



## Pacific Fishery Management Council

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7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101 Portland, OR 97220-1384  
Phone 503-820-2280 | Toll free 866-806-7204 | Fax 503-820-2299 | [www.pcouncil.org](http://www.pcouncil.org)  
Marc Gorelnik, Chair | Merrick J. Burden, Executive Director

### MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 16, 2023

TO: Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team and Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel

FROM: Jessi Doerpinghaus, Staff Officer

SUBJECT: March 2023 Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet in person March 5 – 10, 2023. The Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) and the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) are not scheduled to convene during the March Council meeting, and are instead meeting online prior to the Council meeting. The CPSMT will be having a webinar on March 2, from 1 p.m.- 4 p.m. and the CPSAS on March 3, from 1 p.m.- 3 p.m. Although there are no CPS-related agenda items in March, several topics are of interest to the CPSMT and CPSAS. Major topics for discussion at this meeting are below. For more detailed information, please refer to the situation summaries in the Briefing Book materials.

#### **Marine Planning (G.3)**

The Council's Ad Hoc Marine Planning Committee met February 2, 2023 to discuss an update on suitability modeling being conducted by the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to support identification of offshore wind energy in the Oregon Call Areas and the 2022 lease auction for offshore areas off California. The CPSMT and CPSAS should consider these issues in the context of potential effects to CPS fisheries and coastal communities.

#### **California Current Ecosystem Annual Report (H.1)**

The Council's Fishery Ecosystem Plan calls for an annual report to the Council on status and trends in the California Current Ecosystem. The California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (CCIEA), composed of staff from the National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest and Southwest Fisheries Science Centers and West Coast Region, produced the 2022-2023 Annual State of the California Current Ecosystem Report (Agenda Item H.1.a, CCIEA Team Report 1). Drs. Chris Harvey and Andrew Leising will present an overview of the report.

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**Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiatives (H.2)**

In September 2022, the Council adopted the Initiative on Ecosystem and Climate Information for Species, Fisheries, and Fishery Management Plans as its next ecosystem initiative. At this meeting the Council and its advisory bodies will review the Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup's (EWG) workplan and provide any guidance and feedback. See Agenda Item H.2.a, EWG Report 1.

**Council Operating Procedures and Membership Appointments (G.5)**

In November 2022, Executive Director Merrick Burden updated the Council on two harassment policies adopted by the Council Coordinating Committee. The Council tasked Council staff with incorporating these changes into our Council Operating Procedures. This is the first of two meetings in which the proposed revisions will be brought forward to the Council and its advisory bodies for comment.

JKD:ael

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.3 – Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item B – Open Comment Period
3. Agenda Item H – Ecosystem
4. Agenda Item G – Administrative Matters

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### MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 17, 2023  
TO: Enforcement Consultants  
FROM: Jim Seger Staff Officer  
SUBJECT: March 2023 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet in person [March 4-10, 2023](#) at DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Seattle Airport, 18740 International Blvd, Seattle, WA 98188 (advisory bodies meet in person or online, depending on the advisory body). All meetings are open to the public and there will be an opportunity each day for public comment.

The Enforcement Consultants (EC) will meet in the Olympic 2 Room on Saturday, March 4 starting at 2 p.m.; and the EC will have additional sessions as needed, located as follows: Sunday, March 5 through Tuesday, March 7, Olympic 2 Room; and Wednesday, March 8 through Thursday, March 9, online. Online meeting information will be posted on the Council's [March 2023 Meeting webpage](#).

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

A note on Membership, Appointments and Council Operating Procedures (Agenda Item G.5) on your agenda. The Council previously considered the Council Coordination Committee harassment policies and directed staff to incorporate those policies into our COPs and other documents as appropriate. In response, staff have done so and have drafted a paper that contains possible next steps. Comment on this item is welcome, per the notes on the EC Agenda.

JLS:rdd

Enclosures:

1. EC Agenda
  2. EAS Agenda
  3. EWG Agenda
  4. GAP Agenda
  5. GMT Agenda
  6. HC Agenda
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7. HMSAS Agenda
8. HMSMT Agenda
9. SAS Agenda
10. STT Agenda
11. SSC Agenda
12. Agenda Item A – Call to Order
13. Agenda Item C – Pacific Halibut
14. Agenda Item D – Salmon
15. Agenda Item F – Groundfish Management
16. Agenda Item G – Administrative Matters
17. Agenda Item I – Highly Migratory Species Management
18. Informational Reports
19. General Information and Council Roster

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### MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 17, 2023

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

FROM: Dr. Kit Dahl, Staff Officer

SUBJECT: March 2023 Council meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet March 5-10 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Seattle Airport. The Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel (EAS) will meet **in person** on Sunday and Monday, March 5-6. The Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) will meet **in person on** Monday March 6. Ecosystem topics are on the Council agenda on Tuesday, March 7.

Summaries of Ecosystem topics and other items of interest on the Council agenda are listed below.

#### H.1 California Current Ecosystem Annual Report

The California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Team (CCIEA) has produced the 2022-2023 California Current Ecosystem Status Report (ESR) and appendices (Agenda Item H.1.a, CCIEA Team Report 1). There will be an [online briefing](#) by Drs. Chris Harvey and Andrew Leising on this year's ESR on March 1 at 10 a.m. You are encouraged to attend.

#### H.2 Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiative Workplan

In September 2022, the Council adopted the *Ecosystem and Climate Information Initiative for Species, Fisheries, and Fishery Management Plans Initiative* (shorthanded as the Ecosystem and Climate Information Initiative) as the next initiative to work on (described in the Fishery Ecosystem Plan [Initiatives Appendix](#), Initiative 2.1). The Council directed the EWG to develop a work plan to implement this initiative for the Council to consider at this meeting. The EWG has submitted Agenda Item H.2.a, EWG Report 1 containing its proposed work plan. The EWG will conduct an [online briefing](#) on work plan on March 1 at 1 p.m. You are encouraged to attend.

#### G.3 Marine Planning

The Marine Planning Committee (MPC) met February 2, 2023, to hear presentations and discuss topics including suitability modeling related to offshore wind energy planning, an update on

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National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Aquaculture Opportunity Areas, upcoming events and comment opportunities, and other topics. The MPC Report (Agenda Item G.3.a, MPC Report 1) provides further details on offshore wind energy as well as updates on other related issues.

I have also included Membership, Appointments and Council Operating Procedures (Agenda Item G.5) on your agenda. The Council previously considered the Council Coordination Committee harassment policies and directed staff to incorporate those policies into our COPs and other documents as appropriate. In response, staff have done so and have drafted a paper that contains possible next steps. Comment on this item is welcome. Finally, as usual, I have included Future Council Agenda and Workload Planning (Agenda Item G.6) in case you wish to comment on the scheduling of ecosystem items on future agendas.

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 2023 Meeting webpage](#) to access these materials.

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

KRD:rdd

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.3: Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Items G: Administrative Matters
3. Agenda Items H: Ecosystem Management
4. EAS and EWG Meeting Agendas
5. Informational Reports
6. Hotel Information and Council Roster

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### MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 17, 2023

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

FROM: Mr. Todd Phillips, Groundfish Staff Officer

SUBJECT: March 2023 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet in person with live streaming from [March 5 through March 10](#), 2023 at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, Seattle Airport, 18740 International Blvd., Seattle, WA 98188. The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) will meet in the Cascade 13 and Evergreen 2 rooms, respectively. Their sessions will convene on Saturday, March 4, 2023, at 8:00 a.m. Pacific Time and adjourn on Wednesday, March 8, 2023. All meetings are open to the public and at least one opportunity for public comment has been scheduled for each meeting day. Other Ancillary meetings will be conducted via a combination of online and in-person formats as noted in the Schedule of Ancillary Meetings in the Detailed Agenda (A.3). Instructions for joining online meetings will be posted to the [March Council meeting web page](#). Please see the Council website ([www.pcouncil.org](http://www.pcouncil.org)) for more information.

The Council will consider several important groundfish agenda items and related matters of interest at this meeting. The briefing book materials attached to this memorandum provide detailed information for these items on the Council's March 2023 agenda. The following agenda items summarized below may be of particular interest to the GMT and GAP.

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

The Council is scheduled to consider options for incidental harvest amounts of Pacific halibut recommendations in the salmon troll fishery and adopt final harvest amounts for the primary fixed gear fishery for sablefish north of Point Chehalis. This action is required to allow incidental harvest while assuring quotas are not exceeded.

#### **F.2 Implementation of the 2023 Pacific Whiting Fishery Under the U.S./Canada Agreement**

The annual stock assessment for Pacific whiting was conducted by the Scientific Review Group in the [U.S./Canada Pacific Whiting Treaty Process](#). The Joint Management Committee met February 28 – March 2 to formalize their recommendations for the coastwide (U.S. and Canada)

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total allowable catch. The Council will be informed of the outcomes from this meeting and consider any necessary actions regarding the 2023 Pacific whiting U.S. annual catch limit.

### **F.3 Sablefish Pot Gear Marking – Feasibility Report**

In November 2022, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), in coordination with Oregon Sea Grant, held a workshop to solicit input from the commercial fishing industry regarding marking of sablefish pot gear off the U.S. West Coast. This workshop was held in response to the terms and conditions of the 2020 [Humpback whale](#) biological opinion. A summary report for the workshop and comments submitted by the public in response to the summary report are provided in Agenda Item F.3.a, NMFS Reports 1 and 2, respectively. In response, NMFS provided a summary and recommendations for further considerations as well as the potential for expanding the scope of Council-managed fisheries for which these measures would apply (NMFS Report 3).

### **F.4 Non-Trawl Area Management – Final Preferred Alternative**

The Council is scheduled to adopt their Final Preferred Alternative for this agenda item. The Council selected their Preliminary Preferred Alternatives in September 2022. The draft Environmental Assessment (F.4, Attachment 1) details the management measures and impacts of this action. This document also includes revisions to Alternative 1 to address elements already included in the 2023-2024 harvest specifications and other updates.

### **F.5 Electronic Monitoring Program Changes – Final Preferred Alternative**

The Council is considering changes to the current requirements and deadlines in the Federal regulations and the Electronic Monitoring (EM) Program Manual. Changes to current regulatory deadlines may provide more flexibility to EM video review providers and reduce costs to EM participants. In addition, the regulations need clarity regarding the process to evaluate and summarize EM video review data via the West Coast EM Program Manual.

### **F.6 Final Assessment Methodologies**

The Council will be briefed by the Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) regarding assessment methodologies. The SSC Groundfish Subcommittee drafted a revised version of the Accepted Practices Guidelines for Groundfish Stock Assessments in 2023 and 2024 document from their December 2022 meeting (Agenda Item F.6.a, SSC Groundfish Subcommittee Report 1). This document will supplement the Terms of Reference for the Groundfish Stock Assessment Review Process. The Council will review and approve the accepted practices, as appropriate.

### **F.7 Amendment 31 Groundfish Stock Definitions**

The Council is considering defining and delineating stocks for 12 groundfish species. Under this agenda item, the Council will review the analysis (Agenda Item F.7, Attachment 1) of the range of alternatives adopted at their November 2022 meeting. Council action is to refine the range of alternatives and select a preliminary preferred alternative, as appropriate.

### **F.8 Workload and New Management Measure Priorities**

This agenda item provides an annual opportunity for the Council to consider future groundfish workload and revise its priorities. Interested stakeholders should attend the relevant advisory body discussions, as well as the Council session, to present new management measure proposals for consideration. The GMT and the GAP may revise and/or update the existing list of proposed management measures for groundfish fisheries (see Agenda Item F.8, GMT Report 1). The Council may adopt the updated list and prioritize management measures for development in light of existing commitments.

### **F.9 Inseason Adjustments – Final Action**

This agenda item will consider progress to date of the groundfish fisheries as well as routine inseason adjustments to the 2023 fisheries, as necessary, to achieve conservation objectives. It is expected the GMT will provide information related to 2022 fishery performance, including incidental salmon take in groundfish fisheries as well as mortality impacts of rebuilding groundfish species.

### **G.3 Marine Planning**

The Council is scheduled to receive a report from the Marine Planning Committee on current offshore wind energy issues. Additionally, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management is expected to discuss recent offshore wind energy developments with the Council sites. The Council's [Marine Planning](#) resource webpage is available on the Council website for more information.

### **G.5 Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures (COP)**

The Council will review harassment procedures and policies that will be incorporated into Council policy and procedures under this agenda item. In November 2022, Executive Director Merrick Burden updated the Council on two harassment policies adopted by the Council Coordinating Committee. The Council tasked staff to incorporate those policies into the COPs and other documents, as appropriate. In response, staff have drafted a report to address this issue. Comment on this item is welcome. This is the first of two meetings in which the proposed revisions will be brought forward to the Council and its advisory bodies for comment.

### **H.1 2021-2023 California Current Ecosystem Status Report and Science Review Topics**

The Council is scheduled to review the 2022-2023 California Current Ecosystem Status Report. 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.

### **H.2 Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) Initiative Work Plan**

The Council will discuss the Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup work plan for developing the FEP Initiative on Ecosystem and Climate Information for Species, Fisheries, and Fishery Management Plan. This plan includes discussion on developing risk tables for groundfish populations regarding stock assessment inputs, population dynamics, and ecosystem indicators. These tables could potentially be used by the Council when considering groundfish harvest specifications.

### **Other Items**

The following are additional pre-Council meeting briefings that may be of interest:

- The GMT will host its pre-March Council meeting [webinar](#) to discuss items on the Council's March agenda on February 22, 2023 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- The Ad Hoc Marine Planning Committee will hold a [webinar](#) from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on February 23.
- The National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Team will hold a [webinar](#) to discuss the contents of the 2022-2023 California Current Ecosystem Status Report on March 1 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- The Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup will hold a [webinar](#) regarding the Fishery Ecosystem Plan on March 1 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

This mailing includes the enclosures listed below. Please review these briefing materials in advance to facilitate an efficient meeting week. Please note that the Council will continue to encourage participants to obtain briefing book materials via our website. Printed materials may not be available at the meeting.

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

TMP:acl

Enclosures include:

1. Agenda Item A.4 – Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item B.1 – Open Comment Items
3. Agenda Item C – Pacific Halibut
4. Agenda Item F – Groundfish Management
5. Agenda Item G – Administrative
6. Agenda Item H – 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 17, 2023

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 2023 Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet March 5-10 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Seattle Airport. Both the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) and the Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) are scheduled to meet **online** Tuesday through Thursday, March 7-9. HMS topics are on the Council agenda on Thursday, March 9. Meeting information will be posted on the Council's [March 2023 Meeting webpage](#) including instructions for joining the online meetings.

Summaries of HMS topics and other items of interest on the Council agenda are listed below.

#### I.1 National Marine Fisheries Service Report

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

#### I.2 International Management Activities

The Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Nineteenth Regular Session occurred November 27-December 3, 2022. A staff summary of meeting outcomes is available in the briefing materials (Attachment 2). National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) hosted a U.S. stakeholder virtual public meeting to discuss North Pacific albacore management on February 15, 2023, and will likely report on the results of that meeting. The progress of negotiations over the U.S.-Canada Albacore Treaty may be reported.

#### I.3 Drift Gillnet Fishery Hard Caps – Update

A draft analysis of the proposed action and alternatives was presented to the Council in November 2022. At that time the Council narrowed the range of alternatives and indicated its intention to take final action on the proposal, choosing a preferred alternative, in June 2023. It requested the

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HMSMT provide an update on further analysis of the narrowed range of alternatives at this meeting. However, the Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act was enacted in December 2022. It amends the Magnuson-Stevens Act so that the use of drift gillnet fishing gear will be prohibited within five years of enactment (i.e., December 2027) and directs NMFS to implement a transition program for fishery participants. This substantially affects the context of the proposed action and may lead the Council to adopt another course of action.

### G.2 Report of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS)

The ONMS will update the Council on current activities. This is largely an informational item.

### G.3 Marine Planning

The Marine Planning Committee met February 2, 2023, to hear presentations and discuss topics including suitability modeling related to offshore wind (OSW) energy planning, an update on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Aquaculture Opportunity Areas, upcoming events and comment opportunities, and other topics. The MPC Report (Agenda Item G.3.a, MPC Report 1) provides further details on offshore wind energy as well as updates on other related issues.

I have also included Membership, Appointments and Council Operating Procedures (Agenda Item G.5) on your agenda, because the Council will discuss implementation of the Council Coordinating Committee policy on harassment and discrimination. Since these policies will apply to Council committees, comment is sought. Finally, as usual, I have included Future Council Agenda and Workload Planning (Agenda Item G.6) in case you wish to comment on the scheduling of HMS items on future agendas.

Two ecosystem items are on the Council agenda; however, because they are taken up early on the first day of your meeting, you will not have time to draft reports for them. Two online briefings are scheduled for March 1 (starting at 10 a.m., on [the California Current Ecosystem Status Report](#) and at 1 p.m. on [the new Ecosystem and Climate Information Initiative](#)). You are encouraged to listen to these briefings.

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 2023 Meeting webpage](#) to access these materials.

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

KRD:rdd

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.3: Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Items G: Administrative Matters

3. Agenda Items I: Highly Migratory Species Management
4. HMSAS and HMSMT Meeting Agendas
5. Informational Reports
6. General Information and Council Roster

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### MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 17, 2023

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

FROM: Robin Ehlke, Staff Officer

SUBJECT: March Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet in person from [March 5 through March 10](#), 2023 at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, Seattle Airport, 18740 International Blvd. Seattle, WA 98188. The Salmon Technical Team (STT) and the Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) will also meet in person. The STT will meet in the Cascade 3 room at 8 a.m. daily from March 2 through March 10. The SAS will meet in person in the Cascade 5 room at 8 a.m. daily from March 2 through March 9. All meetings are open to the public and at least one opportunity for public comment has been scheduled for each meeting day.

The Council will consider several important groundfish agenda items and related matters of interest at this meeting. The briefing book materials attached to this memorandum provide detailed information for these items on the Council's March 2023 agenda. The following agenda items summarized below may be of particular interest to the STT and SAS. Please note that the Council will continue to encourage participants to obtain briefing book materials via our website. Printed materials may not be available at the meeting.

The Council will discuss salmon agenda items each day of the March meeting. 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. You are encouraged to attend these online meetings to get an understanding of the topics and prepare for informed discussions when meeting in person.

- The Ad Hoc Marine Planning Committee will hold a [webinar](#) from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on February 23
  - The National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Team will hold a [webinar](#) to discuss the contents of the 2022-2023 California Current Ecosystem Status Report on March 1 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
  - The Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup will hold a [webinar](#) regarding the Fishery Ecosystem Plan on March 1 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
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The Salmon agenda item (Agenda Item D) will begin on Sunday, March 5 (Day 1) with two topics for discussion. The first is a briefing from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to the Council on salmon-related topics and a report from the Science Centers on current research (Agenda Item D.1). Next, the Council will be briefed by the STT on the *Review of 2022 Ocean Salmon Fisheries* and *Preseason Report I: Stock Abundance Analysis for 2023 Ocean Salmon Fisheries* (Agenda Item D.2). The *Review of 2022 Ocean Salmon Fisheries* is scheduled to be posted on the Council website by February 14. The *Preseason Report I* is being compiled by the STT the week of February 21 and should be posted to the Council website by March 2.

The main salmon issue before the Council will be developing alternatives for modeling 2023 ocean fisheries. On March 6, the SAS will present the Council with recommendations for three alternatives (Agenda Item D.3). SAS representatives should review the *Guidance for Alternative Development and Assessment* (Agenda Item D.3, 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 Monday, March 6, so best practice would be to finalize the SAS report by mid-day on Sunday March 5 so that it can be processed and posted by the Secretariat prior to close of business.

After the SAS provides the preliminary 2023 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 D.4 on Tuesday, March 7. Working throughout the week the SAS, STT, and Council will refine the alternatives (Agenda Items D.5 and D.6), which are scheduled to be adopted for public review on Friday, March 10 (Agenda Item D.7). The Council will adopt the hearing officers for the three public salmon hearings scheduled for late March under Agenda Item D.8.

The Pacific halibut agenda items (Agenda Item C) are covered on Sunday, March 5. The Council will hear reports on the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) annual meeting (Agenda Item C.1). Under Agenda Item C.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, 2023, and for the 2024 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 occurring prior to May 16, 2023. The Council will adopt for public review the incidental halibut retention alternatives in the commercial salmon fisheries and include them in the 2023 management alternatives package (Agenda Item D.7).

Habitat issues (Agenda Item E.1) will be discussed on Sunday, March 5. The Habitat committee is meeting in person March 4-5 so please check their agenda for any salmon related items of interest. The Conservation representative from the SAS may want to attend to gather information and relay to the SAS.

On Tuesday March 7, ecosystem topics (Agenda Item H) will be on the Council floor. The Council will hear from the California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (CCIEA) Team on their 2022-2023 California Current Ecosystem Status Report (Agenda Item H.1). 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. Also on March 7, the Council will discuss the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) Initiatives Work Plan (Agenda Item H.2) and hear a report from the Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG) on the work plan for developing the Fishery

Ecosystem Plan (FEP) Initiative on Ecosystem and Climate Information for Species, Fisheries, and Fishery Management Plan. As noted above, there are two online briefings on these topics so please attend these meetings come prepared to discuss these topics and draft a statement if needed.

I have also included Membership, Appointments and Council Operating Procedures (COPs) (Agenda Item G.5) on your agenda. The Council previously considered the Council Coordination Committee harassment policies and directed staff to incorporate those policies into our COPs and other documents as appropriate. In response, staff have done so and have drafted a paper that contains possible next steps. Comment on this item is welcome.

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 commitment to the Council's salmon management process.

RDE:rdd

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A – Council Agenda
2. Agenda Item C – Pacific Halibut Management
3. Agenda Item D – Salmon Management
4. Agenda Item E – Habitat Issues
5. Agenda Item G – Council Administrative Matters
6. Agenda Item H.– Ecosystem Management
7. Informational Reports
8. Proposed SAS Agenda
9. Proposed STT Agenda
10. Proposed SSC Agenda
11. Proposed Habitat Committee Agenda
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### MEMORANDUM

DATE: February 15, 2023  
TO: Scientific and Statistical Committee  
FROM: Marlene A. Bellman, Staff Officer  
SUBJECT: March 2023 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet March 8-14 at the DoubleTree by Hilton, Seattle Airport, 18740 International Blvd. in Seattle, Washington. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will meet **in person** in the Cascade 12 room on Saturday, March 4 and Sunday, March 5, starting at 8 a.m. each day. Your meeting materials are enclosed.

This meeting is being conducted in person with a web broadcast to provide the opportunity for remote public comment. In the event an outage occurs, or technical issues arise that impact the experience of remote attendees, we will attempt to resolve them, but we cannot guarantee that they will be resolved satisfactorily.

Instructions for how to connect to Council and Advisory Body meetings will be posted on the Council's [March 2023 Meeting webpage](#) prior to the first day of the meeting. Upon entering the meeting remotely, please modify your entry to reflect your full identification (full name and affiliation). This additional information helps participants identify speakers during public comment.

#### SSC Administrative Matters

On Saturday March 4, the SSC meeting will be called to order by the SSC Chair and new members or designated alternates will be introduced. Next, the SSC will receive a briefing from the Council's Executive Director, Merrick Burden, to provide clarification on Council direction, informational updates, etc. The SSC will finalize their March 2023 meeting agenda and the November 2022 meeting minutes. Subcommittee assignments will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

#### Council Administrative Matters

Under membership appointments and Council Operating Procedures (COPs), the SSC will have a closed session to review the nomination of Dr. Michael Hinton for the vacant SSC at-large seat and Dr. Cheryl Barnes for the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife SSC seat, as well as Ms. Cassandra Leaman for the vacant Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife seat on the Model

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Evaluation Workgroup and the Salmon Technical Team. These nominations are as of briefing book publication; the SSC may be asked to review any vacant management or technical team seats which come in before the March Council meeting. The SSC recommendations will be offered during the Council Closed Session on Sunday, March 5.

The Council previously considered the Council Coordination Committee (CCC) harassment policies (two model policies under Agenda Item C.1, November 2022) and directed staff to incorporate those policies into our COPs and other documents as appropriate. In response, staff have done so and have drafted a paper that contains possible next steps. Comment on this item is welcome, under Agenda Item G.5. scheduled on Friday March 10.

The SSC will discuss future workload planning matters and report to the Council on this matter under Agenda Item G.6. scheduled on Friday, March 10. Future workload planning will include SSC participation in the upcoming groundfish stock assessment cycle for 2023-24. Coordination of pre-assessment data workshops and Stock Assessment Review panels will be communicated, and any further SSC guidance is encouraged. The SSC statement regularly provides a table with important meeting dates and timelines.

In addition, the SSC will be briefed on the status of the Research and Data Needs review cycle planned for 2023. Council direction provided at the September 2022 meeting will require discussion and SSC guidance on implementation for next steps regarding database development and the process for new proposals, review of proposals, and priority ranking. The SSC is encouraged to clarify any protocol, expectations, and SSC tasks for the tentative timeline.

### Salmon Management

Each year in March, the Council reviews the Stock Assessment and Fisheries Evaluation (SAFE) document (Review of Ocean Salmon Fisheries) and stock abundance projections (Preseason Report I), scheduled under Agenda Item D.2. The SSC will review the forecasts for stocks that are required to have annual catch limits (ACLs) specified and determine if the forecasts represent the best scientific information available for use in modeling 2023 ocean salmon fisheries, specifying acceptable biological catches (ABCs), and setting ACLs. Three stocks are required to have ACLs specified – Sacramento River fall Chinook, Klamath River fall Chinook, and Willapa Bay natural coho. Note that any advanced version of these forecasts is a draft, which will be updated shortly before the SSC convenes. The Salmon Technical Team (STT) will be available for discussion or questions.

### Groundfish Management

The SSC will review an analysis of the range of alternatives and considerations for amending the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP) to define stocks for purposes of making status determinations and will report their recommendations to the Council under Agenda Item F.7 on Wednesday, March 8. The SSC review of the analytical document will include its scientific sufficiency for the Council to use in decision-making, consider the scientific information pertaining to the structure or delineation of the species under consideration, and any key scientific factors for the Council to consider when defining stocks within the FMP. Additionally, the Northwest Fisheries Science Center prepared a report for SSC review that details potential methods for determining the ABC and ACLs for stocks with multiple sub-area assessment models. The

Council is scheduled to refine the range of alternatives and select a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA), as appropriate. The Groundfish Management Team will be meeting with the SSC to hear a presentation on the analytical document provided in the Briefing Book.

The SSC Groundfish Subcommittee will present results from their December 2022 meeting which produced a draft of the Accepted Practices Guidelines for Groundfish Stock Assessments in 2023 and 2024 document. This document is intended to supplement the Council's Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Groundfish Stock Assessment Review Process. The SSC will provide their review, any suggested modifications, and recommendations to the Council under Agenda Item F.6 on Tuesday, March 7.

### Ecosystem Management

The SSC will review the California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) 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. A presentation will be made to the SSC by members of the NOAA California Current IEA Team. The SSC will provide their comments and recommendations under Agenda Item H.1 scheduled for Tuesday, March 7.

The Council will consider the workplan for the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) Ecosystem and Climate Information for Species, Fisheries, and Fishery Management Plans Initiative proposed by the Ad Hoc Ecosystem Workgroup (Agenda Item H.2.a, EWG Report 1). The EWG is proposing to trial a risk table approach to integrate ecosystem information into the groundfish harvest specifications setting process. Although early in the process, advice from the SSC on the proposed approach would be useful at this stage before further efforts are undertaken. The SSC will provide their comments and recommendations on the FEP Initiative under Agenda Item H.2.

### Highly Migratory Species Management

Drift gillnet hard caps are under Council consideration and the SSC plans to hear a follow-up presentation on a bootstrap simulation model used to analyze the range of alternatives to establish hard-caps for high priority protected species (HPPS) in the large-mesh drift gillnet fishery, from Dr. Steve Stohs (National Marine Fisheries Service Southwest Fisheries Science Center; by remote presentation). Specifically, the SSC will report whether their recommendations on improvements to reporting and simulation results for decision-making purposes provided in their November 2022 report have been addressed ([Agenda Item G.3.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1, Nov 2022](#)). The SSC will provide recommendations to the Council under Agenda Item I.3 on Thursday, March 9.

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

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Enclosures include:

### Council and SSC Administrative Matters

1. Agenda Item A.3 – Council Meeting Agenda

2. Agenda Item G.5 – Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures
3. Agenda Item G.6 – Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning

Salmon Management

4. Agenda Item D.2 – Review of 2022 Fisheries and Summary of 2023 Stock Forecasts

Groundfish Management

5. Agenda Item F.6 – Final Assessment Methodologies
6. Agenda Item F.7 – Amendment 31 Groundfish Stock Definitions

Ecosystem Management

7. Agenda Item H.1 – California Current Ecosystem Annual Report
8. Agenda Item H.2 – Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiative Workplan

Highly Migratory Species Management

9. Agenda Item I.3 – Drift Gillnet Hard Caps Update

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

10. March 2023 SSC Agenda
11. Draft November 2022 SSC Minutes
12. Closed Session
13. Informational Reports
14. General Information and Council Roster