

GROUNDFISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON 5-YEAR CATCH SHARE  
PROGRAM AND INTERSECTOR ALLOCATION REVIEW UPDATE

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) received a presentation from Mr. Jim Seger about the status of the 5-Year Catch Share Program Review. Mr. Seger noted that specific Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) action items at this meeting include: (1) the review process, notably the schedule of events; (2) update of Appendix E to groundfish fishery management plan (FMP) such that the appendix is current relative to changes made since implementation of the Catch Shares Program; and (3) direction to the Community Advisory Board (CAB).

The GAP supports the expedited schedule detailed in Agenda Item F.5, Attachment 1, September 2016 (titled “Alternative Process (Tight Timelines)).” As stated in Attachment 1, under the proposed alternative calendar, the catch share review would be completed in November 2017, rather than April 2018. Earlier completion of the review should facilitate more timely implementation of any program changes that flow from the review. The GAP supports timely implementation of improvements to the program. While the GAP endorses the expedited schedule, the GAP cautions that meeting this tighter timeline will likely require quickly synthesizing broad comments and recommendations to hone in on potential program changes that achieve the greatest gains for the industry.

The GAP recommends that Appendix E be updated to accurately reflect the current complexion of the groundfish fishery, which would include incorporating changes made since implementation of the Catch Shares Program. However, if this task is not essential to timely completion of the Program Review then it should receive a low priority in terms of dedication of staff time and resources toward the update versus completion of essential Program Review items.

Finally, relative to guidance to the CAB, the GAP recommends the Council convene a meeting between Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC) staff economists that work the economic data collection program and the CAB (and other interested participants). The GAP makes this request because there appears to be a divergence between industry’s experience of program effects and the analytical findings presented by the NWFSC economic analyses. A goal of this meeting would be for Catch Share Program participants to better understand the analytical approaches and assumptions that will form the basis of the economic analyses, and for the economists to gain a better understanding of the perspectives of program participants about the actual effects of the Catch Shares Program.