

North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
Current Engagement and Communication Practices  
Information Report for the Community Engagement Committee  
April 2019

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Community Engagement Committee (CEC) met on March 20, 2019 in Anchorage, AK. At that meeting, the CEC requested that Council staff prepare a list of engagement strategies and tools that are currently employed by the Council. The following is a non-exhaustive list of engagement strategies and tools and is intended to inform the CEC as they evaluate the Council's current engagement protocols and develops strategies and tools to improve the Council's engagement with rural and Alaska Native communities.

#### Council staff availability

- Council office is always open to the public.
- Council staff contact information available online, including issue-specific contact information.
- Council staff are always available to answer questions during meetings and via phone and email.

#### Current Council Meeting Activities

- Proposed agenda topics for next three meetings posted online.
- Items/analyses and presentations posted to agenda. The Council has developed an online agenda system that allows posting of all analyses and associated materials. All materials are available to the public for review.
- Council analyses are reviewed at least twice, allowing multiple opportunities for public input. Typically analyses go through several stages before being finalized. A standard process would be a discussion paper that identifies issues that the Council may need to address, Initial Review that identifies a range of alternatives for the Council to consider. The Council might select a preliminary preferred alternative after initial review. Public Review that evaluates the anticipated impacts of the Council's preliminary preferred alternative and all other alternatives identified for analysis. Following this process, a Secretarial Review draft is produced which is reviewed by the Secretary of Commerce.
- Real-time audio of the Council meeting is available online during entire Council meeting.
- A newsletter that summarizes council actions is published online following each meeting. Newsletters are archived on the Council's website and are available to the public.
- Audio recordings of all Council discussions are available online following each meeting.
- Archived audio recordings are available to the public by request. The Council is digitizing archived audio tapes to make them available to the public.
- Public comment opportunities are available at multiple occasions for all agenda items. Written comments are accepted via the online agenda portal. Comments received via the agenda portal are posted to the Council's agenda. Comments are also accepted in writing, and in person at every Council and committee meeting.
- June Council meeting is held in diverse, Alaska coastal communities as logistics allow. Typical locations include Nome, Sitka, Juneau, and Kodiak. The Council will meet in Homer in October 2019 and has met in Dutch Harbor in the past.
- Brochures, pamphlets, and summary information is prepared for non-project-based issues. Examples include Fleet Profiles that identify and describe fishing vessels used in Council-

managed fisheries, Community Profiles summarizing fishing communities in Alaska, and summaries of the Council process.

- The Council and the Alaska Board of Fisheries meet together as needed to address issues of common concern. All meetings are open to the public.

### Council Committees

- Council forms ad-hoc and standing committees to provide direct stakeholder advice on key issues. Volunteer committees are appointed by the Council chair from nominations submitted in response to a request from the Council.
- Minutes or reports of all Council committees are posted to the Council agenda. Reports from the committees are usually presented during the appropriate agenda item, or during staff tasking if the committee topics are not related to a Council agenda item.
- Public comment opportunities for committee meetings are provided at multiple opportunities. Comments are accepted via the online agenda portal, in writing, and in person at committee meetings at the chair's discretion.

### Council Plan Teams

- Council stock assessment Plan Team meetings are open to the public.
- Stock assessment plan team meetings are broadcast over the web via Webex.

### Project-Specific scoping or action

The Council has initiated several communication and outreach efforts for projects that have the potential to affect rural and Alaska Native communities. These efforts have used the three-tier approach, recommended by the Rural Outreach Committee.

- Presentations from Council members and staff in rural communities potentially affected by Council actions with opportunities for community feedback and questions – answer sessions.
  - Presentations on Salmon bycatch reduction alternatives with participation in Subsistence RAC meetings across the state, including Statewide RAC meeting in Anchorage. Recommendations also included attending larger, regional conventions that could include meetings of the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), Kawerak, etc.
  - Participation by Council members and staff at community meetings when requested (e.g. IFQ outreach meeting in Kodiak, Unalakleet salmon summit).
  - Council member and staff travel to St Paul Island with scheduled meetings with the City of St. Paul Island, regional non-profit organization, CDQ organization, and the community as a whole.
  - Staff travel to individual communities for outreach and information gathering for several projects including Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Rationalization and Crab deliveries in Dutch Harbor.
  - Joint meeting organized with the Yukon River Panel for presentation on salmon bycatch analysis and feedback between Council and YRP.
- Council-hosted Statewide teleconferences with Council analysts for presentation of analyses and question and answer period during a Council comment period on specific actions concerning salmon bycatch reduction.
- Direct mailings of information and dates for meetings and teleconferences to 700+ communities.
- Evening sessions at Council meetings on specific projects and/or complex issues.
- Council staff involvement at conferences on a wide variety of fisheries and community related topics (e.g. participation in Fisheries Access for Alaska, Cordova Science Talks, Alaska Marine Science Symposium, North American Association of Fisheries Economists, etc).

- Council staff and contractor involvement in social science research in communities (e.g. research on fishing families which consist of workshops in 7 GOA communities; ethnographic research for Social Impact Assessments).

#### Recent and Continuing communication

- Council staff presentations at Regional Advisory Council (RAC) Statewide and regional meetings across western and interior Alaska. Staff update the RACs on salmon bycatch reduction programs. Council members have also been available for questions at some RAC meetings.
- The Council's Crab Plan Team meeting was held in Nome with multiple informal meetings while there with stakeholders.
- Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) includes Action Modules to seek ways to incorporate Local Knowledge and Traditional Knowledge into Council actions from early scoping through analysis and implementation. Action Module task forces include opportunity for membership and input from Bering Sea communities.
- Ecosystem Committee regularly receives presentations from the NOAA Alaska Fisheries Science Center Marine Mammal Lab on northern fur seal population status and research activities. The Ecosystem Committee is now also requesting information from the Aleut Community of St. Paul Island's Ecosystem Conservation Office (ECO), the co-management partner for northern fur seals. The Council has agreed to request updates from the tribal organization whenever presentations from NOAA are requested.

#### Questions that the Community Engagement Committee might consider

- What is working with our current activities?
- What deficiencies can we identify? What can we identify as improvements?
- Who determines which projects receive specific outreach and engagement? Do we have concerns with the current process?
- Are there short-term and long-term improvements that should be prioritized?
- What are the goals and objectives of different engagement strategies or activities?
- How do we define success of different engagement strategies or activities?
- How can we track the success of different engagement strategies or activities?