



# **B1 Executive Director's Report**

December 2024

## **Action Memo**

### **SSC and AP appointments**

The Council will review nominations for the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and Advisory Panel (AP) during Executive Session and the Chair will announce these appointments at the end of the meeting. Nomination materials, including letters of interest and a resume, are posted on the Council eAgenda nominations portal: <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/3051>

All current SSC members are requesting reappointment, with the exception of Dr. Amy Bishop and Dr. Michael Jepson. Four new candidates have expressed interest in being appointed to the SSC for 2025: Dr. Hekia Bodwich, Dr. Jenn Burns, Dr. Emilie Springer, and Dr. Sarah Wise.

There were 21 members on the AP for most of 2024. Seven AP seats have 3-year terms that are expiring at the end of the year. Two seats are associated with resigning members – Brian Ritchie who was appointed to the Council, and Tim Heuker who is not requesting reappointment. The remaining 5 seats are held by members who are all eligible to be reappointed and are requesting reappointment (Tamara Briggie, Gretar Gudmundsson, Lauren Howard, Paul Wilkins, and Susie Zagorski). Additionally, three AP members (Tiffany Andrew, Nels Evens, and Annika Saltman) have served a 1-year orientation year that expires at the end of 2024, and these members are eligible to be extended into a full 3-year term.

The Council received nominations from 6 new candidates for appointment to the AP: Kiril Basargin, Bernie Burkholder, Craig Chythlook, Cheyanne Lambert, Michael “Chance” Miller, and Joshua Songstad.

### **CCC Update**

The Council Coordination Committee (CCC) met in Arlington, Virginia on October 16-17. Ms. Drobnica, Mr. Tweit, Ms. Evans and I represented the NPFMC at the meeting. Major topics of the meeting included updates on NEPA and ESA/MSA Integration policies, updates on IRA funding and National Seafood Strategy, a white paper on flexible status determination criteria, a workshop proposal from the EEJ Workgroup, as well as updates on fisheries science, budget, legislation, and progress of the different CCC workgroups. More information, including presentations and the summary report from the meeting (once finalized) can be found at <https://www.fisherycouncils.org/ccc-meetings> or <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/event/2024-october-council-coordination-committee-meeting>.

## MFAC Nominations

[NOAA Fisheries seeks nominations](#) to fill four vacancies on the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee, an advisory group that researches, evaluates, and provides advice and recommendations to the Secretary and NOAA on agency policies, activities, science, conservation, and regulatory programs critical to the mission and goals of NOAA Fisheries. Committee members are highly qualified, diverse individuals with experience in commercial, recreational, aquaculture, and non-commercial fisheries and businesses; seafood industry, including processing, marketing, restaurants, and related industries; marine, ecosystems, or protected resources management and conservation; and human dimensions or social sciences associated with living marine resources and working waterfronts. A letter of interest and resume are due by **December 23, 2024**; full details on the opportunity, including instructions for submitting nominations, can be found [here](#).

## Council Written Comment Policy

At every meeting, staff reports publicly to the Council on any comments removed from the commenting system, and the rationale for removal, so that we can monitor and revise the process as needed to address unanticipated events. The December meeting comment period was open for 15 days, from November 15 to November 29. No submitted comments were removed.

## Recent Staff and Council member activities

- Council members Mr. Moller, Ms. Goen, and Mr. Ritchie, along with council staffer Ms. Taylor Holman attended the new council member training in Washington DC.
- Ms. Anita Kroska participated at the CCC Habitat Working Group meeting on October 23, including a rollout of new version of Fishing Gear Effects on Marine Habitats Database housed on the US Regional Fishery Management Councils Fish Habitat page.
- Ms. Kroska and Ms. Plauche reviewed abstracts for the 2025 Alaska Marine Science Symposium.
- Council member Nicole Kimball and staff Diana Evans attended the Alaska Sea Grant Advisory Committee Annual Meeting on October 24th.
- I attended the PICES meeting October 27-November 1.
- Dr. Haapala attended the Panel, " Strengthening Subsistence Rights: Legal Frameworks and Pathways to Improved Access for Alaska Native Communities," at the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention on October 17 in Anchorage, Alaska.
- In response to a formal invitation from the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC), Council members Angel Drobnica, Rachel Baker, Jon Kurland, Bill Tweit, and John Moeller attended TCC's Fall Special Convention in Fairbanks, Alaska on November 13-14. David Witherell, Kate Haapala, and Sarah Marrinan participated virtually in the Q&A panel on the 13th as well.
- Ms. Kroska attended the Alaska Interagency Crab Meeting on November 20<sup>th</sup>.
- I attended a meeting of the RFMC Executive Directors on November 21-22.
- Several staff (Kroska, Evans, Holman, Witherell) participated in the RFM Certification surveillance audit for BSAI Crab Fisheries on November 26.

## Committee and Plan Team Meetings

The following Committee and Plan Team meetings have occurred since the October meeting:

- The **Charter Halibut Management Committee** met on October 25, and meets again on December 3 to review and recommend management measures for the 2025 charter fisheries in area 2C and 3A. The committee report will be provided under Agenda Item C-4.
- The Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan **Climate Change Taskforce (CCTF)** met on November 6-7 to develop final recommendations. They will present their report under Agenda Item D-1.

- The **BSAI and GOA Groundfish Plan Teams** met November 12-15 to review stock assessments and recommend harvest specifications. Their report will be presented under Agenda Items C-1 and C-2.
- The **BSAI Crab Plan Team** met on November 5 to discuss NSRKC. Their report will be presented under Agenda Item C-3.
- The **Halibut and Sablefish IFQ Committee** met on December 2 to discuss the IFQ LAPP program review. The committee report will be provided under Agenda Item D-5.

### **Other Meetings this Week**

The Council will meet in **Executive Sessions** on Friday, December 6 from 8-8:30 am to review SSC nominations with SSC leadership, and again on Saturday, December 7 at 2:30 pm to discuss AP/SSC and other appointments and discuss other administrative matters.

NMFS is hosting a **Recreational Fisheries Roundtable** on Monday afternoon in the AP Room, from 1-3pm.

Dr. Ian Stewart will present information on the IPHC **halibut stock assessment** on Monday evening at 5:30 pm in the SSC Room at the Egan Center.

NMFS is hosting an **Information Session** on changes to the Observer Declare and Deploy System (ODDS) in 2025 on Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, from 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm in the AP room. A flyer is attached.