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# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE COUNCIL ENGAGEMENT WITH RURAL AND ALASKA NATIVE COMMUNITIES

SIMON KINNEEN – CHAIR

MELLISA JOHNSON

JENNIFER HOOPER

ROBERT KEITH

MARISSA MERCULIEFF

TOM PANAMAROFF

ROB SANDERSON

BECCA ROBBINS-GISCLAIR

THERESA PETERSON

NICOLE KIMBALL

STEVE MACLEAN - NPFMC



# HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

- Authorized by NPFMC in 2018
- Formed after request from the public to improve engagement
- Process to augment Council's outreach
- Not intended to carry out engagement



*The North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Community Engagement Committee is established to identify and recommend strategies for the Council and Council staff to enact processes that provide effective community engagement with rural and Alaska Native Communities. Effective community engagement may involve two-way communication between the Council and communities at additional stages of the Council process or a project and allow for community concerns, information, perspectives, and priorities to be shared clearly with the Council, whether part of an active Council action or not.*



# MEETINGS

- March 2019 – Anchorage
  - Developed Terms of Reference
  - One-year timeline
  - Four meetings – one in rural community
  - Requested list of outreach/engagement tools in use by the Council
  - Requested information on NMFS' Tribal Consultation



# MEETINGS

- March 2019 – Anchorage
- April 2019 - Teleconference
- Reviewed list of engagement tools



# MEETINGS

- March 2019 – Anchorage
- April 2019 – Teleconference
- June 2019 - Sitka
- Reviewed list of engagement tools
- Began developing recommendations
- Recognized value of outreach efforts



# MEETINGS

- March 2019 – Anchorage
- April 2019 – Teleconference
- June 2019 – Sitka
- October 2019 - Homer
- Council implemented some strategies from June 2019 meeting
- Summary of NFMS' Tribal Consultation
  - Some members engage in Consultation
  - Questioned timing of decision and Consultation



# MEETINGS

- March 2019 – Anchorage
- April 2019 – Teleconference
- June 2019 – Sitka
- October 2019 – Homer
- December 2019 - Anchorage
- Presentation from Chinanik Qaluyat Nunivak Working Group
- Reviewing and revising draft report
- Planned for in-person meeting in Bethel in April 2020



# MEETINGS

- March 2019 – Anchorage
  - April 2019 – Teleconference
  - June 2019 – Sitka
  - October 2019 – Homer
  - December 2019 – Anchorage
  - January 2021 - Virtual
- Identify final recommendations
  - Develop rationale for each recommendation
  - Reviewed opportunities for Council cultural awareness training



# RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consensus recommendations from the committee
  - Not all ideas discussed were recommended
- Presented without consideration of constraints
- Committee encourages the Council to consider Tribes as sovereign governments, and to treat Tribes equally to States of Alaska, Washington, and Oregon
- Committee reiterates that outreach is a good process, recommendations are intended to enhance outreach and engagement

Some recommendations are complementary



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that the Council add a full-time Tribal and Rural Community Liaison position to Council staff**

- The committee recommends a stand-alone Liaison position
- Work across Council actions to provide information and guidance for rural and Tribal stakeholders
- Model after Federal Agency liaisons
- Staff Tribal Advisory Committee
- Aid with other recommendations



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that all Council members and Council employees receive cultural awareness training, and further recommends that First Alaskans Institute provide that training. The committee recommends that Council members and employees should be prioritized for training, but that AP and SSC members should also receive cultural awareness training, when possible. The committee endorses the list of topics identified in the discussion paper, but also recommends that the Council add additional priorities, as necessary, to meet the Council's needs.**



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that the Council formalize a process to solicit presentation and co-presentation from Alaska Native Communities , organizations, and co-management bodies on actions that may affect rural and Alaska Native communities.**

- Should be similar to industry reports that the Council receives on some agenda topics
- Tribal and rural community reports directly to the Council
- Responsibility of Tribal Liaison to work with analysts and Tribes to determine when to present a report
- Tribal Advisory Committee could identify actions and provide information to the Council



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that the Council establish a standing Community Engagement or Tribal Advisory Committee that can provide continued recommendations regarding the Council's engagement efforts.**

- Tribal Advisory Committee could act an internal review of actions for which Council may seek Tribal input or co-presentation
- Staffed by Tribal Liaison



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that:**

- a) The Council for a working group to address the issue of Tribal Consultation inputs into their process and requests that NMFS staff participate in those efforts. This should include recommending a process for ensuring that Tribal Consultation is used to the best, highest, and intended effect and is regularly and meaningfully included in the Council process**
- b) The Council request that NMFS engage in Tribal Consultation on issues related to the Council in a regular and ongoing fashion**
- c) Council staff participate in relevant NMFS Tribal Consultation meetings**



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that:**

- a) Provide an opportunity during B reports for public comment on any agenda item**
- b) Allow public comment via teleconference or videoconference**
- c) Summarize oral public comment in committee meeting minutes**
  - Early comment reduces logistic costs to attend**
  - Teleconference or videoconference comment allows remote participation**



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that the Council provide scholarships or funding for Tribes to participate in Council meetings**

- Meeting costs and logistics are major impediment for rural Alaskan participation
- Scholarships should engage Tribes that are not currently part of the process
- Regional corporations and CDQ groups have supported travel, but not considered reliable opportunities



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that the Council:**

- a) Continue holding council meetings in rural and Alaska Native communities**
- b) Encourage Council members to visit rural and Alaska Native communities**
  - Important for Council members to understand rural and Alaska Native issues
  - Council members should visit rural communities beyond hub communities
  - Meetings in hub communities allow participation by smaller communities
  - Expand list of Council meeting communities



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that the Council develop qualitative and quantitative metrics through which the Council can measure the impact of its engagement strategies**

- Record what has been done, and what worked or did not
- Recommend SSPT, LKTKS Task Force, and Tribal Advisory Committee be involved



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that the Council continue current outreach practices and improve them to include information delivery and strategies to foster two-way engagement**

- Committee recognizes the Council's outreach process is a good process
- Expand and augment the process to encourage more engagement and communication



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that the Council encourage co-production of knowledge and incorporate LK and TK, and information from Tribal Consultation, and results from outreach and engagement with Alaska Native communities meaningfully in analyses, recommendations, and data so that they are clearly factored into Council recommendations and decision-making**

- Co-production of knowledge equally considers western scientific knowledge and Indigenous knowledges
- Committee encourages the Council to consider co-produced knowledge on equal footing as western scientific knowledge



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that the Council work with NMFS Alaska Region to:**

- a) Establish a dedicated Tribal Liaison position at NMFS**
- b) Recommend that AFSC increase non-economic social science staff, particularly with expertise working with Alaska Native communities and their knowledges**



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**The committee recommends that the Council include indigenous representation from each region (GOA, BS, Arctic) on the AP, and indigenous representation on every Council body (SSC, AP, etc.)**

- There are many tribes in Alaska, and difficult for one or a few people to represent them all
- Best way to build trust is to include more people in the process



# POTENTIAL CONSTRAINTS

- The committee recognized that there may be constraints that the Council must consider
- The committee chose to present recommendations without consideration of constraints to reflect the intention of the committee
  
- **Legal constraints**
- **Logistical constraints**
- **Cost constraints**



# CONCLUSIONS

- Recommendations are consensus of the committee
- Recommendations are designed to address difficulties for rural and Tribal participation in the Council process
- Recommendations are designed to augment current practices and remedy perceived deficiencies in Council policy or procedure
- The committee encourages the Council to continue to strive to achieve equal participation from rural and urban stakeholders and continue to seek strategies and technologies to encourage participation from tribal and rural communities

