

Draft SSC Report June 2023



Balance of SSC Report

Administrative issues (1 of 2)

- A 'plain language' summary of findings from the Feb SSC workshop has been drafted and will be finalized this summer for dissemination
- A process for developing research priorities was proposed by an SSC subgroup for implementation in 2023/24
 - The SSC **supports** the proposed process and timeline
 - The SSC **recommends** that the Council solicit public input on Research Priorities via an online submission form in Jun-Oct

Administrative issues (2 of 2)

- The SSC reviewed proposed options for adjusting the Council meeting annual cycle
- The SSC acknowledges the need for implementing cost-saving changes to the annual meeting cycle but did not reach consensus on a preferred option
 - There was strong support for in-person meetings rather than meeting virtually, to the extent possible
 - If the February meeting is dropped, or virtual meetings are chosen, additional efficiencies in the annual cycle would have to be identified to limit the length of SSC meetings
 - Flexibility in the length and format of meetings may be needed

B1 Plan Team Nominations

- The SSC reviewed the nominations for:
 - Ms. Abby Jahn to the GOA groundfish plan team
 - Mr. Steve Whitney to the BSAI groundfish plan team
 - Dr. Sarah Wise to the Social Science Plan Team
- The SSC finds these nominees to be well-qualified and ***recommends*** the Council approve these nominations

B2 National Standard 1 - Updated Guidelines

- The SSC received a presentation from Dr. Rick Methot on the updated Technical Guidance for Estimating Status Determination Reference Points and their Proxies - National Standard 1 guidelines
- The SSC **formed** a subgroup in order to develop feedback on these revisions prior to the August 31st deadline

C4 Bristol Bay Red King Crab Closures – Initial Review (1 of 4)

- The SSC *finds* the document is **not sufficient** to inform Council decision-making at final action
- The SSC *recommends* that additional information be incorporated to allow the Council to better understand the fishery and policy impacts of the alternatives before the document is advanced to public review
 - The analysis characterizes uncertainty in the likelihood that closures will result in meaningful improvements in the crab population and in the ecological impacts and financial costs to the fleet of fishing elsewhere
 - The treatment of this uncertainty creates the impression of equivalent levels of costs and benefits, when there is evidence to support considerable costs to relocating effort but uncertain conservation benefit)
 - Additional work can incorporate available data and information that can place better bounds on the uncertainty around costs and benefits

C4 Bristol Bay Red King Crab Closures – Initial Review (2 of 4)

- The SSC *recommends*:
 - Develop a richer and better integrated evaluation of effort displacement across the fleets, using existing models
 - Using the predicted spatial effort reallocation, estimate key outcome variables, including PSC catch, additional time fished, and the cost of additional time and fuel expended
 - Discuss the types of benefits that would accrue to engaged and dependent communities

C4 Bristol Bay Red King Crab Closures – Initial Review (3 of 4)

- The SSC *recommends (cont.)*:
 - Improve the characterization of shore-based and inshore floating processors, as well as tendering activities.
 - Consult with stock assessment authors to better summarize the biological consequences for the RKC stock under different levels of PSC, which may be reflected in already available analyses
 - Using existing data, conduct a retrospective evaluation of the RKCSA to provide performance metrics for the program and insight into how the RKCSA contributes to stock health.

C4 Bristol Bay Red King Crab Closures – Initial Review (4 of 4)

- The SSC also *finds* that the evidence used to justify NMFS recommendations for the application of modern technologies to evaluate pelagic trawl gear performance standards is insufficient to inform the Council
 - The SSC *suggests* applying the LKTKS on-ramps to integrate local knowledge provided by gear mensuration experts and the industry about the state of the art in gear-seabed contact mensuration

D3 Crew Data Collection (1 of 6)

- The report focused specifically on the potential for:
 - Universal Crew Data Collection (CDC);
 - Collecting quota lease prices across rationalized fisheries; and
 - Redundancy of these efforts with current Economic Data Reports (EDRs)
- The SSC *supports* the collection of socioeconomic data to ensure the timely organization and communication of information to aid in documenting performance for monitoring, program reviews, and as inputs for adaptive management in a changing natural environment
- The SSC *finds* this report to be a substantial improvement in terms of clarity and feasibility relative to past iterations

D3 Crew Data Collection (2 of 6)

- The SSC *supports* the path laid out in the “Possible Solutions” section. Specifically:
 - Uniform collection of a vessel-level survey to collect data on crew;
 - Systematic collection of lease data costs across the federal catch share programs; and
 - Updating the current EDR fields to be consistent with the CDC and one another

D3 Crew Data Collection (3 of 6)

- The SSC notes that the data elements discussed in the report (crew data, lease prices) likely require different surveys aimed at different populations; the SSC supports what appears to be an incremental approach to socioeconomic data collection with crew data prioritized first
- The SSC **suggests** that exempting small vessels from data collection could undermine the goal of understanding impacts on smaller operations and communities
- The SSC **suggests** the Council could benefit from a process that leverages best practice in the survey design to inform the specific questions asked and the process for acquiring the data, and to proactively troubleshoot potential issues
- The SSC **suggests** that after initial development, the detailed plan and specific questions be reviewed by relevant Plan Teams, the SSPT and SSC

D3 Crew Data Collection (4 of 6)

- The SSC *suggests* the success of this program could be supported by a mapping between goals of the CDC and the specific question posed, instrument used, and pathway to Council documents
- The SSC *suggests* the effort could benefit from federal efforts. E.g.:
 - Cost & Earnings Data Harmonization workgroup convened by NMFS Science and Technology. Comparable data from different regions could help inform management under changing environmental conditions.
 - A panel of social and economic questions precleared by OMB

D3 Crew Data Collection (5 of 6)

- The SSC *suggests* considering whether there are relatively simple data elements relevant for informing management in the face of increasing variability that could be added into the same survey vehicle, e.g.:
 - Fuel cost and bait cost data could inform costs associated with area closures
 - Information on where vessels spend their money on support services (e.g. fueling and other supplies) could help understand broader economic impacts of fisheries on communities

D3 Crew Data Collection (6 of 6)

- The SSC *suggests* considering whether any of the priority elements could be collected through existing routine data collection methods or relatively minor modifications to those methods. Collection through a routine data collection method could be less burdensome to industry and less staff intensive to administer.