

GROUND FISH NON-SALMON ENDANGERED SPECIES WORKGROUP REPORT

The Pacific Coast Groundfish and Endangered Species Workgroup (Workgroup) was established in June 2013 to serve as a multi-party advisory body to the Council with the objective to support Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 7(a)(2) compliance and Biological Opinion (BiOp) for the continued operation of the fishery. This Workgroup consists of: four taxa experts (fish, marine mammals, seabirds, and sea turtles); a National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) representative from the West Coast Groundfish Observer Program, Protected Resource Division, and the Sustainable Fisheries Division; a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) representative; and representatives from each State management agency. The Workgroup meets, at minimum, biennially to review updated estimates of the incidental take for eulachon, green sturgeon, humpback whales, leatherback sea turtles, and short-tailed albatross. The original eulachon and green sturgeon, humpback whales, and leatherback sea turtles [BiOp](#)¹ was completed by NMFS in 2012 and short-tailed albatross [BiOp](#) was completed by USFWS in 2017.

The Workgroup may recommend for the Council to consider new conservation and management measures to minimize bycatch of these protected species. It may also recommend new analyses, reports, or changes to sampling protocols to improve bycatch estimates. Workgroup recommendations can be adopted by the Council and addressed where appropriate. However, Workgroup meetings are generally timed to so that their recommendations that involve adoption or adjustment of management measures can be considered as part of the biennial harvest specifications and new management measures process.

The Workgroup met from April 30 to May 1, 2019 and reviewed the most recent incidental take estimates of the aforementioned Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species. The Workgroup chair is expected present the findings from the Workgroup's report (Agenda Item I.4.a, Groundfish Endangered Species Workgroup Report) at this meeting. Copies of the reports presented to the Workgroup at their meeting are provided, in electronic format, on the June briefing book webpage (labeled as NMFS Reports 1-6, *Electronic Only*).

The Council has the opportunity under this agenda item to address conservation concerns raised in the reports and consider measures to minimize bycatch of the aforementioned species. New management measures that the Council identifies at this meeting could be evaluated as part of the 2021-2022 harvest specifications and new management measures period.

Council Action:

- 1. Review Groundfish Endangered Species Workgroup Recommendations**
- 2. Identify Measures to be Evaluated as part of the 2021-2022 Biennial Management Period, or Other Appropriate Actions.**

¹ Note: the Steller sea lion eastern distinct population segment was originally included in the NMFS BiOp; however, it was delisted in 2012 and was therefore not discussed at this meeting

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item I.4.a, Groundfish Endangered Species Act Workgroup Report.
2. Agenda Item I.4.a, NMFS Report 1: Fishing Effort in the 2002-2017 U.S. Pacific Coast Groundfish Fisheries (*Electronic Only*).
3. Agenda Item I.4.a, NMFS Report 2: Observed and Estimated Bycatch of Eulachon in 2002–2017 US West Coast Groundfish Fisheries (*Electronic Only*).
4. Agenda Item I.4.a, NMFS Report 3: Observed and Estimated Bycatch of Green Sturgeon in 2002–2017 US West Coast Groundfish Fisheries (*Electronic Only*).
5. Agenda Item I.4.a, NMFS Report 4: Humpback whale bycatch in 2016 - 2017 in the U.S. West Coast Groundfish Fisheries (*Electronic Only*).
6. Agenda Item I.4.a, NMFS Report 5: 2018 Leatherback Sea Turtle Estimated Bycatch Reporting Requirements As Set Out In The NMFS Biological Opinion For The Continuing Authorization Of The Pacific Coast Groundfish Fisheries (*Electronic Only*).
7. Agenda Item I.4.a, NMFS Report 6: Observed and Estimated Bycatch of Short-tailed Albatross in U.S. West Coast Groundfish Fisheries 2016-2017 (*Electronic Only*).
8. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- I.4 Groundfish Non-Salmon Endangered Species Workgroup Report Todd Phillips
- a. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
 - b. Public Comment
 - c. **Council Action:** Review Groundfish Endangered Species Workgroup Recommendations and Identify Measures to be Evaluated for the 2019-2020 Biennial Management Period or Other Appropriate Actions

PFMC
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