

PRELIMINARY PREFERRED SCHEDULE FOR DEVELOPING 2013-14 GROUND FISH HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES¹

Non-italicized font in the table below represents activities associated with the Council process. Italicized font represents activities associated with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) review and implementation process, including procedures and public comment periods required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Administrative Procedures Act (APA). Bold font dates represent Council meeting dates.

This schedule is premised on the preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS), which has statutorily defined minimum time periods for public comment. If NMFS determines that an environmental assessment (EA) can be prepared, a substantially different and less constrained schedule for the NEPA process could be contemplated. Under regulations, a public comment period is not required on an EA except in certain circumstances.²

Start Date	End Date	Task
April 9, 2011	April 14, 2011	<p>The Council meets and adopts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A preliminary schedule, process, and work plan for developing 2013-2014 groundfish harvest specifications and management measures for public review. Schedule includes detailed timelines for such things as Scientific and Statistical Subcommittee (SSC) meetings, Groundfish Management Team (GMT) meetings, and the NMFS Secretarial review and implementation process. 2. A decision whether to initiate analysis necessary to restructure the stock complexes and bring new fish into the groundfish fishery management plan (FMP) for the 2013-2014 cycle.³ 3. Recommendations for long-term solutions, including whether an amendment to the groundfish FMP should be pursued. 4. A process to modify Council Operating Procedure 19 for exempted fishing permits (EFPs), with the goal of issuing two-year EFPs that coincide with the harvest specifications and management measures process.

¹ As recommended by the Council in April 2011.

² The EA would need to be finalized so that a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) can be signed before the Final Rule is published in December 2012. The NMFS determination process of whether to prepare an EA or EIS ends in this schedule on September 28, 2011. If an EIS is to be prepared, a Notice of Intent (NOI) must be published in the Federal Register.

³ Existing stock complexes include Other Fish, Other Flatfish, and Minor Nearshore, Shelf, and Slope rockfish north and south of 40°10 N. latitude. The task of restructuring the complexes could include 1) regrouping the existing complexes based on productivity and susceptibility scores, and 2) examining existing data sources and determining whether new species should be brought into the groundfish FMP. Analysis of the Other Fish complex is anticipated since spiny dogfish, a component of the Other Fish complex, is scheduled for an assessment in the 2013-2014 cycle.

Start Date	End Date	Task
April 15, 2011	August 25, 2011	Council staff, NMFS Northwest Region (NWR), General Counsel, NMFS NEPA Coordinator, and GMT chair develop draft framework for Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) and the NEPA analysis necessary to support Council decision-making. ⁴ Work products include guidance for the advisory bodies and a detailed outline of the anticipated EIS, and criteria for when a range of alternatives is needed for the NEPA process and Council decision-making.
April 25, 2011	April 29, 2011	Data Poor Methodologies Workshop: Review methodologies for estimating yield for unassessed species including the depletion-corrected average catch and depletion-based stock reduction analysis used for the 2011-2012 cycle (see Agenda Item B.3.a Attachment 7, June 2010), associated productivity and susceptibility assessments, and alternative methods for identifying overfishing levels (OFLs) for tier 2 and tier 3 stocks for use in the 2013-2014 cycle. ⁵ Three GMT members, one from each state, will attend. One Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) representative to attend.
June 7, 2011	June 9, 2011	SSC meets ⁶ to reach recommendations on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Updated assessments. 2. Data report for cowcod. 3. Data poor methodologies for use in the 2013-2014 cycle.
June 8, 2011	June 13, 2011	The Council meets and adopts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A final schedule, process, and work plan for developing 2013-2014 groundfish harvest specifications and management measures. 2. Stock assessment updates for four species: bocaccio, canary rockfish, darkblotched rockfish, and yelloweye rockfish. 3. Data report for one species: cowcod. 4. Methodologies for setting harvest specifications for data poor stocks to be used in the 2013-2014 cycle. 5. Council briefed on EIS development process and staffing.
June 20, 2011	June 24, 2011	Stock Assessment Review (STAR) Panel (Seattle, WA): Pacific ocean perch and petrale sole. One GMT and GAP representative to attend.
July 11, 2011	July 15, 2011	STAR Panel (Seattle, WA): Widow rockfish and spiny dogfish. One GMT and GAP representative to attend.

⁴ Meetings involving Council advisory bodies will be noticed by PFMC and announced in the Federal Register.

⁵ If certain criteria are met, a stock may be re-classified from tier 3 to tier 2.

⁶ Dates for the SSC meetings are estimated based on past meeting schedules.

Start Date	End Date	Task
	<i>July 15, 2011</i>	<i>To achieve the necessary frontloading, all necessary approvals will be secured to allow NMFS NWR staff, the NMFS Regional NEPA Coordinator and NOAA General Counsel (GC) to perform concurrent or expedited reviews proposed in the schedule for harvest specifications NEPA/rulemaking to be adopted by the Council.⁷</i>
	July 18, 2011	GMT teleconference/webinar to discuss emerging issues.
July 25, 2011	July 29, 2011	STAR Panel (Newport, OR): Sablefish and Dover sole. One GMT and GAP representative to attend.
August 8, 2011	August 12, 2011	STAR Panel (Santa Cruz, CA): Greenspotted rockfish and blackgill rockfish. One GMT and GAP representative to attend.
September 13, 2011	September 15, 2011	SSC meets ⁸ to reach recommendations on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. OFL values. 2. Stock categories (i.e., tiers 1, 2, and 3). 3. Sigma values. 4. Considerations for the P* decision. 5. Revised or new impact assessment models. 6. Eight full assessments, if all are recommended by the STAR panels. 7. Restructured complexes, if applicable.

⁷ Current procedures now in place for necessary sequential review and written regulatory processing approvals, in combination with other regulatory processes, would not allow for the fishery to begin on January 1 of a given cycle if taken sequentially after final Council action at a June Council meeting.

⁸ Dates for the SSC meetings are estimated based on past meeting schedules.

Start Date	End Date	Task
September 14, 2011	September 19, 2011	<p>The Council meets and adopts:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stock assessments for the eight species subject to summer STAR panels.⁹ 2. If Council chooses to restructure the stock complexes, adopt the preliminary preferred alternatives (PPA) for restructured complexes, except the Other Fish complex.¹⁰ 3. Final preferred alternatives (FPA) for OFLs, as recommended by the SSC, including OFLs derived from data poor methodologies. 4. FPA sigma values, as recommended by the SSC. 5. A range of P* alternatives, including PPA P* values. 6. A range of acceptable biological catch (ABC) alternatives, including PPA ABC levels. 7. Prioritized range of new management measures for preliminary analysis.¹¹
September 26, 2011	September 30, 2011	The SSC Groundfish Subcommittee meets to review rebuilding analyses prepared for overfished species as well as any stock assessments approved for further review by the Council. One GMT and GAP representative to attend.
	September 28, 2011	NWR, NOAA GC, NEPA coordinator, Council staff, and GMT Chair meet to discuss the determination of the NEPA document category (EA or EIS). ¹² NMFS decides on NEPA document category. ¹³
October 3, 2011	October 7, 2011	The GMT meets in Seattle, Washington to approve impact projection models, review new stock assessments and rebuilding analyses. The GMT, NMFS NWR, NOAA GC, and NMFS NEPA coordinator draft a recommended integrated range of 2013-2014 harvest specifications and preliminary management measures for analysis.
	<i>October 14, 2011</i>	<i>Notice of intent to prepare an EIS filed for Federal Register publication by this date.</i>

⁹ Council action could be postponed from September to November for any stock assessments recommended for further review by a 2011 STAR panel and/or the SSC. I.e., those assessments the Council authorizes to be sent to the September 26-30 mop-up panel.

¹⁰ If the spiny dogfish assessment is adopted by the Council at the September meeting, the Other Fish complex analysis will need to take the assessment results into consideration. While this could be done by simple subtraction, it is possible the Other Fish complex PPA might need to be moved to November.

¹¹ New management measures are those management measures that have not been analyzed or implemented in a previous cycle.

¹² Meetings involving Council advisory bodies will be noticed by PFMC and announced in the Federal Register.

¹³ The balance of this schedule assumes a decision for an EIS.

Start Date	End Date	Task
November 1, 2011	November 3, 2011	SSC meets ¹⁴ to reach recommendations on: 1. Rebuilding analyses. 2. Any stock assessments relegated to “mop-up” reconsiderations completed at the September 26-30 SSC Groundfish Subcommittee meeting.
November 2, 2011	November 7, 2011	The Council meets and adopts: 1. Rebuilding analyses and any assessments sent to the mop-up panel. 2. FPA for P* values. 3. FPA for ABC levels. 4. If Council chose to restructure the stock complexes, adopt FPAs for restructured complexes, including the Other Fish complex. 5. PPA for non-overfished species ACLs. 6. A range of overfished species ACLs and PPA ACLs. 7. A tentative range of allocation alternatives. ¹⁵ 8. A final set of new management measures for detailed analysis.
November 8, 2011	January 31, 2012 ¹⁶	The GMT, Council staff, and analytical team develop and analyze the integrated alternatives, which are a combination of the harvest specifications and management measures.
November 8, 2011	March 31, 2012	Convene the Ad-Hoc Groundfish Allocation Committee (GAC) for a two day meeting prior to the March Council meeting some time in this interval. The GAC will consider the results of the integrated alternatives analysis and generate recommendations for Council consideration.
	<i>Late Winter – Dates to be determined</i>	<i>Draft DEIS submitted to NMFS for review from interdisciplinary project team.</i>

¹⁴ Dates for the SSC meetings are estimated based on past meeting schedules.

¹⁵ Allocations to be reviewed for tentative adoption include both the trawl and non-trawl allocations as well as the within non-trawl apportionments and accountability measures (e.g., recreational harvest guidelines). Specifically, this includes two-year allocation alternatives for species not allocated under Amendment 21: bocaccio, canary, cowcod, and yelloweye and non-overfished species allocations (e.g., black rockfish in Oregon and California).

¹⁶ February 17, 2012 is the estimated briefing book deadline for the March Council meeting in 2012.

Start Date	End Date	Task
<i>Late winter – Dates to be determined</i>	<i>Early spring – Dates to be determined</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Concurrent Sustainable Fisheries Division and Regional NEPA Coordinator review of draft DEIS</i> • <i>EIS project team addresses comments</i> • <i>GC review of DEIS</i> • <i>EIS project team addresses comments</i>
March 2, 2012	March 12, 2012	At the March Council meeting, the Council and advisory bodies receive an informational briefing on the selected results of the integrated alternatives.
November 8, 2011	March 31, 2012	Opportunity for state and tribal agencies to hold constituent meetings to obtain input on final harvest specifications and preliminary management measures.
	March 23, 2012 ¹⁷	Preliminary DEIS submitted for the April Council meeting advance briefing book.
April 1, 2012	April 6, 2012	The Council meets and adopts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. FPA non-overfished species ACLs. 2. FPA overfished species ACLs. 3. PPA management measures from the range adopted at the November Council meeting.¹⁸ 4. PPA allocations.
April 7, 2012	May 31, 2012 ¹⁹	Council staff, GMT, and analytical team validate and refine analysis, consequent to the April Council meeting actions, as necessary.
<i>April 24, 2012</i>	<i>May 4, 2012</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NOAA Office of Planning and Policy Integration (PPI) review of draft DEIS</i> • <i>EIS project Team addresses comments and prepares DEIS for public release</i> • <i>NWR Clearance of DEIS</i> • <i>PPI Clearance of DEIS</i>
<i>May 7, 2012</i>	<i>May 11, 2012</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prepare DEIS package</i> • <i>File DEIS with Environmental Protection Agency</i>
	<i>May 18, 2012</i>	<i>EPA publishes Notice of Availability starting 45-day public comment period on DEIS²⁰.</i>

¹⁷ March 23, 2012 is the estimated briefing book deadline for the April Council meeting in 2012.

¹⁸ Additional management measures that require limited analysis could be added, if necessary. Complex management measures considered only under emergency situations. Complex management measures could be added in April; however, the January 1 fishery start date may be compromised.

¹⁹ Estimated briefing book deadline for March 2012.

²⁰ If an EA is prepared, this comment period is not required.

Start Date	End Date	Task
June 20, 2012	June 25, 2012	The Council meets and adopts: 1. Corrections to the FPA harvest specifications, if needed. 2. FPA allocations. 3. FPA management measures.
July 9, 2012	July 13, 2012	The GMT meets to finalize analysis of the Council's FPA for the FEIS.
July 9, 2012	August 5, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NWR initiates iterative process by sending draft regulations to Council staff and GMT for review.</i> • <i>Council and NMFS staffs reach consensus on draft regulation language. Council staff & GMT send draft regulations comments to NWR.</i> • <i>NWR provides Council staff with near complete regulations text for deeming.</i>
	July 2, 2012	<i>45-day NEPA public comment period on DEIS ends.</i>
August 5, 2012	August 26, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>NWR sends draft proposed rule package to GC, Issues Advisory to headquarters (HQ)</i> • <i>NWR sends draft proposed rule to Edits Unit for review</i> • <i>NWR makes Edits Unit changes and sends draft proposed rule package to HQ (excluding the FMP Amendment)</i>
	August 24, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Council staff provides draft FMP language to NWR, if necessary</i> • <i>GC & Sustainable Fisheries Division simultaneous review of FMP language</i> • <i>Draft FMP language is sent to HQ</i> • <i>NWR & Council staff reach consensus on rule and FMP language</i>
	August 30, 2012	<i>Council Executive Director transmits final FMP recommendation (if necessary) and final regulations deemed necessary and appropriate for 2013-14 groundfish fisheries.</i>
July 3, 2012	August 24, 2012	<p><i>Prepare FEIS:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>EIS project team organizes public comments and revises DEIS based on public comments and final action by the Council, and prepares draft FEIS</i> • <i>NWR SFD staff, Regional NEPA Coordinator, and GC conduct concurrent and expedited reviews of draft FEIS</i> • <i>EIS project team addresses comments</i> • <i>PPI review of draft FEIS²¹</i> • <i>EIS project team addresses comments and prepares draft FEIS for public release</i> • <i>NWR clearance of draft FEIS</i> • <i>PPI clearance of draft</i>

²¹ NMFS will have needed to secure expedited review and clearance processes agreement with PPI well in advance.

Start Date	End Date	Task
<i>August 27, 2012</i>	<i>August 31, 2012</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prepare and send FEIS package to EPA (will need to overnight FEIS or request HQ to hand deliver FEIS)</i> • <i>File FEIS with EPA</i>
	<i>September 7, 2012</i>	<i>EPA publishes FEIS NOA.</i>
<i>August 31, 2012</i>	<i>September 30, 2012</i>	<i>Proposed rule publishes, 30-day proposed rule public comment period required by APA ends.</i>
<i>October 1, 2012</i>	<i>November 13, 2012</i>	<i>Preparation of Final Rule under APA:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>SFD drafts final rule and sends package to GC for review</i> • <i>GC completes review and sends to SFD</i> • <i>SFD completes revisions and sends to Edits Unit</i> • <i>SFD completes Edits Unit changes and sends package to HQ</i>
	<i>October 8, 2012</i>	<i>30 day NEPA cooling off period for FEIS.</i>
<i>October 8, 2012</i>	<i>November 13, 2012</i>	<i>NMFS prepares Record of Decision:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Review any comments received during 30 day cooling off period and prepare draft record of decision (ROD).</i> • <i>Finalize draft ROD</i> • <i>NWR SFD staff, Regional NEPA Coordinator, and GC conduct concurrent and expedited reviews of draft ROD</i> • <i>Project team addresses comments</i> • <i>NWR clearance of draft ROD</i> • <i>Draft ROD submitted to HQ for review</i> • <i>HQ signs ROD (must be submitted with final rule package)</i>
	<i>December 2, 2012</i>	<i>Final Rule Publishes under the APA.</i>
	<i>January 1, 2013</i>	<i>30-day cooling off period required by APA ends; FMP amendment and regulations effective and groundfish fishery begins under new regulations.</i>