests the expanded discussion paper go to the SSC for review and comment if that can be accomplished without delaying council review and action.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on April 9, 2022, at 10:50 a.m.

## D2 Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan

**Council Staff:** Diana Evans (BS FEP Team, Ecosystem Committee), Dr. Diana Stram (CCTF), and Dr. Kate Haapala (LKTKS)

**Other Presenters:** Dr. Kerim Aydin (BS FEP Team co-Chair), Dr. Sarah Wise (LKTKS Taskforce co-chair)

**Action Required:**

1. Review Bering Sea FEP Plan Team report, CCTF update, LKTKS Taskforce update, and Ecosystem Committee Report
2. Provide feedback and make recommendations as necessary

**Summary:** *The Council will review progress reports from advisory groups working on Bering Sea ecosystem issues, bringing local and traditional knowledge into the Council process, and the effects of climate change on Bering Sea fisheries.*

After staff presentations and public comment, the following actions were taken:

**Ms. Kimball made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Mezirow:**

The Council supports the ongoing work of the Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan Team, Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, Subsistence (LKTKS) Taskforce, and Climate Change Taskforce and the April 2022 SSC recommendations on each of these teams.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on April 9, 2022, at 2:15 p.m.

**Mr. Tweit made the following motion which was seconded by Ms. Vanderhoeven:**

The Council recommends the Ecosystem Committee begin collecting information to inform the initial steps for potential development of a GOA Fishery Ecosystem Plan, or similar tool. The Council requests the Committee to identify:

- the series of decision points for the Council, primarily the value an FEP might serve in the GOA;
- lessons learned during development of the BS FEP;
- whether the FEP Team and action module/taskforce format should be continued, and if so, would modifications be useful to streamline the process;
- the timing to intersect with ongoing projects such as GOA CLIM; and
- the question of staff, resources, and opportunities for partnerships or synergies, particularly if effort would be redirected from the Bering Sea.

The resulting information would be available for Council consideration, should it decide to initiate scoping for a GOA FEP or similar process.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on April 9, 2022, at 2:30 p.m.

**Mr. Tweit made the following motion which was seconded by Ms. Vanderhoeven:**

The Council recommends that NPFMC representatives make the following comments at the CCC, with respect to the ongoing work of the CCC Area-based Management Subcommittee.

- The Council recommends that the CCC highlight the need for GIS funding to complete the work of the subcommittee. The calculation of total area closed is an important input to the America the Beautiful Act (ATB) guidance document and atlas, and GIS work to account for overlapping areas is needed.
- The Council recommends that the CCC Subcommittee report highlight that the implementation of conservation areas is most effective when developed through ground-up collaborations taking place over many years, with diverse stakeholder and agency involvement, and that the CCC encourage the Departments of Commerce and the Interior to consider a bottom-up approach to identifying important areas for ATB.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on April 9, 2022, at 2:35 p.m.

## D4 Best Scientific Information Available (BSIA) Stock Status Directive

**Council Staff:** Dr. Diana Stram  
**Other Presenters:** Dr. Anne Hollowed  
**Action Required:** Review and comment on the draft discussion document

**Summary:** *The Council will review a document prepared by NMFS describing the process for how the best available scientific information is used to set catch limits for groundfish, crab, and scallop in Alaska.*

The Council directed staff to provide the SSC's comments to the agency. No additional action was taken on this agenda item.

## E1 Staff Tasking

**Council Staff:** David Witherell and Diana Evans  
**Action Required:**  
1. Review Committees and Plan Teams  
2. Provide direction on tasking priorities and scheduling

**Summary:** *The Council will listen to public testimony about existing and new management measures that the public may be interested in and will provide feedback to staff and the Council Chair about how to prioritize staff work on existing and new projects.*

*The Council will also review its committee membership, identify agendas for any upcoming committee meetings, and assess the first hybrid Council meeting in preparation for the June Council meeting in Sitka.*

After staff presentations and public comment, the Council provided direction to staff on tasking and letters, and the following actions were taken:

### E1 Reflections on Council Process

**Mr. Marx made the following motion which was seconded by Ms. Kimball:**

The Council requests staff further explore ideas for potential changes to the Council process with respect to the Council's meeting schedule and agenda timing, and the Council's advisory bodies. Initial priorities are as follows:

- Reevaluate the timing of crab and groundfish harvest specifications in light of fishery needs and stock prioritization.
- Reduce the number of annual Council meetings from 5 to 4, and drop the February meeting; and consider making 1-2 meetings a year virtual.
- Changes to the nomination/reappointment process for the Advisory Panel and SSC

- Further consideration of how to approach agency B-reports
- Evaluate options to continue the opportunity to provide remote testimony

Following completion of these tasks the Council will decide whether to proceed with exploration of any additional potential changes.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on April 9, 2022, at 5:38 p.m.

## E1 SSC Workshop

**Ms. Kimball made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Jensen:**

The Council recommends an SSC subgroup develop the scope of a half or full day SSC workshop for February 2023 focused on the management of Federal stocks given the rapid changes that have been observed in the northern Bering Sea and southern Chukchi Sea (e.g., shifts in distributions of fish and fisheries, changing prey availability, etc) and possible ecosystem responses. This workshop is intended to provide an opportunity to proactively provide scientific guidance to the Council regarding these issues and could include topics such as the need for more dynamic reference points in stock assessments and harvest policy.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously on April 9, 2022, at 5:41 p.m.

**The Council adjourned on Saturday, April 9, 2022, at 5:45 P.M.**



## TIME LOG

### NPFMC April Council Meeting – 259th Plenary Session

Meeting held at the Hilton Hotel and virtually via Zoom Webinar  
April 6-9, 2022

### Wednesday, April 6, 2022

4/6/2022 8:00 AM Call to order  
4/6/2022 8:13 AM Jon Kurland Introduction  
4/6/2022 8:13 AM Approval of Minutes

### **B REPORTS**

4/6/2022 8:14 AM **B1 Executive Director Report** – NPFMC ED, David Witherell  
4/6/2022 8:28 AM B1 Report on Executive Committee Report – NPFMC DD, Diana Evans  
4/6/2022 8:50 AM **B2 NMFS Management Report** – Glenn Merrill, Anne Marie Eich, Alicia Miller  
4/6/2022 9:17 AM **B2 EFH Presentation** – NMFS, Gretchen Harrington  
4/6/2022 9:29 AM **B5 USCG Report** – LCDR Jed Raskie  
4/6/2022 9:39 AM Break  
4/6/2022 10:09 AM **B8 Coop Reports** – Introduction – Sarah Marrinan  
4/6/2022 10:15 AM **B8 APA Report** – Stephanie Madsen and Austin Estabrooks  
4/6/2022 10:38 AM **B8 AFA Report** – John Gruver  
4/6/2022 10:48 AM **B8 AM 80 Report** – Beth Concepcion  
4/6/2022 11:00 AM **B8 GOA Rockfish** – Julie Boney  
4/6/2022 11:16 AM **B Public Testimony**  
4/6/2022 11:17 AM Ry Pengilly  
4/6/2022 11:27 AM Linda Behnken  
4/6/2022 11:36 AM Lunch Break

### **C1 IFQ OMNIBUS AMENDMENTS – Final Action**

4/6/2022 1:06 PM **C1 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Sara Cleaver and NMFS, Abby Jahn  
4/6/2022 2:35 PM C1 Enforcement Committee report – NPFMC staff, Jon McCracken  
4/6/2022 2:48 PM C1 AP Report – Ruth Christiansen and Matt Upton  
4/6/2022 2:47 PM Break  
4/6/2022 3:15 PM **C1 Public Testimony**  
4/6/2022 3:16 PM Tad Fujioka  
4/6/2022 3:20 PM Nick Johanson  
4/6/2022 3:23 PM Paul Clampitt  
4/6/2022 3:32 PM Bob Alverson  
4/6/2022 3:38 PM Bernie Burkholder  
4/6/2022 3:43 PM John Moller

**C1 Public Testimony Continued**

4/6/2022 3:54 PM	Wendy Alderson
4/6/2022 3:56 PM	Steve Fish
4/6/2022 4:00 PM	Lauren Mitchell
4/6/2022 4:03 PM	Linda Behnken
4/6/2022 4:16 PM	Erik Velsko
4/6/2022 4:30 PM	Break
4/6/2022 4:41 PM	<b>C1 Ms. Campbell Motion</b>
4/6/2022 5:09 PM	<b>Recess</b>

**Thursday, April 7, 2022**

**C2 RQE FEE COLLECTION PROGRAM – Final Action**

4/7/2022 8:00 AM	Call to order
4/7/2022 8:02 AM	<b>C2 Presentation</b> – NPFMC staff, Sarah Marrinan, NMFS, Kurt Iverson
4/7/2022 9:30 AM	<b>C2 AP Report</b> – Ruth Christiansen
4/7/2022 9:35 AM	<b>C2 Public Testimony</b>
4/7/2022 9:35 AM	Forrest Braden
4/7/2022 9:41 AM	Richard Yamada
4/7/2022 9:52 AM	Jim Kearns
4/7/2022 9:54 AM	Linda Behnken
4/7/2022 10:00 AM	Break
4/7/2022 10:35 AM	<b>Mr. Mezirow Motion</b>
4/7/2022 11:39 AM	<b>C3 SSC Report Scallop Specs</b> – Franz Mueter
4/7/2022 11:50 AM	<b>C4 SSC Report GOA Rockfish</b> – Franz Mueter

**C3 SCALLOPS – SAFE REPORT, ABC/OFL, PLAN TEAM REPORT**

4/7/2022 1:16 PM	<b>C3 Presentation</b> – ADFG, Tyler Jackson and NMFS, Scott Miller
4/7/2022 1:52 PM	C3 AP Report – Matt Upton
4/7/2022 1:53 PM	<b>C3 Ms. Bush Motion</b>

**C4 CENTRAL GOA ROCKFISH ADJUSTMENTS**

4/7/2022 1:58 PM	<b>C4 Presentation</b> – NPFMC staff, Jon McCracken
4/7/2022 2:35 PM	<b>C4 Public Testimony</b>
4/7/2022 2:35 PM	Rebecca Skinner
4/7/2022 2:41 PM	Julie Bonney
4/7/2022 3:01 PM	Break
4/7/2022 3:12 PM	<b>C4 Ms. Campbell Motion</b>
4/7/2022 3:18 PM	Recess

**Friday, April 8, 2022**

4/8/2022 8:00 AM Call to Order  
4/8/2022 8:00 AM **Balance of the SSC report** – Franz Mueter

**D1 BRISTOL BAY RED KING CRAB (BBRKC) MANAGEMENT, Biology and Gear Impact**

4/8/2022 8:49 AM **D1 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Sam Cunningham, NMFS, Kelly Cates, and ADFG, Ben Daly

4/8/2022 10:15 AM Break  
4/8/2022 10:33 AM **D1 AP Report** – Ruth Christiansen and Matt Upton  
4/8/2022 11:09 AM D1 Presentation Continued  
4/8/2022 11:25 AM **D1 Public Testimony**  
4/8/2022 11:25 AM Adam Hosmer  
4/8/2022 11:29 AM Jamie Goen and Cory Lescher  
4/8/2022 11:35 AM Craig Lowenberg  
4/8/2022 11:39 AM Siri Dammarell  
4/8/2022 11:45 AM Casey McManus  
4/8/2022 11:46 AM Calista Songstad  
4/8/2022 11:49 AM Andrew Hillstrand  
4/8/2022 11:53 AM Jon Warrenchuk  
4/8/2022 11:59 AM **Lunch Break**  
4/8/2022 1:17 PM **D1 Public Testimony Continued**  
4/8/2022 1:19 PM Heather Mann  
4/8/2022 1:32 PM Chad Lowenberg  
4/8/2022 1:36 PM Casey McManus  
4/8/2022 1:39 PM Stephanie Madsen  
4/8/2022 1:58 PM Steven Minor  
4/8/2022 2:05 PM Gretar Gudmundsson  
4/8/2022 2:11 PM Brent Paine  
4/8/2022 2:31 PM Scott Goodman  
4/8/2022 2:50 PM John Gauvin  
4/8/2022 3:01 PM Erik Velsko  
4/8/2022 3:13 PM Recess



**Saturday, April 9, 2022**

**D1 Public Testimony Continued**

4/9/2022 8:08 AM	Patrick O'Donnell
4/9/2022 8:12 AM	Oystein Lone
4/9/2022 8:15 AM	Nikolai Siverstol
4/9/2022 8:19 AM	Mateo Paz-Soldan
4/9/2022 8:24 AM	Paul Wilkins
4/9/2022 8:33 AM	Heather McCarty
4/9/2022 8:42 AM	Hannah Heimbuch
4/9/2022 8:48 AM	Edward Poulsen
4/9/2022 9:00 AM	Lance Farr
4/9/2022 9:14 AM	Theresa Peterson
4/9/2022 9:19 AM	Break
4/9/2022 9:59 AM	<b>Ms. Baker Motion</b>

**D2 BERING SEA FISHERY ECOSYSTEM PLAN (BS FEP):** (a) FEP Team Report, (b) Local knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, Subsistence (LKTKS) report, (c) Climate Change Taskforce (CCTF) Report, (d) Ecosystem Committee report

4/9/2022 11:12 AM	D2(a) BS FEP Presentation – NMFS, Dr. Kerim Aydin
4/9/2022 11:27 AM	D2(b) LKTKS Presentation – NPFMC staff, Dr. Kate Haapala and NMFS, Dr. Sarah Wise
4/9/2022 12:00 PM	Lunch Break
4/9/2022 1:19 PM	D2(c) CCTF Presentation – NPFMC staff, Dr. Diana Stram
4/9/2022 1:35 PM	D2(d) Ecosystem Committee Report – NPFMC DD, Diana Evans
4/9/2022 1:55 PM	<b>D2 Public Testimony</b>
4/9/2022 1:56 PM	Brenden Raymond-Yakoubian
4/9/2022 1:58 PM	Megan Williams
4/9/2022 2:07 PM	Theresa Peterson
4/9/2022 2:12 PM	<b>Ms. Kimball Motion</b>
4/9/2022 2:22 PM	<b>Mr. Tweit Motion</b> – GOA FEP
4/9/2022 2:32 PM	<b>Mr. Tweit Motion</b> - OEEM

**D4 BEST SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION AVAILABLE (BSIA) STOCK STATUS DIRECTIVE**

4/9/2022 2:35 PM	<b>D4 Public Testimony</b>
4/9/2022 2:43 PM	Brenden Raymond-Yakoubian
4/9/2022 2:50 PM	Break

**E STAFF TASKING**

4/9/2022 3:07 PM	E Staff Tasking Ticker List – NPFMC ED, David Witherell
4/9/2022 3:27 PM	<b>E Public Testimony</b>
4/9/2022 3:27 PM	Bob Alverson
4/9/2022 3:29 PM	Paul Clampitt
4/9/2022 3:32 PM	Ron Kavanaugh
4/9/2022 3:34 PM	Hannah Heimbuch
4/9/2022 3:47 PM	Heather McCarty and Jeff Kauffman
4/9/2022 3:56 PM	Brenden Raymond-Yakoubian
4/9/2022 4:00 PM	John Moller
4/9/2022 4:01 PM	Cory Lescher
4/9/2022 4:07 PM	Leonard Herzog
4/9/2022 4:12 PM	Landry Price
4/9/2022 4:20 PM	Patrick O'Donnell
4/9/2022 4:28 PM	Rebecca Skinner
4/9/2022 4:34 PM	Ephraim Froehlich
4/9/2022 4:40 PM	Lance Farr
4/9/2022 4:42 PM	Gretar Gudmundsson
4/9/2022 4:45 PM	Break
4/9/2022 4:56 PM	E Staff Tasking Discussion Continued
4/9/2022 5:16 PM	<b>Mr. Marx Motion</b> – Council Process
4/9/2022 5:39 PM	<b>Ms. Kimball Motion</b> – SSC Workshop
4/9/2022 5:42 PM	Recess

# April 2022 Newsletter

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## Meeting News

### Council Holds First Hybrid Meeting

For the first time in two years, the Council met in-person, along with an online option for presenters and attendees. The meeting was held at the Anchorage Hilton, using double the meeting space allowing for extra distancing for both the Council members as well as the public following [COVID protocols](#). Council administrative staff engineered the hybrid approach which also allowed remote public comment if a stakeholder indicated they would be testifying remotely. The zoom addresses, documents, presentations and motions were all available through the [eAgenda](#), as were sign-ups for public comment by agenda item. The Council intends to keep the hybrid portion of the meeting for June, but may re-assess at a future date depending on the internet capabilities of upcoming meeting venues and locations. If you attended the meeting, either in person or remotely, and have logistical or technical feedback, please email [npfmc.admin@noaa.gov](mailto:npfmc.admin@noaa.gov).

### Welcome New Council Members

The Council introduced new members Mr. Jon Kurland and Ms. Sara Boario. Mr. Kurland is the new Regional Administrator in Alaska for NOAA Fisheries, and has served various senior roles in the Alaska Region, most recently as Assistant Regional Administrator for Protected Resources. Ms. Boario is the new Regional Director for USFW Alaska Region, and recently served as the Assistant Regional Director for External Affairs in Alaska. We welcome both in their new roles.

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## Cooperative Reports

Every April, the Council reviews cooperative reports submitted by representatives from the American Fisheries Act Program, Amendment 80 Program, Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program, and BSAI Crab Rationalization Program. As part of these programs, cooperatives have been required or requested to provide an annual written report detailing the use of the cooperative quota or addressing other specific areas of Council interest. The written reports and the voluntary presentations ([available under Agenda Item B8](#)) are a resource for the Council and the public to track the effectiveness of the cooperatives and whether the cooperative programs are meeting their intended goals. The reports and presentations also facilitate feedback from cooperative managers to the Council on successes of the program and areas of the program that may need adjustment. The Council appreciates the effort put into this annual agenda item, including cooperative managers that voluntarily provided presentations.

Staff contact is Jon McCracken and Sarah Marrinan.

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## IFQ Omnibus and Enforcement Committee Report

The Council took final action on the IFQ Omnibus Amendments analysis to modify IFQ and CDQ Program regulations. The analysis considered several elements intended to increase operational flexibility for vessels using pot gear and jig gear to harvest IFQ/CDQ as well as a separate alternative to temporarily remove the Adak CQE residency requirement to provide more opportunity for the Adak CQE to fully harvest its allocation. The Council also received the [Enforcement Committee report](#) which highlights enforcement-related considerations related to the current and proposed changes to regulations.

After receiving the staff presentation, the Committee report, and public testimony, the Council selected a preferred alternative. The preferred alternative included:

- A change to biodegradable panel requirements which could provide increased flexibility for innovation in gear designs for vessels fishing IFQ across the GOA and BSAI.
- Removal of flagpole, radar reflector, and buoy requirements for GOA sablefish longline pot gear.
- An element which would allow vessels targeting halibut IFQ in pot gear in the GOA to use a tunnel opening larger than 9 inches if they also have sablefish IFQ on board. This element will allow vessels with both sablefish and halibut IFQ to target halibut and larger sablefish more efficiently in longline pot gear.
- A change to pot limits in Western Yakutat which would allow vessels fishing IFQ to use 200 pots per vessel, and modifications to gear retrieval requirements in the Central GOA and Southeast Outside Area.
- An element which would authorize jig gear as a legal gear type to harvest sablefish IFQ/CDQ in the BSAI and GOA.
- A five-year exemption to Adak CQE residency requirements.

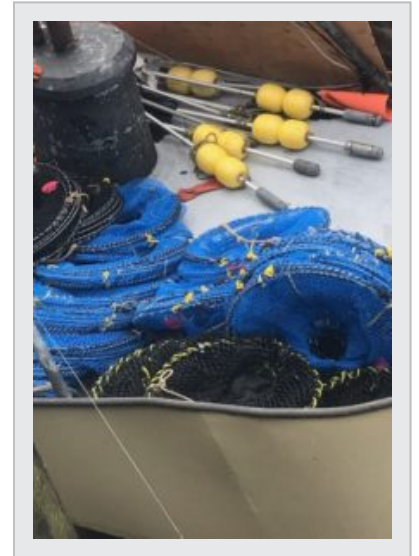


Photo courtesy of Robert Marvelle, NMFS OLE

The Council's [motion](#) aims to balance the need for flexibility and improved efficiency with the need to consider potential impacts of grounds preemption and gear conflicts, as well as how potential impacts may differ across management areas.

Staff contact is Sara Cleaver.

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## Recreational Quota Entity Funding Mechanism

The Council took final action to recommend a Charter Halibut Stamp mechanism for charter vessel operators to fund the Recreational Quota Entity (RQE). The Council recommended that NMFS develop regulations to establish the fee requirement for a Charter Halibut Stamp and contract with the RQE to develop the fee collection system. The Charter Halibut Stamp would be required for charter vessel anglers 18 years of age and older for each day they intend to harvest halibut on a charter vessel fishing trip in International Pacific Halibut Commission regulatory areas 2C and 3A. This includes charter halibut vessels operated and permitted under the Community Quota Entity and Military Morale and Welfare programs.

The Council determined that stamp fees in the first three years after the implementation of the program cannot exceed the following amounts: \$20 for a 1-day stamp, \$40 for a 3-day stamp, and \$60 for a 7-day stamp. However, after the first three years of implementation, the RQE may recommend that NMFS increase the fee amounts in each of these categories by up to 10% annually. The RQE may also recommend a fee less than these amounts or recommend discontinuing the fee collection if deemed warranted.

The Sportfishing Guide Business Owner or their designee would be responsible for paying all required fees. Charter Vessel Guides would be responsible for ensuring there is a validated halibut stamp on the vessel for each angler subject to the fee for each day of halibut fishing. Fee payment and charter halibut stamp validation would need to occur prior to departure of each fishing day.

Although the Council outlined several policy-level decision points for the Charter Halibut Stamp program, including maximum fee amounts, there are still many types of decisions left to be made. In developing the regulations, it is the intent of the Council that NMFS coordinate with the Charter Halibut Management Committee and the RQE in the development of the stamp requirements and fee collection system and update the Council as appropriate.

The Council's final action recommendation is predicated on concurrent action in the U.S. Congress to grant NMFS this fee collection authority. This authority is currently being considered in Congress as part of a larger package titled the America COMPETES Act. If this language is amended or does not get signed into law by the president, it may be necessary for the Council to reconsider its recommendation for the RQE funding mechanism.

Relatedly, in February of 2022, the Council initiated an analysis to consider revising the commercial/ charter halibut allocations under the Area 2C and 3A Catch Sharing Plan (CSP). Staff were directed to evaluate the impacts of increasing the charter halibut portion of the combined catch limit (CCL) at the lowest level of CCL and decreasing the charter portion of the CCL in the third tier of the allocation for both Area 2C and 3A. However, the Council's purpose and need statement specified that the RQE is its preferred method for reallocation of halibut harvesting opportunity from the commercial halibut sector to the charter halibut sector. It specified that should the Council both take final action on the RQE funding mechanism (as occurred at this April 2022 meeting) and the RQE fee funding mechanism become law, the Council intends to table (or rescind as suggested in April) this action to change the CSP at the following Council meeting.

Staff contact is Sarah Marrinan.

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## Scallop Specs

In April 2022, the Council reviewed the 2022 Alaska Weathervane Scallop SAFE report and specified scallop ABC for the 2021/2022 fishing year at 1.156 million pounds (546 t), a level equivalent to 90% of OFL, which is 1.284 million pounds (582 t). The federal specification of scallop OFL and ABC applies to all waters off Alaska, while guideline harvest levels (GHLs) for the State's scallop registration areas and districts are established by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

According to the Scallop 2022 SAFE, total scallop removals in 2020/2021 were 238,551 lb.; 108t of shucked meats, 20.6 % of ABC (1.156 million lb.; 524 t) and 18.6% of OFL. Therefore, overfishing did not occur in

2020/2021. The preliminary harvest for the 2021/2022 season is estimated to be 298,755 lb. (136 t).

The current OFL and ABC have not changed for several years and are based on the 1990-1997 time period. The State currently takes a very conservative approach when setting GHs, and removals rarely approach OFL. In the 2020/2021 fishing year, the total removals were only 18.6% of OFL. Given the current trends in abundance and biomass, including CPUE, provided in the 2022 SAFE, the SSC recommended that the Scallop Plan Team discuss setting the OFL based on a more accurate time period that is representative of the current stock status.



As seen in previous years, the SSC raised the possibility of setting multi-year specifications, as is done for some stocks in the groundfish and crab SAFE reports. The Council passed a **motion** that initiates an analysis to amend the Scallop FMP to provide flexibility for non-annual assessments.

Staff contact is Sarah Rheinsmith.

## CGOA Rockfish Adjustment

The Council released for final action an analysis to adjust CGOA Rockfish Program measures. The Council identified a preliminary preferred alternative, and requested staff consider and address comments from the SSC to the extent practicable. The preliminary preferred alternative includes the following Alternative 2 options:

1. Change the season start date from May 1 to April 1
2. Eliminate the catcher vessel (CV) cooperative holding cap of 30 percent
3. Increase the processing cap to 40 percent of the CV quota share pool for sablefish, Pacific cod, and primary rockfish
4. Revise the vessel aggregated rockfish harvesting cap by capping only Pacific ocean perch at 8 percent of the CV quota share pool for this species.



**Pacific Ocean Perch**

The purpose of this action is to address changes in the fishery which would increase flexibility and efficiency, improve functionality, and better ensure the total allowable catch for the primary rockfish species is fully harvested and landed in Kodiak as intended. Unforeseen changes in the Central GOA rockfish fishery in recent years to include the continuing Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic conditions, impacts to the GOA flatfish market due to the continuing foreign trade tariffs, and the loss of several shorebased processing facilities

in Kodiak have resulted in difficulties in processing all the trawl CV rockfish quota, especially later in the season as processors approach their current processing caps or close for seasonal maintenance. In addition,

dusky rockfish and northern rockfish CV quota are not fully harvested, so modifying the aggregate harvest cap for the primary rockfish species to apply only to POP could facilitate a greater percentage of dusky rockfish and northern rockfish quota being harvested.

The Council has scheduled final action for June 2022. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

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## Bristol Bay Red King Crab

The Council reviewed a discussion paper on four topics related to Bristol Bay Red King Crab (BBRKC), tasked staff with additional evaluation, and requested information from Bering Sea fishery sectors with crab mortality. The purpose of the paper was to aid the Council, other responsible agencies, and the public in considering actions related to an ongoing stock decline for BBRKC, preliminary evidence of shifts in stock distribution, and the closure of the 2021/22 directed BBRKC fishery. The paper covered: (1) crab molting and mating, and how the timing of those cycles may interact with fisheries; (2) survey, stock assessment, directed fishery, and bycatch boundaries used for management; (3) estimated seafloor contact by pelagic trawl gear in the directed pollock fishery; and (4) examples of flexible spatial management tools used in Alaska and other regions to manage impacts on certain species.



After considering the paper and receiving public testimony, the Council took two actions to better inform any management response to the state of BBRKC: a request to four Bering Sea fishery sectors for input on near-term steps and needed research, and direction for staff to develop a more in-depth discussion paper that includes six specific items.

The Council asked participants in the BBRKC directed fishery, the Bering Sea Pacific cod fisheries (all gears), the AFA pollock trawl fishery, and the Amendment 80 sector (non-pollock trawl catcher/processors) to make reports to the Council in October 2022. These sectors should encompass all

fishing mortality of red king crab in the Bristol Bay region. All sectors are asked to report on voluntary measures to avoid BBRKC and reduce crab mortality in 2023 and beyond. The sectors are also asked to identify research that would inform the development of more flexible and effective spatial management measures relative to the geographically static seasonal or year-round closures that currently exist, or gear modifications that could reduce impacts on the crab stock. The trawl sectors are asked to identify research that could help evaluate unobserved crab mortality in that sector. The BBRKC directed fishery sector is asked to report on measures that could reduce discard mortality of crab.

Council staff will work with NMFS, the Alaska Fisheries Science Center, and Alaska Department of Fish & Game to develop a paper on the following six topics:

1. Impacts of annual or seasonal gear closures in the Red King Crab Savings Area (RKCSA) on groundfish target catch, the timing of fishing relative to crab molting/mating, crab bycatch avoidance, and bycatch of non-crab species.

2. Data on all sources of BBRKC mortality in Federal groundfish fisheries and directed crab fisheries. This should include information on the sex of crab catch/mortality, observer coverage, discard mortality rates, the timing of mortality relative to molting/mating, and – for groundfish fisheries – proportions of bycatch in the BBRKC fishery area, the trawl prohibited species catch (PSC) limitation zone, and the RKCSA.
3. Information needed to create dynamic closed areas that could protect mature female BBRKC
4. Information needed for the Amendment 80 sector to create a “rolling hot spot” closure system that avoids and reduces BBRKC PSC, and information needed to evaluate what trade-offs such a system might have in regards to encounter rates of Pacific halibut
5. Impacts of groundfish predation on BBRKC
6. Impacts of prohibiting pot gear fishing for Pacific cod in NMFS Area 512 (east of the RKCSA), and impacts of hard-cap PSC limits for Pacific cod pot sectors.

Staff contact is Sam Cunningham

## Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan Team and Taskforce reports

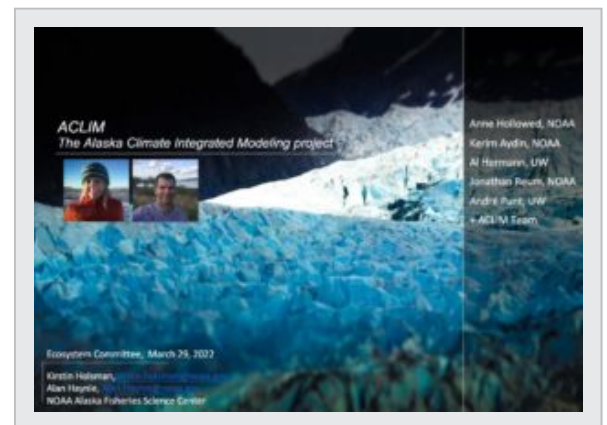
The Council received several progress reports on the ongoing BS FEP-related work and supported their ongoing work. The Ecosystem Committee and the SSC both provided feedback as well. A discussion of the reports is provided below.

### BS FEP Team report

The BS FEP Team reported on their annual meeting, and development of a strategic ecosystem evaluation report for the Bering Sea. The report is organized around the six ecosystem goals that are identified in the FEP, and the objectives that support them. A pilot version of the strategic report is planned for this fall, noting that some sections will be more complete than others, depending on the availability of data. The Team intends to work in subteams during May and over the summer, to make progress on each of the ecosystem goal sections; public involvement is welcome.

The SSC provided comments that were supported by the Council. Given the impacts of environmental change and shifting baselines in the Bering Sea, the SSC recommends moving away from the normative term “health” in the title of report, and ensuring that the report objectives and indicators remain forward-looking. The Team will address the SSC comments in their May and fall work products. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

## Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and Subsistence Taskforce





The Local Knowledge (LK), Traditional Knowledge (TK), and Subsistence (collectively LKTKS) Taskforce reported on the progress of its work over the last year. This update primarily focused on the draft protocol for identifying, analyzing and incorporating LK, TK, and subsistence information into the Council's decision-making process. The LKTKS Taskforce reviewed an initial draft of the protocol at its January 2022 meeting and anticipates making future progress throughout 2022.

The LKTKS Taskforce also reported on the search engine containing a wide variety of materials and information on LK, TK, the social science of LK and TK, and subsistence information. You can visit the search engine here: [https://www.npfmc.org/lkths\\_information/](https://www.npfmc.org/lkths_information/). The LKTKS Taskforce intends to convene for its next meeting in Fall 2022; continued public engagement and involvement is welcome. Staff contact is Kate Haapala.

## Climate Change Taskforce report

The Climate Change Taskforce (CCTF) reported on their progress May 2021. The major workproduct to address objective 1 of the work plan (collating existing information through which climate change information is currently included in the fishery management process, identify gaps, and help create opportunities to increase the inclusion of available information) is a report of the Climate Readiness Synthesis (CRS) to be made available over the summer and discussed at a CCTF meeting in August (dates TBD). This CRS will be reviewed by the Council in October 2022. The CRS will provide a snapshot of our current climate readiness as characterized through 2021, with the intent to periodically update the report as changes occur in the future. The CRS will include three sections: 1) a management overview which provides the current tools employed for managing fisheries in the North Pacific and an evaluation of their climate change potential adaptive capabilities (strengths), climate change potential maladaptive capabilities (weaknesses) and some near-term recommendations on modification to increase climate change resilience. 2) A review of groundfish and crab SAFE reports as well as Plan Team minutes for all climate change-related information currently contained therein. This section will also include some near-term recommendations for inclusion of currently available climate change information to augment assessment chapters, as applicable. 3) A knowledge and information summary that includes a summary of existing forms of LKTK information, industry-collected information and NGO information as it relates to climate change. This section will also include some near-term recommendations for improvements on information available but not yet compiled. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

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## Ecosystem Committee

The Ecosystem Committee met in March to discuss a variety of issues, including the Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan reports (see [separate newsletter article](#)) as well as other agenda items. The Council made the following response on specific issues:

- Area-based management: The Council requested that NPFMC representatives provide specific recommendations at the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) in May, to highlight the need for GIS funding to support the closure area categorization work underway through the CCC Subcommittee. The Council also recommends that the CCC Subcommittee report highlight the importance of ground-up collaborations in identifying appropriate closure areas.

- GOA Ecosystem scoping: The Council tasked the Ecosystem Committee with some preliminary scoping work to evaluate lessons learned from the Bering Sea FEP process, and needs in the GOA, in preparation for eventual Council interest in initiating a GOA FEP or some similar tool.
- PSEIS/Groundfish management policy: The Council requested staff to provide an assessment later this year of resources necessary for a review of the PSEIS, which typically begins with development of a Supplemental Information Review.



Dutch Harbor, Alaska

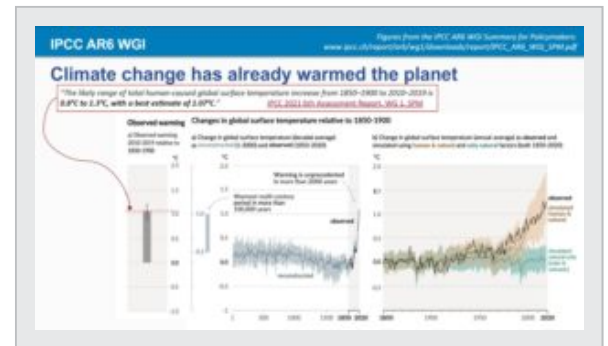
The Committee also wanted to highlight the following funding opportunities available under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act:

- Habitat restoration projects that increase resilience for coastal communities, or provide for fish passage, through the [NOAA Restoration Center](#)
- [Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund](#) opportunities
- Projects to create and restore natural systems for current and future threats from coastal hazards, through the [National Coastal Resilience Fund](#)

Staff contact is Diana Evans.

## Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

Dr. Kirstin Holsman provided the SSC an overview of the Sixth Assessment Report from the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). This report assesses the impacts of climate change on ecosystems, biodiversity, and human communities at global and regional levels as well as the vulnerabilities and the capacity and limits of the natural world and human societies to adapt to climate change. Dr. Holsman provided the general overview of the climate projections which show global warming at an alarming rate as well as more specific threats and projections for the North Pacific. This report is available on the IPCC website at: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-working-group-ii/>. This presentation will be provided to the AP and the Council at the October 2022 meeting in conjunction with the report from the Climate Change Taskforce (CCTF). Staff contact is Diana Stram.



## Best Scientific Information Available (BSIA)

The SSC and Council reviewed a draft NMFS document focused upon Best Scientific Information Available (BSIA) as it relates to our current specifications process for all managed stocks, and provided comments. In

2019, NOAA issued a procedural directive that required each Region to develop a regional Best Scientific Information Available (BSIA) framework that describes how it implements NOAA Fisheries general BSIA framework. The required elements of this framework should include: a timeline, the roles of each partner in the process, and a description of modifications from the general framework (if required). Per Council direction, the SSC's comments will be provided to the agency for incorporation prior to finalizing the document for submission to NOAA in May 2022. Once final, the document will be broadly available to the public.

Staff contact is Diana Stram.

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## Staff Tasking

The Council discussed the relative priority and scheduling of previously-tasked projects, and identified new tasking. The revised [3 meeting outlook](#) reflects this guidance.

The Council discussed **the June meeting**. At this point, the Council is still planning on an in-person/hybrid Council meeting in Sitka, AK. The Council will follow a similar format as at the April meeting, accommodating remote accessibility options, including broadcasting the SSC and AP in addition to the Council, and allowing for remote and in-person testimony at all three meetings.

The Council provided the following additional guidance:

- Direction to staff to write a comment letter on the NOAA Fisheries and BOEM [Draft Federal Survey Mitigation Strategy](#) that addresses anticipated impacts of offshore wind energy development on NOAA Fisheries' scientific surveys in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. The Council noted that while the initial strategy focuses elsewhere, it is important to provide comments as it will serve as a model to address the impacts of offshore wind on NOAA Fisheries surveys nationwide.
- Clarification of its intent that IFQ transfers that occurred under the COVID-19 emergency rule provisions should not count towards the regulated limit allowed for the existing medical transfer provision, and authorized NMFS to prepare any required rulemaking under its authority.
- Request to staff to arrange a Joint Protocol Committee meeting with the Alaska Board of Fish, to discuss upcoming crab and Pacific cod issues of mutual interest.
- Support for the SSC proposal to hold a [workshop](#) in February 2023 focused on the management of Federal stocks, given the rapid changes that have been observed in the northern Bering Sea and southern Chukchi Sea, and possible ecosystem responses
- Tasking to staff with further work on several ideas from the February 2022 staff paper on reflections on the Council process and ideas for change (see [separate newsletter](#)). Staff will report back in June.

Additionally, the Council directed staff to develop a NPFMC Facebook page in order to provide an additional avenue to reach rural communities. The creation of a social media presence on Facebook is responsive to recommendations from the Council's Community Engagement Committee. Through the Facebook page, staff will disseminate meeting announcements and availability of meeting materials, content that is usually highlighted on the 'Spotlight' section of the Council's webpage.

Staff contact is Diana Evans.

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## Council Process Ideas for Change

In response to a staff discussion paper from February with reflections on the Council process and identifying potential ideas for change, the Council tasked staff with exploring several ideas related to the timing of the harvest specifications process, reducing the Council's 5 meeting per year schedule down to 4, the nomination process for AP and SSC members, and an approach to agency B reports, as well as options for continuing remote testimony when meeting in communities with limited internet bandwidth.

The February 2022 staff paper contained a series of ideas related to potential changes to the Council meeting schedule and agenda timing, and advisory bodies. The inclusion of ideas in the paper was intended to start a public conversation and were not provided as staff recommendations. The Council chose to refer the paper to their Executive Committee and AP and SSC leadership, who met in March and provided recommendations to the Council to initially prioritize 5 ideas for further exploration. The Council concurred with the Committee recommendations, and also included the idea related to agency B reports. Additionally, the Council requested staff include a discussion previously referenced in other materials related to planning for return to in-person meetings. The issue raised by staff is that it may be difficult for the Council to continue the same level of remote accessibility, in terms of offering a meeting broadcast and opportunities for remote testimony, for the AP and SSC as well as the Council, when meeting in some of the coastal communities where the Council usually meets.

Based on the Council's direction, staff will provide further discussion of each set of ideas, including any tradeoffs that should be considered. Staff will bring back a paper addressing all of the prioritized ideas in June, noting that some (especially the timing of the harvest specifications process) will not yet be fully fleshed out. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

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## Upcoming Meetings

The following Committee and Plan Team meetings are currently anticipated.

### Before the June Council meeting

- **BSAI Crab Plan Team** – May 16-20, 2022 – hybrid: Anchorage, AK / remote access
- **BS FEP Team** report working sessions – virtual; May 2022 (TBD)
- **Enforcement Committee** – June 2, 2022 – virtual
- **IFQ Committee** – May 26, 2022 – virtual
- **Trawl EM Committee** – May 31, 2022 – hybrid: Anchorage, AK / remote access
- **Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee (FMAC)** – June 1, 2022 – hybrid: Anchorage, AK / remote access
- **PNCIAC** – (TBD)

### Later in 2022

- **BS FEP Climate Change Taskforce** – August 2022
- **Partial Coverage Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee (PCFMAC)** – Aug/Sep 2022
- **Ecosystem Committee** – September 2022
- **BSAI Crab Plan Team** – week of September 12-16, 2022
- **Joint Groundfish Plan Teams** – week of September 19-23, 2022; November 2022
- **Charter Halibut Management Committee** – October, December 2022
- **Joint Protocol Committee** – October 2022 (T)
- **BS FEP Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and Subsistence Taskforce (LKTKS)** – Oct/Nov 2022

The Council will also host the national workshop of SSCs in Sitka, AK, August 15-17, 2022.

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