

Inflation Reduction Act Funding for Climate Resilience Planning Timeline

Updated November 19, 2024

Overview

Funding made available to the Councils under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provides the North Pacific Fishery Management Council with the resources and staff capacity to invest in a focused climate readiness planning effort. The Council submitted a proposal to NMFS and was approved for \$2.5 million in funding, approximately \$1.4 million of which has been provided to us to date. **All IRA funds must be spent by the end of 2027.** While the Council is not constrained to planning the entirety of its climate actions within this timeline (and in fact, the proposal acknowledges that some actions, such as implementing FMP amendments to change harvest control rules, would of necessity extend beyond this timeline), it's nonetheless important to consider how to leverage this substantial funding support strategically and impactfully during the next three years.

The Council's IRA funding proposal focuses on three objectives that build on and advance the Council's current priorities and initiatives (see more detail in the Appendix):

- Objective 1: Develop a climate-resilient management policy. (This work is intended to be carried out through the Programmatic Evaluation process).
- Objective 2: Continue work to incorporate local and traditional knowledge. (This work would also be carried out through the Programmatic Evaluation process).
- Objective 3: Strengthen the consideration of uncertainty and risk in harvest specifications.

This document updates and replaces initial IRA funding timeline estimates reported to the Council in February 2024, and provides the following:

- Table 1: Status update of current IRA funding accomplishments and upcoming milestones. This table provides a progress report on recently completed and upcoming activities funded under the IRA grant.
- Table 2: Anticipated timeline and milestones for overall NPFMC IRA climate work, updated December 2024.

Staff will continue to use this format to track progress toward achieving the grant proposal objectives, and to reflect current Council planning timelines. **Note, this update focuses specifically on the objectives and fixed timeline for the Council's IRA-funded work**, recognizing other concurrent climate-related initiatives including the Climate, Ecosystem, and Fisheries Initiative (CEFI), the work and recommendations of the Climate Change Task Force, ideas generated at the June 2024 Climate Scenarios Workshop, and the potential development of a climate workplan may continue to inform the Council's climate resilience work during and beyond the IRA funding timeline.

Table 1: Status update of current IRA funding accomplishments and upcoming milestones

Date Status	Milestone	Related to objective?	Progress achieved
June 2024 <i>Completed</i>	Climate Scenarios Workshop	1, 2, 3	The workshop and report will help support development of the Programmatic Evaluation by providing a forum to identify broad concerns and themes of discussion that can inform the Council's consideration of Programmatic alternatives.
Oct 2024 <i>Completed</i>	Climate Scenarios Workshop report, SCS8 discussion paper	1, 2, 3	The Council received the Climate Scenarios Workshop report workshop and a discussion paper on climate science and ideas from the 8th national meeting of the Scientific Coordination Subcommittee (SCS8), held in August 2024. The Council passed a motion supporting two objectives identified by the SSC for maintaining momentum toward achieving Objective 3.
Dec 2024 <i>Scheduled</i>	D1 Climate planning discussion	1, 2, 3	The Council will receive the final report of the Climate Change Task Force. Staff will provide ideas for supporting the Council's April discussion of Programmatic alternatives and are requesting Council feedback on whether and how to proceed with developing discussion materials.
Apr 2025 <i>Scheduled</i>	Programmatic Evaluation	1, 2	The Council may revise the Programmatic alternatives, enabling staff to proceed with analysis.
Apr 2025 <i>Tentative</i>	SSC Workshop	3	The SSC is tentatively scheduled to hold a workshop to provide guidance on approaches for considering potential adjustments to groundfish and crab harvest control rules to be more climate resilient.
2025 <i>Tentative</i>	Sablefish economic research to inform harvest specifications	3	Using IRA funds, the Council is seeking a researcher/ analyst to develop an economically sophisticated management strategy evaluation for sablefish in Alaska, allowing the Council to explore harvest specifications adjustments in the face of future environmental and market variability under climate change. The position would follow a scope of work initially developed by the SSC at the April 2024 meeting. Work would begin in 2025.

Table 2: Anticipated timeline and milestones for overall NPFMC IRA climate work, updated December 2024.

Council meetings	Management policy amendments through Programmatic Evaluation	Assessment and climate science amendments
2024	Feb	SSC identifies case studies for SCS8
	Apr	SSC scopes contract work needed for sablefish MSE
	Jun	Climate Scenarios Workshop (CSW)
	Oct	CSW report Discuss climate work planning
	Dec	Final CCTF report, Council direction on a climate workplan and Programmatic Evaluation discussion
2025	Feb	SSC short workshop on HCRs (proposed)
	Apr	Provide guidance on an approach (e.g., a technical workgroup) to considering potential adjustments to groundfish and crab harvest control rules to be more climate resilient.
	Jun	Postdoctoral position begins (anticipated)
	Oct	Check in /status update
	Dec	Update from technical staff workgroup, followed by analytical work to evaluate potential changes; subsequent report back to Council (anticipated fall 2025/winter 2026)
2026	(Feb)	Council workshop (timing TBD) Consider LKTK onramp opportunities to inform Programmatic Evaluation
	Apr	Non-FMP changes SSC and Council implement initial non-FMP amendment changes to BSAI crab harvest specifications process
	Jun	Draft Programmatic Evaluation (Anticipated Apr or June)
	Oct	Non-FMP changes SSC and Council implement initial non-FMP amendment changes to groundfish harvest specifications process
	Dec	Final Programmatic Evaluation Council adopts revised management policy and objectives (earliest feasible)
2027	(Feb)	Council workshop (timing TBD) Develop future actions to further implement revised policy and objectives
	Apr	FMP amendment adjustments (timing TBD) Initial/Final review of FMP analyses for harvest specification adjustments
	Jun	Actions to implement revised policy (timing TBD) Develop work plan for next steps; initiate action either through workshops or Council actions
	Oct	
	Dec	

Appendix: NPFMC IRA funding proposal objectives

The Council's original IRA funding proposal objectives and milestones including the following.

Objective 1: Implement a new, adaptive ecosystem-based fishery management policy and objectives in all NPFMC fishery management plans (FMPs), to provide for climate resilient fisheries.

1. Council staff will complete a programmatic evaluation of the Alaska Federal fisheries, focused on identifying the current state of climate readiness for Alaska fisheries and tools, pathways, and management measures that will better align with the Council's preferred approach to risk and uncertainty in the face of environmental change.
2. Council will approve and NMFS will implement FMP amendments that revise the Council's management policy for each active Council FMP.
3. Council will develop and adopt a workplan and timeline for initiating future management measure analyses to bring Council fisheries in line with the revised management policy. Recommendations for of additional changes will occur under the Council's standard operating grant.
4. Staff will develop plain language communication and outreach materials for explaining decisions related to climate-resilient fisheries management.

Objective 2: Expand and refine onramps and opportunities to incorporate local knowledge (LK) and traditional knowledge (TK) into the Council management processes alongside western science.

1. Council will host a workshop with Tribes and stakeholders to identify how to extend Bering Sea recommendations to other Alaska regions and fisheries and develop recommendations for onramps and opportunities.
2. Council will implement revisions to NPFMC procedures based on workshop recommendations, including a template for how LKTK should be considered in Council amendment analyses.

Objective 3: Develop and implement new tools for the harvest specifications process, to adapt to risk in the face of uncertainty due to climate-driven marine ecosystem changes.

1. Through Alaska regional case studies, NPFMC SSC will solicit national feedback on the potential added value of different risk adaptations.
2. Council will develop and implement procedures for non-FMP adjustments, such as reassessing time periods used to define productivity of crab and groundfish stocks, or metrics needed to modify (add or remove) FMP species as species distributions continue to change.
3. Council will develop and implement procedures for incorporating and reviewing economic and socioeconomic information as part of TAC-setting, for example through environmental and socioeconomic profiles (ESPs), ecosystem status reports (ESRs), or economic or fishing community engagement reports.
4. Council will develop and adopt a workplan for longer-term consideration of adjustments requiring a crab and/or groundfish FMP amendment, such as harvest control rules and changes to the tier system.