

GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON FUTURE COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA AND WORKLOAD PLANNING

The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) reviewed the draft November Agenda ([Agenda Item H.5., Attachment 2](#)), Year-at-a-Glance ([Agenda Item H.5., Attachment 1](#)), and Groundfish Workload Priorities ([Agenda Item H.5., Attachment 3](#)) contained in the advanced briefing book and provide comments below. This report also contains our comments on other items for which we are involved.

September 28th Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) Webinar

The GMT has been notified that the Pacific ocean perch (POP) stock assessment and yelloweye rebuilding analysis will be taken up at the September 28th SSC webinar (“mop-up”), which the GMT will be participating in, with Jessi Doerpinghaus acting as the official GMT representative.

October GMT work session

The GMT will have a public work session from October 2-5, 2017 at the Council office in Portland, Oregon. At that meeting, the GMT will be discussing a range of alternatives for the annual catch limits (ACLs), including those adopted at this meeting, as well as considerations for POP and yelloweye rockfish that will be analyzed through the biennial harvest specifications and management measures process. The GMT anticipates having National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) West Coast Region (WCR) staff who will be working on the biennial process, as well as National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) General Counsel and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) coordinator participate in this meeting, as it should assist with the overall biennial process.

Additionally, at this meeting, the GMT will begin discussing proposed management measures, the associated workload, and potentially the most efficient process to proceed, for the Council’s consideration at the November PFMC meeting. GMT staff will also be working with NMFS Regional staff and NOAA to develop an approach for the items discussed in [Agenda Item E.5](#) at this meeting.

If the Pacific halibut discard mortality rate (DMR) methodology is added to the November agenda, the GMT will need to submit our report in time for the advanced briefing book. This will require the GMT to spend some time at our October work session finalizing that report.

Other October Meetings

Ms. Heather Reed and Ms. Jessi Doerpinghaus are GMT representatives to the RecFIN and PacFIN committees, respectively, and will attend the meetings. Members of the GMT will also attend the public Community Advisory Board meeting in Portland, Oregon October 24-25.

Pre-November GMT webinar

Depending on the final November agenda, the GMT may need a pre-meeting webinar to help frontload our workload. The week of November 6 is the likely candidate. The GMT chair and vice-chair will work with Council staff to determine if a webinar is needed, get it scheduled, and publicly noticed.

November Council Meeting

The GMT notes that the draft November ([Agenda Item H.5, Attachment 2](#)) schedule currently has several large, work-intensive items tentatively scheduled, including the 2019-2020 biennial harvest specifications preliminary preferred alternatives and management measures range of alternatives, preliminary approval of exempted fishing permits, “5-year Catch Share Review follow on issues range of alternatives,” and the essential fish habitat (EFH) and Rockfish Conservation Area (RCA) action review.

At this meeting, the GMT has reviewed the EFH/RCA Project Team’s Report (September 2017, [Agenda Item H.5.a](#)). **The GMT recommends the Project Team bring a similar report under workload planning at the November Council meeting, with includes an achievable timeline for completion. The GMT does not recommend a presentation by the project team as a stand-alone agenda item at the November 2017 meeting,** given the project team’s status report, and the GMT’s November groundfish workload. The GMT appreciates the complexity of the analytical burden and competing workloads of the analysts, and that progress is being made towards a comprehensive analytical draft that may be available sometime in 2018. The GMT notes that assembling any report of preliminary results at the November meeting would detract from the team’s effort at compiling required analyses, and would not be appropriate as data are still being reviewed and results amended by the project team. The GMT notes that the March 2018 meeting is currently scheduled for 6.8 days, and the GMT’s focus will be on the biennial process at the April and June 2018 meetings. Therefore, **the GMT recommends the EFH/RCA agenda item be given careful consideration on when to reschedule.**

If the EFH/RCA project team presentation is removed from November, **the GMT recommends that ESA consultation on salmon and seabirds replace it.** If actions resulting from the consultation are expected to be included in the 2019-2020 biennial harvest specifications and management measures analysis, we would need to have those identified in November so that they could be included in our overwinter analysis.

If the halibut DMR methodology is added to the November agenda, the GMT would need to have time for review scheduled with the SSC, which is required prior to presenting to the council for approval.

Overwinter Work

The GMT will be working with Council and NMFS staff over the winter months on the 2019-2020 biennial harvest specifications and management measures analysis and documentation.

Year-at-a-Glance

The GMT reviewed the draft Year-at-a-Glance ([Agenda Item H.5, Attachment 1](#)). The GMT appreciates the biennial harvest specifications and management measures check-in/briefing scheduled at the March 2018 Council meeting. This has been used in previous cycles and seems to facilitate April discussions and actions on the biennial harvest specifications and management measures.

The GMT recommends that:

- 1. The EFH/RCA project team bring a workload planning report to the November Council meeting which includes a timeline for completion. The GMT does not recommend a presentation by the project team as a standalone agenda item.**
- 2. The council carefully consider when to reschedule the EFH/RCA agenda item to reduce the March meeting workload.**
- 3. If the council chooses to reschedule the EFH/RCA presentation at the November council meeting that the ESA consultation on salmon seabirds replace it.**

PFMC
09/18/17