

REVIEW OF FISHERY ECOSYSTEM PLAN INITIATIVES

In April 2013, the Council adopted a Pacific Coast Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) for the U.S. Portion of the California Current Large Marine Ecosystem, as a vehicle for bringing ecosystem-based principles into the Council decision-making process under its existing Fishery Management Plans (FMPs). At the same time, the Council adopted an Ecosystem Initiatives Appendix, which provides examples of how the Council could address issues that affect two or more Council FMPs or coordinate major Council policies across the FMPs to fulfill identified FEP needs.

Section 1.3 of the FEP describes the Council's process for reviewing and updating the ecosystem initiatives, the FEP appendix, and, ultimately, the FEP itself. Under the FEP, each year at the Council's March meeting, the Council and its advisory bodies will:

- review progress to date on any ecosystem initiatives the Council already has underway;
- review the list of potential ecosystem initiatives provided in Appendix A to the FEP, and determine whether any of those initiatives merit Council attention in the coming year;
- if initiatives are chosen for Council efforts, request background materials from the appropriate entities;
- in March 2015 and in each subsequent odd-numbered year, assess whether there are new ecosystem initiative proposals that could be added to the appendix; and
- in March 2018, assess whether to initiate a review and update of the FEP.

The Council will review its progress to date on FEP Initiative 1, which is now Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 1 to its FMPs, under this meeting's Agenda Item E.4. This March 2015 meeting is the Council's first opportunity to review and update the ecosystem initiatives in the FEP appendix, and to consider whether it wishes to add new ecosystem initiative proposals to the appendix.

Draft potential ecosystem initiatives are provided in the FEP appendix at Section A.2 (see Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 1). Each draft initiative includes suggestions for background information needed to support consideration of the initiative and suggestions for the expertise needed on an ad hoc workgroup to develop the initiative. If the Council determines that it wishes to address a new ecosystem initiative, it would begin by requesting relevant background information from the appropriate agencies and other entities, which would then be made available to the Council and its advisory bodies at a subsequent Council meeting, scheduled at the Council's discretion.

The draft initiatives differ in their levels of complexity, background work and information needed, and types of expertise needed to develop. The Council may choose to explore background information on more than one ecosystem initiative simultaneously. Upon review of an initiative's background informational materials, the Council will decide whether to further pursue that initiative, and may then request nominations for appointments to an ad hoc workgroup to be tasked with developing the initiative. Any materials developed through the ad hoc workgroup process would, as usual with Council advisory body materials, be made available for review and comment by all of the Council's advisory bodies and the public during the Council's policy assessment and development process.

At this meeting, the Council and its advisors are scheduled to review the existing potential FEP initiatives and to provide guidance on a process and schedule for pursuing future initiatives.

The Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel met by webinar on January 14, 2015, and, based on the discussion, drafted a report, which is included in the briefing materials. The Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup met by webinar on February 11, 2015, and plans to draft a supplemental report.

As part of this overview Ms. Yvonne deReynier, National Marine Fisheries Service West Coast Region, will brief the Council on the initiatives process.

Council Action:

Prioritize Potential Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiatives and Provide Guidance on Future Process and Schedule.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 1: Ecosystem Initiatives Appendix To The Pacific Coast Fishery Ecosystem Plan.
2. Agenda Item E.2.b, Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel Report.
3. Agenda Item E.2.c, Public Comment.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview Kit Dahl
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Prioritize Potential Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiatives and Provide Guidance on Future Process and Schedule

PFMC
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