



Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Marc Gorelnik, Chair | Merrick J. Burden, Executive Director

December 23, 2021

RE: March 2022 Pacific Fishery Management Council Meeting

Dear Fellow Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) Members:

Thank you to all that were able to provide input into the question of how best to assemble for our March 2022 Council meeting. As indicated in Executive Director Burden's email to you all several days ago, there are several issues we are considering as we contemplate how best to assemble in March in order to facilitate good decision making, while helping to protect the health of our broader Council family in the face of our ongoing COVID situation.

We received many very considerate and well-thought-out responses to the question of whether and to what degree we should meet in person. Nearly everyone expressed a clear desire to meet in person in some form, though this was often tempered by the reality of our COVID situation and questions about how to practically pull together an in-person or hybrid setting. Some of you expressed a desire to have the entire Council meet in person, while others expressed a willingness to continue meeting remotely while various issues continue to play out.

As staff and I contemplated your responses and how best to proceed, we balanced many different issues including: the benefits to our process from meeting in person; practical and technical considerations related to meeting in-person, hybrid, and remotely; travel restrictions associated with different members of the Council family; budget implications; ongoing risks and uncertainties with COVID; and more. It became clear that a fully in-person meeting with Council and advisory bodies in March was impractical and not widely supported. A fully remote Council meeting, as we have done for the past two years, was practical, but also not popular in the responses we received. No Council member indicated an inability to travel to an in-person meeting in San Jose, California.

After considering all of your responses and consulting with staff, we have decided to call for a partial in-person meeting in March. It will be comprised of:

- In-person Council Members
 - In-person Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS)
 - In-person Salmon Technical Team (STT)
 - Accommodations for in-person Tribal co-managers and related salmon processes as requested
 - Other advisory bodies to meet remotely
 - Public Council participation to be remote
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The location for this meeting will be our originally scheduled hotel in San Jose (DoubleTree by Hilton San Jose). This meeting space appears to be the best candidate for our March meeting and is fortunately still available to us. We remain hopeful that our April meeting can be conducted fully in-person. That will depend on the state of the pandemic, of course. A partial in-person meeting in March is a step in that direction.

Like many of you, the COVID situation continues to weigh heavily on my mind as I envision us gathering together. To help mitigate the risks of COVID to all of us and to the Council family, Council and in-person advisory bodies will be expected to adhere to certain COVID protocols. We are continuing to contemplate and develop these protocols, but they will be communicated in a timely fashion. Staff have also indicated that they are continuing to explore various approaches that could accommodate a small number of remote participants in case one or more members of the STT, SAS, or similar cannot meet in person. Of course, should the COVID situation become untenable over the next couple of months we will cancel our in-person plan and revert back to a fully remote meeting.

Thank you once again for your input into this very important matter, and Happy Holidays.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc Gorelnik". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marc Gorelnik
Council Chair

MJB:rdd

Cc: SAS Members
STT Members
Council Staff
Mr. Craig Hess