

Council Motion
B Reports
June 5, 2026

In response to NMFS' suggested need to update regulations in the March 13 letter to the Council,¹ the Council requests preparation of a regulatory amendment to review and clarify regulations related to the disposition of prohibited species catch (PSC) to mitigate misinterpretation of or inconsistencies in multiple federal regulations that have accumulated over time. While historically vessels required to discard PSC did so at sea after monitoring, vessels are now required to retain and land PSC at the dock under several regulatory programs to improve precision in accounting. A review is needed to identify and resolve any conflicting regulations.

The Council supports use of the Prohibited Species Donation (PSD) Program to support hunger relief and reduce waste. For PSC that a processor does not donate, regulations should clarify that processors may convert PSC into fish meal, oil, or bone meal and may sell those products to minimize waste and avoid having to return PSC to vessels for disposal at sea. This holistic review of disposition of PSC should include suggestions for improvements to the PSD program and clearly set out permissible options and requirements.

All PSC limits, vessel prohibitions on the sale of PSC, and vessel requirements for PSC avoidance while fishing for groundfish remain in place. This action is intended only to clarify what is allowable for disposal of PSC that has already been caught and is landed at the dock.

¹https://files.npfmc.org/CM/2026/03132026_Fishmeal_Letter_to_NPFMC.pdf