

Work Plan for the Five-Year Review of Essential Fish Habitat for Pacific Coast Salmon

Proposal

The Northwest Region (NWR) and the Southwest Region (SWR) of NOAA Fisheries are working in partnership with Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC), the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) and the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) to conduct the 5-year review of EFH for Pacific Coast salmon. The funds will be used to conduct a comprehensive assessment of Pacific Coast salmon EFH, focusing on information that has become available since the initial designation in 2000. Project funding will be passed through to the PFMC to administer the funds in conducting the assessment. The PFMC will contribute, without cost, its administrative overhead and extensive scientific peer and public review process to the effort, and all NOAA Fisheries contributions to the project will be funded through existing programs. The requested funds will be spent only to support special scientific, stakeholder, or public meetings, outreach, supplies and printing, travel and PFMC contract work and/or staffing necessary to develop, analyze, draft, and review the pertinent salmon EFH information.

The NWR and SWR, in collaboration with the NWFSC, SWFSC, and the PFMC, established an oversight panel to provide assistance and direction to accomplishing the overall task. The panel will be responsible for overall planning, coordinating assignments within their respective organizations, providing sideboards for contract work, and reviewing preliminary draft documents and products. Further review, including final stakeholder and public involvement, will occur through the normal PFMC review process, which will include all PFMC advisory bodies, in particular the Habitat Committee and Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). The tasks to be accomplished under the grant to the PFMC are described below.

1. Review and synthesize available information on the distribution and abundance of Pacific Coast salmonids to further refine existing spatial datasets. To the extent possible with available information, the resolution and accuracy of these spatial datasets will be improved by characterizing the utility and quality, by species and lifestage, of various habitat areas (e.g., migratory, spawning, rearing). The specific tasks, assigned personnel, and work schedule will be:
 - a. Conduct a literature review of salmon stock distribution (primary) and abundance (secondary) in California, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, and draft an annotated bibliography.
Contractor—to be determined (TBD; current negotiation with Cramer Fish Sciences).
Work Schedule--Initiated by October 1, 2009 and completed by January 31, 2010.
 - b. Incorporate new information into a GIS database for analysis and display.
Assigned Personnel—NWR, SWR.
Work Schedule—TBD.

2. Review and synthesize available information on the impassible man-made barriers in each basin that can be used to further refine existing spatial datasets and refine the list of those structures that meet the criteria for designation as the upstream extent of EFH. The specific tasks, assigned personnel, and work schedule will be:
 - a. Conduct a review of GIS data and literature on the impassible man-made barriers in each basin.
Key Contact Personnel—Contractor TBD, Nancy Munn and John Stadler (NWR), Bryant Chesney and Eric Chavez (SWR), Chuck Tracy (PFMC).
Work Schedule— Initiated by October 1, 2009 and completed by January 31, 2010.
 - b. Review existing barrier designation criteria and recommend changes if necessary.
Key Contact Personnel—Nancy Munn and John Stadler (NWR), Bryant Chesney and Eric Chavez (SWR), Chuck Tracy (PFMC).
Work Schedule— Initiated by September 16, 2009 and completed by November 1, 2010.
 - c. Recommend modification of barrier list
Key Contact Personnel—Nancy Munn (NWR), Bryant Chesney and Eric Chavez (SWR), Chuck Tracy (PFMC), Contractor TBD.
Work Schedule—TBD.
3. Review the available information and develop an annotated bibliography on the existing and emerging threats to the EFH of Pacific Coast salmon. Such threats include, but are not limited to, climate change, changes in ocean productivity cycles, and anthropogenic activities such as offshore oil exploration and development, aquaculture, and alternative energy development. In addition, review and synthesize potential actions that may avoid, minimize, or otherwise offset adverse impacts to EFH that are associated with the above activities. The bibliography will be used to identify potential non-fishing threats to EFH, describe the effects of these activities on EFH, and develop conservation recommendations, as required by the implementing regulations (50 CFR 600.815(a)(4). The specific tasks, assigned personnel, and work schedule will be:
 - a. Conduct a literature review of threats to EFH and potential conservation measures and draft an annotated bibliography
Assigned Personnel—Contractor TBD.
Work Schedule—Initiated by October 1.
4. Review the available information and develop an annotated bibliography on the importance of specific types of habitats to the life history of Pacific Coast salmon that can be used to designate Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC). The specific tasks, assigned personnel, and work schedule will be:
 - a. Conduct a literature review of life history information and draft an annotated bibliography.
Assigned Personnel—Contractor TBD.
Work Schedule—Initiated by October 1, 2009.

- b. Incorporate new information into GIS database for analysis and display
Key Contact Personnel—Barb Seekins (NWR), Charleen Gavette and Matt Dorsey (SWR).
Work Schedule--TBD
 - c. Review/revise existing HAPC descriptions, recommend specific habitat types/areas for HAPC consideration.
Key Contact Personnel—Nancy Munn (NWR), Bryant Chesney and Eric Chavez (SWR), Chuck Tracy (PFMC), Phil Roni (NWFSC), Brian Spence (SWFSC), Habitat Committee
Work Schedule—Initiated by September 11, 2009.
5. Issue a draft report for scientific, stakeholder, and public review. The specific task, assigned personnel, and work schedule will be:
- a. Draft a report for Council briefing materials and subsequent review by stakeholders and public through the Council process and outside the normal process if necessary.
Key Contact Personnel— Chuck Tracy (PFMC).
Work Schedule—Draft to be reviewed tentatively at the September 2010 Council meeting.
6. Issue a final report subsequent to final Council approval.

The information identified above will be compiled in a draft report to be presented to peer-reviewers and stakeholder groups for comment via the PFMC process. A final report will provide the basis for the Pacific Coast salmon EFH five-year review and will be presented to the PFMC, who will approve the review for submittal to NMFS and consider if an FMP Amendment process is warranted.

Summary of Assigned Tasks, and Personnel

John Stadler and Nancy Munn (Panel Chair) - NWR/HCD

- Review criteria for designation of upstream barriers
- Review and revise existing HAPC descriptions
- Recommend specific areas/habitat types for HAPC consideration
- Draft materials for initial report to Council for briefing materials
- Complete to final draft of EFH review after Council approval

Barb Seekins - NWR/HCD

- Incorporate new information into GIS database for analysis and display
- Distribution and abundance
- Upstream extent of EFH/barriers
- HAPC

Charleen Gavette and Matt Dorsey - SWR/HCD

- Incorporate new information into GIS database for analysis and display
 - Distribution and abundance
 - Upstream extent of EFH/barriers
 - HAPC

Bryant Chesney and Eric Chavez - SWR/HCD

- Review criteria for designation of upstream barriers
- Review and revise existing HAPC descriptions
- Recommend specific areas/habitat types for HAPC consideration
- Draft materials for initial report to Council for briefing materials
- Complete to final draft of EFH review after Council approval

Phil Roni - NWFSC

- Review criteria for designation of upstream barriers
- Review and revise existing HAPC descriptions
- Recommend specific areas/habitat types for HAPC consideration

Brian Spence - SWFSC

- Review criteria for designation of upstream barriers
- Review and revise existing HAPC descriptions
- Recommend specific areas/habitat types for HAPC consideration

Chuck Tracy - PFMC

- Liaison with contractor to develop annotated bibliography
 - Distribution and abundance
 - Upstream barriers
 - Habitat usage
 - New/emerging threats to EFH
- Review criteria for designation of upstream barriers
- Review and revise existing HAPC descriptions
- Recommend specific areas/habitat types for HAPC consideration
- Lead initial draft report to Council for briefing materials

PFMC Advisory Bodies – HC, SSC, SAS, STT

- Recommend specific areas/habitat types for HAPC consideration
- Peer Review of draft report

General Work Schedule

Approximate milestones and deliverables for the project as follows:

- Summer 2009: Funding awarded; grant to PFMC
- Summer 2009: Procurement and planning process by PFMC
- Summer/Fall 2009: Staffing assignments and/or contract award; project initiation
- Winter/Spring 2010: Development of draft documents under PFMC and NMFS oversight
- Summer 2010: Draft report delivered; Committee, stakeholder and public review via at least a two Council meeting process
- Fall/Winter 2010: Final scientific peer review by SSC; final report delivered; NMFS/Council determination whether or not there is sufficient information available to merit initiation of FMP Amendment