



# C3 Snow Crab Rebuilding Plan Progress Report

February 2022 Council Meeting

## Action Memo

Council Staff: Jon McCracken, Dr. Diana Stram  
Action Required: ~~Adopt alternatives~~  
Review progress report on snow crab rebuilding

### Background

On October 19, 2021, NMFS notified the Council that Bering Sea (BS) snow crab status has been changed to overfished. The BS snow crab assessment shows that mature male biomass (MMB) is 50,600 metric tons (mt), which is less than the minimum stock size threshold (MSST) of 76,700 mt, therefore the stock is overfished. The stock is not subject to overfishing.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) requires that a rebuilding plan be developed and implemented within two years of the stock being declared overfished. The rebuilding plan should specify a time period for rebuilding the fishery, not to exceed ten years. To facilitate development of the BS snow crab rebuilding plan, the Council was initially scheduled to select alternatives at this meeting. However, during the January 2022 Crab Plan Team (CPT) meeting, the team determined that the stock assessment model for assessing the snow crab stock status, and intended for use in estimating the time frame for rebuilding the BS snow crab stock under different levels of fishing conditions, needs further refinement. The CPT is scheduled to review the stock assessment model during the May CPT meeting. **Given the model will undergo additional review and revisions at the May CPT meeting, the Council lacks the necessary information to select alternatives for analysis at this meeting.**

The Council will instead receive a progress report on the BS snow crab rebuilding plan. The progress report provides an overview of the Magnuson-Stevens language on rebuilding overfished stocks and National Standard 1 guidelines for determination of rebuilding requirements, current stock status for BS snow crab, and sources of BS snow crab mortality. Given the change in schedule, the Council will be able to adopt alternatives in June 2022, and initial review of the rebuilding plan amendment will likely be postponed until October 2022.