



## **D2 CGOA Rockfish Program Review**

June 2025 Council Meeting

### **Action Memo**

Council Staff: Anna Henry

Other Presenters: Darrell Brannan (Brannan & Associates LLC; lead), Dr. Mike Downs (Wislow Research Associates LLC)

Action Required:

1. Receive Program Review report and presentation
2. Recommend any changes to document prior to finalization
3. Consider any proposed actions for the CGOA Rockfish Program (under this agenda item or E Staff Tasking agenda item)

### **BACKGROUND**

Management of the Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA) rockfish fisheries before 2007 was conducted under the License Limitation Program (LLP) and was a short 3-week fishery in July and directly conflicted with the region's pink salmon fishery. To improve economic, biologic, and safety conditions the Rockfish Pilot Program (RPP) was implemented as a 5-year test program authorized by Congress from 2007-2011. The success of the RPP resulted in the Council implementing the Rockfish Program (RP). The RP was designed to retain the conservation, management, safety, and economic gains created by the RPP. Specific elements of the RPP were modified under the RP to improve the program and comply with the legal authority granted to NOAA Fisheries. The initial RP was a 10-year program that was in place from 2012 through 2021. The Council reauthorized the RP prior to the 2021 sunset date. The current RP does not include a sunset date. This review covers the current RP and also considers the impacts of changes made to the RP since it was implemented, including changes that have been recently implemented.

Section 303A of the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) requires the Council and NMFS to review all Limited Access Privilege Programs (LAPPs), including those programs approved prior to the enactment of the reauthorized MSA in 2007. Reviews are intended to evaluate the program's performance in meeting its goals and objectives as outlined in the MSA, including the impact on harvesting and processing sectors, and fishery dependent communities. The MSA also specifies that reviews of these LAPPs should occur no less frequently than once every seven years. The most recent CGOA Rockfish Program Review was finalized in October 2017. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), Advisory Panel (AP) and Council reviewed and approved a workplan for this CGOA Rockfish Program Review in June 2024. The document prepared serves as the program review that meets this MSA requirement. It also serves as the Allocation Review required under National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Allocation Policy Directive 01-119 established in 2016 along with two associated Procedural Directives.

This CGOA Rockfish Program Review was originally scheduled for review at the April 2025 Council meeting. The Advisory Panel completed their review at the April meeting, and their report on this agenda item is linked on the eAgenda. Due to timing constraints, the Council did not review this action in April

and it was rescheduled for this meeting. Three written public comments were submitted in April. A link to those comments is provided on the June eAgenda under D2.

### Action Required/Next Steps

At this meeting, public and the Council bodies may provide feedback on the review's completeness of evaluating program impacts and the program's ability to meet its objectives. The Council may recommend any changes before the document is finalized. Typically, program reviews are presented once in the Council process, after which recommendations for changes are made, and the final version of the review is linked on the Council website.

A program review is not an "action document"; however, it provides a unique opportunity to consider the program holistically. From the review of this information and associated public testimony, any changes to the program that may be warranted could be considered for action separately from the review. This could occur through the initiation of a discussion paper, or if the action is defined enough to articulate a purpose and need statement and set of alternatives, through an analysis. Any separate proposal for action could be made during this agenda item or during 'E Staff Tasking' agenda item.

## NPFMC Program Reviews

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation & Management Act requires program reviews initially after the first 5 years and then every 7 years for all Limited Access Privilege Programs (LAPPs).

