



Pacific Fishery Management Council

7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101 Portland, OR 97220-1384
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Marc Gorelnik, Chair | Charles A. Tracy, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 12, 2021

TO: Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team, Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel, and Interested Parties

FROM: Kerry Griffin, Staff Officer

SUBJECT: March 2021 Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet in online format March 4 – 5 and 8 – 11, 2021. The Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) and the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) will convene for one day, March 2, 2021. There are no CPS items on the Council's agenda. However, there are several related agenda items the CPSMT and CPSAS will be considering, with possible supplemental reports being developed. Major topics for discussion at this meeting are below. For more detailed information, please refer to the situation summaries in the Briefing Book materials.

Report of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (C.1)

Once per year, representatives of the National Marine Sanctuaries (NMS) present current and upcoming items that may be of interest to the Council. The purpose is to maintain a meaningful avenue of communication between NMS and the Council, especially with respect to any activities or regulations that may impact fishing activities.

Marine Planning (C.2)

Marine Planning is a standing agenda item at every March Council meeting, with the purpose of updating the Council on activities related to offshore development activities such as offshore wind, aquaculture, and other items of interest to the Council. At this meeting, representatives from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will provide information about Aquaculture Opportunity Areas, and representatives of the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) will present information about identifying suitable sites for offshore wind energy projects.

California Current Ecosystem and IEA Annual Report (I.1)

The Council's Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) calls for an annual report to the Council on status and trends in the California Current Ecosystem (CCE). The California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (CCIEA), composed of staff from the National Marine Fisheries Service

(NMFS) Northwest and Southwest Fisheries Science Centers and West Coast Region, produced the 2021 Annual State of the California Current Ecosystem Report (Agenda Item I.1.a, IEA Team Report 1). Drs. Chris Harvey and Toby Garfield will present an overview of the report.

Climate and Communities Initiative Update (I.2)

The Council has been engaged in a climate change scenario planning exercise since 2019 as part of the FEP Climate and Communities Initiative (CCI). In 2020 four climate scenarios were developed through workshops and meetings and under the auspices of the Ad Hoc Climate and Communities Core Team (CCCT). Jonathan Star will present an update on CCI status to the Council.

Fishery Ecosystem Plan Five-Year Review Update (I.3)

In September 2018, the Council initiated a review of the Council's Pacific Coast FEP. In March 2020, the Council adopted revised Chapters 1 and 2, which include a vision statement, goals and objectives, and other reorganized elements in these chapters from the current FEP. In September 2020, the Council reviewed a revised draft of Chapter 3 and proposed revisions to Chapter 4 and 5.

Upcoming Meetings of the Ecosystem Workgroup and the Habitat Committee

The Ecosystem Workgroup is holding an [online meeting](#) February 22 – 23 and will discuss I.1 (CCE/IEA Annual Report) and I.3 (FEP five-Year Review). The Habitat Committee is holding an [online meeting](#) February 24th, which will include representatives from the BOEM and the NOAA, who will present information about offshore wind energy development and Aquaculture Opportunity Areas. Representatives of the CPSMT and CPSAS are strongly encouraged to attend, so they can convey key information to the other members of their advisory bodies.

KFG:rdd

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.4 – Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item B.1 – Open Comment
3. Agenda Item C.1 – ONMS Coordination Report
4. Agenda Item C.2 – Marine Planning Update
5. Agenda Item I.1 – California Current Ecosystem and IEA Annual Report
6. Agenda item I.2 – Climate and Communities Initiative Update
7. Agenda Item I.3 – Fishery Ecosystem Plan 5-Year Review Update
8. Agenda Item C.6 – Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning
9. CPSMT Agenda
10. CPSAS Agenda
11. Informational Reports
12. General Information

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 9, 2021
TO: Enforcement Consultants
FROM: Jim Seger Staff Officer
SUBJECT: February 2021 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its advisory bodies will meet March 2-5, and 8-11, 2021, via webinar. All meetings are open to the public. For Advisory Bodies, there will be one daily opportunity for public comment.

Instructions for how to connect to Advisory Body webinars will be posted on the Council's [March 2021 Meeting](#) webpage prior to the first day of the meeting. It is recommended that you use a computer headset to listen to the meeting, but you may use your telephone for the audio-only portion of the meeting. The audio portion may be attended using a telephone by following the connect to audio instructions on your screen, shown after joining the webinar.

The main meeting for the Enforcement Consultants (EC) will be held Wednesday March 3, at 8 a.m. and the EC will have additional sessions as needed on an ad hoc basis Thursday March 4, Friday March 5, and Monday March 8 through Wednesday March 10. Ad hoc sessions scheduled during that period and the times for those sessions will be posted on the EC webinar screen and/or the Council's March meeting website.

Enclosed are materials for items on the EC Agenda and additional items that might be of interest to you. Your agenda allows you to add other items from the Council agenda, if you should decide there are other issues on which you would like to comment.

JLS:kma

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.4, Proposed Council Meeting Agenda
 2. EC Agenda
 3. CPSAS Agenda
 4. CPSMT Agenda
 5. EAS Agenda
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6. EWG Agenda
7. GAP Agenda
8. GMT Agenda
9. HC Agenda
10. LC Agenda
11. HMSAS Agenda
12. HMSMT Agenda
13. SAS Agenda
14. STT Agenda

Administrative Matters

15. C.1 Report of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS)
16. C.2 Marine Planning Update
17. C.6 Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning

Salmon Management

18. E.5 Recommendations for 2021 Management Alternative Analysis
19. E.6 Further Direction for 2021 Management Alternatives
20. E.7 Further Direction for 2021 Management Alternatives
21. E.8 Adopt 2021 Management Alternatives for Public Review

Pacific Halibut

22. F.1 Annual International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) Meeting Report
23. F.2 Incidental Catch Recommendations: Options for Salmon Troll and Final Action on Recommendations for Fixed Gear Sablefish Fisheries

Groundfish Management

24. G.2 Workload and New Management Measure Priorities
25. G.4 Inseason Adjustments – Final Action
26. G.5 Electronic Monitoring Program Update

General Information

27. Informational Report 2... Report to Congress: Section 201(a) of the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act of 2018
28. Informational Report 3... MAFMC Letter: USFWS Licensing and Inspection Requirements for U.S. Squid Fisheries
29. Informational Report 4... West Coast Fisheries Impacts from COVID-19
30. Informational Report 5... OLE: Trawl Rationalization (TRat) Compliance Summary -2020
31. Schedule of Council Meetings and Council Roster



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 10, 2021

TO: Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel, Ecosystem Workgroup, and Interested Persons

FROM: Dr. Kit Dahl, Staff Officer

SUBJECT: March 2021 Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its advisory bodies will meet March 2-5 and 8-11, 2021, by webinar. The Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel (EAS) and the Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) will meet Tuesday-Wednesday, March 2-3. Instructions for how to connect to advisory body webinars will be posted on the Council's [March 2021 Meeting webpage](#) prior to the first day of the meeting. Three ecosystem topics are on the Council agenda. Summaries of these agenda items and other topics of interest follow.

I.1 California Current Ecosystem and Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) Report and Science Review Topics

The California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (CCIEA) team will present the 2021 Annual State of the California Current Ecosystem Report. The purpose of the Report is to present ecosystem information for the California Current Ecosystem to the Council in a succinct, straightforward format so that the Council may take into account ecosystem variability in its decisions. The IEA Team has also submitted a list of candidate ecosystem research topics for Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) review. Any topics selected by the Council would then be reviewed by the SSC during the September 2021 meeting.

I.2 Climate and Communities Initiative Workshop Report

From mid December 2020 to early February 2021 the second phase of the Council's climate change scenario planning exercise was conducted through a series of four online workshops. Workshop participants discussed the regional challenges presented by the four scenarios and possible actions to address those challenges. The workshops were led by Jonathan Star, contracted by the Council for the scenario planning process; with Council staff, he has prepared a report summarizing workshop outcomes. According to its Year-at-a-Glance planner, the Council intends to wrap up the Climate and Communities Initiative, which the scenario planning process is a part of, at its September 2021 meeting. The EAS and EWG should consider what needs to be done, and who should do it, to achieve the Initiative's objectives by the September Council meeting.

I.3 Fishery Ecosystem Plan Five-Year Review—Final Action

The EWG submitted an updated draft of Fishery Ecosystem Plan Chapter 3 and a draft of revised Chapter 4 (EWG Report 1) and an annotated outline of a standalone document with proposed Council policy guidance on offshore development (based on the current Chapter 5, *PFMC Policy Priorities for Ocean Resource Management*). The Council would like to see the five-year review and revision of the FEP come to conclusion at its September 2021 meeting. The EAS and EWG may want to make recommendations on the completion of outstanding tasks to meet the Council's September deadline.

C.2 Marine Planning Update

In 2020 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration began developing methods to identify Aquaculture Opportunity Areas and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is in the process of identifying potential offshore wind energy sites. Agency representatives will give presentations during a February 24 online Habitat Committee meeting, which other advisory body members are encouraged to attend. The Council may consider how to facilitate public involvement in siting decisions, particularly in relation to Council stakeholders and provide recommendations to the aforementioned agencies.

C.3 Legislative Matters

The Council's Legislative Committee will consider various Congressional proposals for reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and the January 22 Executive Order "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad." The latter includes provisions bearing on the activities of the Council and its stakeholders. The Legislative Committee will meet March 3 and report to the Council on March 11.

In addition to the previous topics, you may wish to provide comments on scheduling ecosystem-related topics at future Council meetings under Agenda Item C.6, Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning.

In addition to the enclosed briefing materials, you may obtain electronic copies of all the meeting materials on our website. We also post supplemental briefing materials on our website as they become available after distribution of the advance briefing book. Public comment is available only in electronic form through the Council's [e-portal](#). Visit the [March 2021 Meeting webpage](#) to access these materials.

As always, thank you for your service to the Council process.

KRD:kma

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.4: Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Items I: Ecosystem Management
3. Agenda Items C: Administrative Matters

4. EAS and EWG Meeting Agendas
5. Informational Reports
6. Council Roster

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 12, 2021

TO: Groundfish Advisory Subpanel, Groundfish Management Team, and Groundfish Interested Persons

FROM: Mr. Todd Phillips, Groundfish Staff Officer

SUBJECT: March 2021 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its advisory bodies will meet via webinar March 2-5 & 8-11, 2021. The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) will convene their sessions starting Thursday, March 3, 2021 at 8:00 A.M. and adjourn on Tuesday, March 9, 2021. All meetings are open to the public. Advisory bodies will have once-daily opportunity for public comment scheduled on their agendas.

Instructions for how to connect to advisory body webinars will be posted on the Council's [March 2021 Meeting webpage](#) prior to the first day of the meeting. It is recommended that you use a computer headset to listen to the meeting, but you may use your telephone for the audio-only portion of the meeting. The audio portion may be attended using a telephone by following the connect to audio instructions on your screen, shown after joining the webinar. Please remember to enter your full name (including your Agency acronym, if appropriate) when prompted on the webinar entry screen. This additional information helps Council identify speakers in the webinar.

The Council is scheduled to consider several important groundfish agenda items and related matters of interest. The briefing book materials attached to this memorandum provide detailed information for these items on the Council's March 2021 agenda; however, the following agenda items, summarized below, may be of particular interest.

C.2 Marine Planning Update

The Council is scheduled to receive updates from Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) on recent developments regarding offshore wind energy sites and from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) on the identification of Aquaculture Opportunity Areas in California. The Habitat Committee will host a [webinar](#) on February 24, 2021 where BOEM and NOAA will discuss these items in detail. It is recommended that at least one member from the GAP and GMT attend this webinar and be prepared to report back to their respective group at the March meeting.

F.2 Incidental Catch Recommendations: Options for Salmon Troll and Final Action on Recommendations for Fixed Gear Sablefish Fisheries

The Council will adopt final Pacific halibut retention limits for 2021 primary fixed gear sablefish fishery. As part of this agenda item, the Council will consider if the 2021 landing limits for the primary sablefish tier fishery should remain consistent with those implemented in the Fall of 2020. The limits were a landing ratio of 250 pounds dressed weight of halibut for every 1,000 pounds dressed weight of sablefish landed, and up to two additional halibut in excess of the 200-pounds-per-1,000-pound ratio per landing.

G.2 Workload and New Management Measure Priorities

This agenda item is the opportunity for stakeholders to propose new groundfish management measures for Council consideration. The GAP and the GMT will revise and update the existing list of proposed management measures, as appropriate. The Council may adopt the updated list for future development. The Council may also prioritize management measures for development in light of existing commitments. Interested stakeholders should attend the relevant advisory body discussions, as well as the Council session, for this agenda item to present new management measure proposals for consideration by the Council.

G.3 Pacific Whiting Utilization in the Mothership Sector

The Council will continue the Mothership Utilization scoping discussion and may adopt a range of alternatives for public review under this agenda item. This agenda item is expected to build on information presented at the Council's September 2020 meeting. The GMT and GAP are expected to discuss the scope of the action and provide recommendations regarding to the Council.

G.4 Inseason Adjustments – Final Action

This agenda item will consider progress to date of the groundfish fisheries as well as routine inseason adjustments to the 2021 fisheries, as necessary, to achieve conservation objectives. It is expected the GMT will provide information related to 2020 fishery performance, including incidental salmon take in groundfish fisheries as well as mortality impacts of rebuilding groundfish species. Recommendations related to inseason adjustments may be made under this agenda item.

G.5 Electronic Monitoring Program Update

At the [June 2020 meeting](#), the Council recommended that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), in consultation with the Council, conduct a comprehensive review of Electronic Monitoring (EM) program guidelines and provider manual consistent with the revised proposed rule, the final data retention procedural directive, and any other relevant NMFS directives. The Council is scheduled to conduct a review of the revised EM Program draft Guidelines and EM Manual and provide their comments to NMFS.

I.1 California Current Ecosystem and Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) Report and Science Review Topics

This annual report highlights trends in physical, biological, and socioeconomic components of the ecosystem – taking into account the effects of fisheries and other human activities. The IEA team may also submit a list of ecosystem research topics for the Scientific and Statistical Committee review. A pre-Council briefing is scheduled during the Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG)/Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel (EAS) [webinar](#) on February 23, 2021 at 2:30 p.m. (estimated).

I.2 Climate and Communities Initiative Workshop Report

Results of Phase 2 of the Climate and Communities Initiative (CCI) will be reviewed by the Council under this agenda item. The Council is expected to provide guidance on further scenario planning as well as discuss the completion of the CCI Review of Phase 2. Jonathan Star will review this topic at the Council meeting with the EAS on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 2:00 p.m. Please refer to the [EAS agenda](#) posted on the Council's March meeting website for additional details.

I.3 Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) Five-Year Review – Final Action

The Council is scheduled to adopt the final updates to Chapters 3 and 4 of the Fishery Ecosystem Plan and review the outline of Chapter 5. The EWG will receive a briefing on Wednesday, March 3, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. (estimated). A pre-Council briefing is scheduled during the EWG/EAS [webinar](#) on February 22, 2021.

Other Items

Two other webinars will be conducted in February that may be of interest to the GAP, GMT and interested stakeholders. On February 16, 2021 the GAP will host a [webinar](#) to discuss modifications to the Non-Trawl Rockfish Conservation Area and the GMT will host its pre-March Council meeting [webinar](#) on February 17, 2021. Additionally, the spiny dogfish pre-assessment discussion will be held on March 9 at 2:30 p.m. as part of the GAP's Council meeting agenda. The public is invited to these meetings.

This mailing includes the enclosures listed below. Please review these briefing materials in advance to facilitate an efficient meeting week. Briefing materials for this meeting can be accessed from the [March 2021 Meeting briefing book webpage](#).

Thank you for your commitment to the Council process and management of Pacific groundfish fisheries.

TMP:ael

Enclosures include:

1. Agenda Item A.4 – Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item B.1 – Open Comment Items
3. Agenda Item C.2 – Marine Planning Update and Aquaculture Area Mapping.
4. Agenda Item G – Groundfish Management
5. Agenda Item F – Pacific Halibut
6. Agenda Item I – Ecosystem
7. Enforcement Consultants Agenda
8. GAP Agenda
9. GMT Agenda
10. Scientific and Statistical Committee Agenda and Draft Minutes
11. Informational Reports
12. Council Roster



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 10, 2021

TO: Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel, Highly Migratory Species Management Team, and Interested Persons

FROM: Dr. Kit Dahl, Staff Officer for Highly Migratory Species

SUBJECT: March 2021 Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet March 2-5 and 8-11, 2021 by webinar. The Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) and the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) will meet Thursday, Friday, and Monday, March 4-5, and 8. Instructions for how to connect to advisory body webinars will be posted on the Council's [March 2021 Meeting webpage](#) prior to the first day of the meeting. Summaries of the five HMS topics and two Administrative items on the Council agenda follow.

H.1 National Marine Fisheries Service Report

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) will brief the Council on recent regulatory activities and international meetings.

H.2 Review of Essential Fish Habitat Phase 2

The Council will consider the Phase 2 Action Plan for the review of essential fish habitat designations in the HMS Fishery Management Plan, consistent with Council Operating Procedure 22. The Action Plan describes the scope of the review, its objectives and schedule, and key personnel involved in the review. The Council may provide guidance on how the review should be conducted.

H.3 Recommend International Management Activities

The Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) and Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) held their annual meetings in December 2020 and, among other things, adopted conservation measures for Pacific bluefin tuna. National Marine Fisheries Service is currently undertaking rulemaking for domestic implementation based on Council recommendations from the November 2020 meeting. The only relevant international meeting scheduled between the March and June Council meetings is the Fifth North Pacific Albacore Management Strategy Evaluation Workshop for Fishery Managers scheduled March 22-25.

H.4 Deep-Set Buoy Gear Permit Clarifications

At the November 2020 Council meeting NMFS submitted a report requesting clarification on several components of the proposed limited entry permitting system adopted through Council final action in September 2019 (see Attachment 1 for the Council motion). The HMSMT and HMSAS met on January 15 to discuss the issues needing clarifications and possible recommendations. The HMSMT submitted a report clarifying the issues the Council needs to address and offering its perspectives on how any such clarifications could be considered by the Council. In addition to the HMSMT report, Attachment 2 provides additional background on the development of the Council final action and the issues at hand. Attachment 3 is the associated FMP amendment language (Amendment 6) adopted by the Council in September 2019, incorporating changes the Council made during final action. Since one of the key issues needing resolution is Council intent about qualification criteria based on deep-set buoy gear exempted fishing permits (EFP), Attachment 4 is a blank sample EFP and associated Terms and Conditions. The layout of the form can help the Council better understand the use of terms related to permit qualification criteria.

H.5 Biennial Harvest Specifications and Management Measures

Through its September and November 2020 meetings the Council had the opportunity to review and comment on status determination criteria established by NMFS for the species managed under the HMS Fishery Management Plan (FMP). As of the November 2020 Council meeting, NMFS had been unable to report on the status determination criteria and resulting determinations for two stocks, Eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) bigeye tuna and EPO yellowfin tuna, because of issues related to the timing of IATTC meetings and the methodology used in new benchmark assessments prepared by IATTC scientific staff. While the procedural issues have been overcome, NMFS has sought guidance from the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) on the best method for using the stock assessment results to identify proxies for status determination criteria for these two stocks. NMFS staff met with the SSC HMS Subcommittee on February 4; the Subcommittee will provide recommendations to the full SSC at its March 2-3 meeting. A joint NMFS-Southwest Fisheries Science Center report, describing alternative methods for identifying proxies, is included in the advance briefing materials. The Council will consider SSC and other advisory body recommendations and recommend to NMFS how to proceed with identifying proxies.

C.2 Marine Planning Update

In 2020 the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration began developing methods to identify Aquaculture Opportunity Areas and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is in the process of identifying potential offshore wind energy sites. Agency representatives will give presentations during a February 24th online Habitat Committee meeting, which other advisory body members are encouraged to attend. The Council may consider how to facilitate public involvement in siting decisions, particularly in relation to Council stakeholders, and provide recommendations to the aforementioned agencies.

C.3 Legislative Matters

The Council's Legislative Committee will consider various Congressional proposals for reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and the January 22 Executive Order "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad." The latter includes provisions bearing on the activities of the Council and its stakeholders. The Legislative Committee will meet March 3 and report to the Council on March 11.

In addition to the previous topics, you may wish to provide comments on scheduling HMS topics at future Council meetings under Agenda Item C.6, Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning.

In addition to the enclosed briefing materials, you may obtain electronic copies of all the meeting materials on our website. We also post supplemental briefing materials on our website as they become available after distribution of the advance briefing book. Public comment is available only in electronic form through the Council's [e-portal](#). Visit the [March 2021 Meeting webpage](#) to access these materials.

As always, thank you for your service to the Council process.

KRD:kma

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.4: Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Items H: Highly Migratory Species Management
3. Agenda Items C: Administrative Matters
4. HMSAS and HMSMT Meeting Agendas
5. Informational Reports
6. Council Roster

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 12, 2021

TO: Salmon Advisory Subpanel, Salmon Technical Team, and Interested Persons

FROM: Robin Ehlke, Staff Officer

SUBJECT: March Council Meeting

In conjunction with the March Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) meeting, the Salmon Technical Team (STT) and the Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) will meet online. The STT will meet starting at 8 a.m. March 3 and continue through March 11; the SAS will meet starting at 8 a.m. March 3 and continue through March 10. The Council will begin the salmon agenda on March 4, and continue through March 11. Other topics of interest on the Council agenda include habitat, ecosystem, and Pacific halibut. There are also a few online meetings scheduled prior to the start of the March Council meetings to be aware of.

The Habitat Committee is holding an online meeting on February 24 to hear presentations from NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) and BOEM (Bureau of Ocean Energy and Management) on Aquaculture Opportunity Areas and offshore wind energy siting, respectively, as part of the Marine Planning Agenda Item C.2. Advisory Bodies (ABs) should have at least one representative attend who can then report to the entire AB. ABs are encouraged to develop supplemental reports for the March Council meeting. Meeting details will be posted on the Council website.

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) will be holding an online meeting on February 16. Although not on the Council's agenda in March, the GAP's agenda will include potential fishery management changes regarding non-trawl Rockfish Conservation Area management. Salmon trollers may be interested in sitting in on this GAP discussion. This topic is scheduled for Council consideration in April 2021. Meeting details are posted on the Council website.

The Salmon agenda item (Agenda Item E) will begin on March 4 with three topics for discussion. The first is a briefing from National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to the Council on salmon-related topics and a report from the Science Centers on current research (Agenda Item E.1). Next, the Council will further discuss a salmon reintroduction plan above Grand Coulee Dam, and consider a draft response letter to the project (Agenda Item E.2). Lastly, the Council will be briefed by the STT on the *Review of 2020 Ocean Salmon Fisheries* and *Preseason Report I: Stock Abundance Analysis for 2021 Ocean Salmon Fisheries* (Agenda Item E.3). The *Review of 2020 Ocean Salmon Fisheries* is scheduled to be posted on the Council website by February 16. The *Preseason Report I* is being compiled by the STT the week of February 16 and should be posted to the Council website by March 1.

The main salmon issue before the Council will be developing alternatives for modeling 2021 ocean fisheries. On March 5, the SAS will present the Council with recommendations for three alternatives (Agenda Item E.4). SAS representatives should review the *Guidance for Alternative Development and Assessment* (Agenda Item E.4, Attachment 1) and clearly identify their fishery priorities and engage in negotiations as necessary to resolve conflicts among fishery sectors and areas to arrive at cohesive and coordinated options. This Agenda Item is on the Council floor first thing on Day 2, so the SAS will need to finalize the report by the end of Day 1; this will likely require work to continue late into the evening of March 4.

After the SAS provides the preliminary 2021 management alternatives, the STT will then collate and analyze the alternatives as directed by the Council. The STT results will first be presented under Agenda Item E.5 on March 8. Working throughout the week the SAS, STT, and Council will refine the alternatives (Agenda Items E.6 and E.7), which are scheduled to be adopted for public review on March 11 (Agenda Item E.8). The Council will adopt the hearing officers for the three public salmon hearings scheduled for late March under Agenda Item E.9.

The Pacific halibut agenda items (Agenda Item F) are covered on March 4. The Council will hear reports on the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) annual meeting (Agenda Item F.1). Under Agenda Item F.2, the Council will consider incidental halibut retention limits in salmon troll and fixed gear sablefish fisheries. The SAS should be prepared to offer recommendations regarding alternatives for halibut retention in salmon troll fisheries that begin May 16, 2021 and for the 2022 season occurring prior to May 16. In addition, the SAS should be prepared to offer recommendations for any inseason adjustments to the halibut retention regulations for the 2021 season occurring prior to May 16. The Council will adopt for public review the incidental halibut retention alternatives in the commercial salmon fisheries and include them in the 2021 management alternatives package (Agenda Item E.8).

Habitat issues (Agenda Item D.1) will be discussed on March 4 prior to the salmon topics, and Groundfish Agenda Item G.2, 'Workload and New Management Measure Priorities' will be covered on March 9.

On March 10, ecosystem topics will be on the Council agenda. Each year at the March meeting, the Council receives the Annual State of the CCE Report to bring ecosystem information into the Council process in a succinct, straightforward format to assist decision-making through the consideration of ecosystem variability. The reports covering the California Current Ecosystem (CCE) and the Integrated Ecosystem Assessment are under Agenda Item I.1. Under agenda Item I.2 the Council will hear an update on the Climate and Communities Initiative and Agenda Item I.3 will cover an update on the 5-year review of the Fishery Ecosystem Plan. Please take the time to read the enclosed material on these three ecosystem topics so everyone is prepared for a discussion and ready to draft a statement if desired.

Legislative Matters are covered under Agenda Item C.3 on March 11. The Council will consider future Council meeting agendas and workload planning (Agenda Item C.5) on March 9. Also, Informational Reports will include a report from NOAA on the west coast fisheries impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Please take the necessary time needed to review and familiarize yourself with briefing materials thoroughly before the meeting. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for your assistance in the Council's salmon management process.

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.4 – Council Agenda
2. Agenda Item C.2, C.3, C.6 – Council Administrative Matters
3. Agenda Item D.1 – Habitat Issues
4. Agenda Items E.1 through E.9 – Salmon Management
5. Agenda Items F.1 - F.2 – Pacific Halibut Management
6. Agenda Item G.2 - Groundfish Workload and New Management Measure Priorities
7. Agenda Items I.1 - I.3 – Ecosystem Management
8. Informational Reports
9. Proposed SAS Agenda
10. Proposed STT Agenda
11. Proposed SSC Agenda
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 12, 2021

TO: Scientific and Statistical Committee

FROM: John DeVore, Staff Officer

SUBJECT: March 2021 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and its advisory bodies will meet March 2-5, 8-11, 2021 via webinar. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will meet on Tuesday, March 2 and Wednesday, March 3, starting at 8 a.m. each day. Your meeting materials are enclosed.

Instructions for how to connect to Advisory Body webinars will be posted on the Council's March 2021 Meeting webpage prior to the first day of the meeting. It is recommended that you use a computer headset to listen to the meeting, but you may use your telephone for the audio-only portion of the meeting.

Council Administrative Matters

SSC members are encouraged to attend a February 24 webinar on marine planning where staff from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management and NOAA Office of Aquaculture present their respective mapping portals and information that is most relevant to fisheries marine spatial planning. The Council may request a future SSC review of these mapping tools.

The SSC will review the nomination of Dr. Michele Zwartjes, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to replace Ms. Robin Bown on the Groundfish Endangered Species Workgroup.

The SSC will discuss future workload planning and will report to the Council on their plans under Agenda Item C.6.

The SSC will continue discussion with Dr. Jim Hastie and Dr. Sarah Shoffler, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Northwest and Southwest Fisheries Science Centers, respectively on developing a regional framework for deciding best scientific information available (BSIA). This framework is anticipated to be considered by the Council later this year in advance of a 2022 deadline to finalize the framework.

Salmon Management

The SSC will review the 2020 Fisheries and Summary of 2021 Stock Abundance Forecasts and recommend to the Council whether this report is the best scientific information available and can be used in modeling 2021 ocean salmon fisheries, specifying acceptable biological catches, and setting annual catch limits.

Highly Migratory Species Management

The SSC will be briefed on considerations for a NMFS BSIA determination for deciding bigeye and yellowfin tuna harvest specifications. New assessments for these species are structured in a probabilistic framework. NMFS and the Council are seeking guidance on how to use the framework for determining BSIA.

Ecosystem Management

The SSC will review the California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment State of the California Current report and provide their recommendations to the Council on the use and future content of this report. The SSC will also review a list of proposed topics for review by the SSC Ecosystem Subcommittee and identify priority topics for discussion next September.

Thank you all for your dedication to West Coast fishery management and the Council process.

JDD:kma

Enclosures include:

Council and SSC Administrative Matters

1. Agenda Item A.4 – Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item C.6 – Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning

Salmon Management

3. Agenda Item E.3 – Review of 2020 Fisheries and Summary of 2021 Stock Forecasts

Highly Migratory Species Management

4. Agenda Item H.5 – Biennial Harvest Specifications and Management Measures

Ecosystem Management

5. Agenda Item I.1 – California Current Ecosystem and Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) Report and Science Review Topics

SSC Agenda, Draft SSC Minutes, Closed Session, Etc.

1. March 2021 SSC Agenda
2. Draft November 2020 SSC Minutes

Page 3

3. Closed Session
4. Informational Reports
5. General Information and Council Roster

PFMC
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