

Northwest Fisheries Science Center

# Annual Guidance Memorandum for Fiscal Year 2022

September 2021



**NOAA**  
**FISHERIES**



*Each year, the NOAA Fisheries Northwest Fisheries Science Center develops an Annual Guidance Memorandum (AGM) to outline our priorities, policy, and budget context. We share this document with Center staff. Here you will find the executive summary for our Fiscal Year 2022 AGM. Because this is an internal Center document, some of the links and data that it references are unavailable. Please reach out to NWFSC's Director, Dr. Kevin Werner (kevin.werner@noaa.gov), if you are interested in seeing the full document.*

## Executive Summary

Fiscal Year 2022 will be a year of significant change—for the Center, for all of the National Marine Fisheries Service and NOAA under the new Administration, and beyond. It is so important that everyone at the Center make positive, constructive contributions to our collective efforts—mostly identified in this Annual Guidance Memorandum—in order to realize the best outcomes. This FY22 AGM lays out the Center Leadership Team's vision and priorities for October 2021–September 2022. It is divided into two main parts.

Priorities contains five major sections, including one for each of the four goals identified in the Center's Vivid Description of the Future:

1. Reimagining the Work and Work Life with COVID. We look forward to a future after COVID passes, recognizing that the patterns the endemic will take are hard to predict and will require us to quickly adapt to the ever-changing environment. We anticipate a future “hybrid” work environment, including a mix of onsite work, flexible schedules, and telework. This section suggests ways for you to stay engaged and positive while remaining resilient and safe, and commits the Center to conducting regular staff surveys, creating reintegration committees, streamlining operations, breaking down silos, providing opportunities for social connection and learning, and to celebrating our successes. Each of us has important roles to play and contributions to make in defining and realizing what our work life will look like this next year and beyond. We need everyone to engage in this.
2. Science in Service. The Center's top priority, in FY22 and every year, is maintaining our standards for high-quality science aligned with Center priorities. This means staying flexible, embracing change, and planning for the future, while considering the realities of our budget. We evaluated all 145 projects, and, acknowledging the quality of the research and the dedication of the scientists, identified several projects having lower alignment with the Center's top science priorities. These projects will be phased out over time, while others will be realigned with higher-priority efforts at the Center. With our research supporting all three goals in the NMFS Strategic Plan for 2019–22, we commit to continuing the sustainable fisheries, protected resources, and aquaculture science for which we are well known and respected.

3. Organizational Excellence. One of our realities is a heavier administrative burden for everyone. To help, we are streamlining our administrative and support services, in part through the creation of an Administrative Services Program that will work with scientific leadership and staff to find ways to operate efficiently and effectively within our rules-based governmental structure. We will rigorously assess and improve our organizational design across the Center, with a focus on the Fish Ecology Division. We welcome your input on the Center's organizational design throughout the first quarter of FY22.
4. State-of-the-Art Habitats for Science and People. We are committed to moving the Montlake campus to a new, leased facility, and progress will continue in FY22. We are also moving selected science portfolios to Manchester and Sand Point, where they will join existing Center teams in new and/or recapitalized facilities purpose-built for our science. Your input is needed to ensure that these new and repurposed facilities will be suited for our science needs, now and well into the future.
5. Partnership, Public Outreach, and Education. Communication, both internally and with external audiences, is vital to the Center's success, whether we are providing facts and logic to reporters, engaging with supporters and critics, or countering misinformation in the public sphere. Communication is also key to forming successful partnerships and collaborations—and this will be the focus of the executive program briefings in FY22. The Communications Program will continue to host Presentation Labs for all programs to help create and practice these briefings.

FY22 Policy, Budget, and Staffing Outlook provides background information to better understand the political, financial, and personnel constraints that guide our decision-making.

1. Policy. This section contains links to the Biden Administration Executive Orders, NOAA strategies, and NMFS strategic plans that dictate the major themes and focuses of our scientific endeavors.
2. Budget. While the Senate Appropriations Committee has not yet created a budget report, the House of Representatives has, and this section quotes extensively from the House mark that provides for over \$1 billion for NMFS operations, research, and facilities—almost \$80 million more than the FY21 level.
3. Staffing. Here we discuss the realities of the Center's annual labor costs, while reaffirming our commitment to supporting the Center's standing and ad hoc employee committees.

Finally, please note that [this Google folder](#) contains all of the files associated with this AGM.

We thank you for taking the time to read and react to this Annual Guidance Memorandum. The Leadership Team this year contains several new members committed to the Center's values of stewardship, service, integrity, collaboration, and community. We are excited about the possibilities as we continue to work toward the goals outlined by the Center in the Vivid Description of the Future and its Implementation Plan.