



Pacific Fishery Management Council

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

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 21, 2023

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

FROM: Jessi Doerpinghaus, Staff Officer

SUBJECT: April 2023 Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet in person from April 2-7, 2023. The Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team (CPSMT) and the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) will meet in person on April 3 and 4. The Council is scheduled to take up CPS matters on April 4 and 5 and the majority of the CPSMT and CPSAS will likely attend those Council sessions. As time allows, both advisory bodies may reconvene after the Council has completed those agenda items. Major topics for discussion at this meeting are below. For more detailed information, please refer to the situation summaries in the Briefing Book materials.

National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Report (H.1)

NMFS will provide a regulatory update and the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) will provide an update on science center activities, including a report on the Pacific Sardine stock structure workshop held in November 2022.

Exempted Fishing Permits for 2023-2024 – Final Action (H.2)

There were three proposals for exempted fishing permit activities adopted for public review at the November 2023 meeting which are all designed to support stock survey work. If approved by the Council, the proponents will submit their applications to NMFS.

Fishery Management Plan (FMP) Housekeeping – Final Action (H.3)

In November 2022, the Council adopted [FMP housekeeping changes](#) for public review which are provided in Attachment 1 (strikeout/underline) and Attachment 2 (clean version). The CPSMT, NMFS staff, and Council staff have reviewed those changes and offer some revisions in Attachment 3 (strikeout/underline) and Attachment 4 (clean version). Rationale for the changes can be found in CPSMT Report 1.

Sardine Harvest Specifications and Management Measures for 2023-2024- Final Action (H.4)

In April 2022, the Council supported the recommendation of its advisory bodies and delayed the proposed benchmark assessment for Pacific sardine (originally scheduled for 2023) until the completion of the stock structure workshop held in late 2023. The CPS FMP allows limited harvest in the live bait and small-scale fishing sectors while the stock is overfished. The CPSAS and CPSMT should be prepared to make recommendations on incidental and live bait harvest for the 2023 – 2024 fishing year.

Essential Fish Habitat- Range of Alternatives/Preliminary Preferred Alternatives (H.5)

In June 2022, the Council adopted the Phase 2 Action Plan for CPS EFH. Over the winter, the CPSMT, SWFSC, NMFS, and Council staff developed a proposed EFH appendix and an alternatives document for the Council to review and consider. There are two main alternatives for the Council to consider: Alternative 1 is inclusive of the elements in the new EFH Appendix, such as updated identification and description, non-fishing impacts, etc. Alternative 2 is specific to market squid Habitat Areas of Particular Concern. The Council's action at this meeting is to adopt a range of alternatives and propose any modifications to the alternatives. The Council may select a Preliminary Preferred Alternative if they wish. Final action is scheduled for June 2023.

Equity and Environmental Justice (F.1)

In 2022, NMFS solicited comments on its [draft Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy](#) (EEJ). Since then, it has been working to finalize the national strategy and has begun making plans for development of a regional EEJ implementation plan. Part of that process will involve community engagement plans. At this meeting, NMFS will update the Council on its process, the Council will receive a staff report on what the Council already does that relates to EEJ concerns (Agenda Item F.1, Attachment 1), and the Council will be asked to provide guidance on further responding to EEJ concerns. The CPSMT and CPSAS will discuss and finalize any statements on their webinars prior to the April Council meeting.

Council Process and Efficiencies (F.2)

In September 2022, the Council directed staff to return with a more detailed examination of the tradeoffs associated with meeting formats resulting from an initial staff white paper provided by Council staff at that meeting. Attachment 1 under this agenda item provides an overview of the tradeoffs associated with in person, hybrid, and other styles of meetings. The CPSMT and CPSAS should consider this white paper and the questions posed in the white paper on the future of meeting formats. The CPSMT and CPSAS will discuss and finalize any statements on their webinars prior to the April Council meeting.

Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures (COP) (F.7)

In November 2022, the CPSMT recommended to the Council that COP 9 be updated to reflect the correct assessment type in the assessment schedule for Pacific mackerel and that the timing of the Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation document be revised to once per year. Additionally, edits related to Amendment 20 on management categories are included for Council consideration. Council staff has provided a copy of COP 9 with the proposed changes. The CPSMT and CPSAS should review those changes and offer a recommendation.

JKD:rdd

Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A.3 – Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item B.1 – Open Comment
3. Agenda Item F – Administrative
4. Agenda Item H – Coastal Pelagic Species
5. CPSMT Agenda
6. CPSAS Agenda
7. Informational Reports
8. General Information and Council Roster

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 21, 2023
TO: Enforcement Consultants
FROM: Jim Seger Staff Officer
SUBJECT: April 2023 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet in person April 1-7, 2023 at the Crowne Plaza Foster City – San Mateo, 1221 Chess Drive, Foster City, CA 94404 (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) meeting will be held via webinar*** Saturday, April 1, at 9 a.m. and the EC will have additional sessions as needed on an ad hoc basis Sunday, April 2 through Thursday, April 6.

Instructions for how to connect to Advisory Body webinars will be posted on the Council's [April 2023 Meeting](#) webpage prior to the first day of the meeting. ***Upon entering the meeting, please modify your entry on the participant list to reflect your full identification (full name and agency acronym).*** This additional information helps participants identify speakers in the webinar. 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.

Enclosed are materials for items on the EC Agenda and additional items that might be of interest to you.

JLS:rdd

Enclosures:

1. EC Agenda
 2. BC Agenda
 3. CPSAS Agenda
 4. CPSMT Agenda
 5. GAP Agenda
 6. GMT Agenda
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7. HC Agenda
8. LC Agenda
9. SAS Agenda
10. STT Agenda
11. SSC Agenda
12. Agenda Item A – Call to Order
13. Agenda Item D – Pacific Halibut
14. Agenda Item E – Salmon
15. Agenda Item F – Administrative Matters
16. Agenda Item G – Groundfish Management
17. Agenda Item H – Coastal Pelagic Species Management
18. Informational Reports
19. General Information and Council Roster

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03/15/23



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MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 21, 2023

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

FROM: Brett Wiedoff, Groundfish Staff Officer

SUBJECT: April 2023 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) [April 2023 meeting](#) will be held in-person with live streaming from April 2 through April 7, 2023 at the Crowne Plaza, 1221 Chess Drive, Foster City, CA 94404. The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) will meet remotely via webinar. Their sessions will convene on Sunday, April 2, 2023, at 8:00 a.m. Pacific Time and adjourn on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, when business has concluded for the meeting. 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 April 2023 [Council meeting webpage](#). Please see the Council website (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 April 2023 agenda. The following agenda items summarized below may be of particular interest to the GMT and GAP.

F.1 Regional Implementation of the National Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy

In 2022, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS/NOAA Fisheries) solicited comments on its draft Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy (EEJ). Since then, it has been working to finalize the national strategy and has begun making plans for development of a regional EEJ implementation plan. Part of that process will involve community engagement plans. At this meeting, NMFS will update the Council on its process, the Council will receive a staff report on what the Council already does that relates to EEJ concerns, and the Council will be asked to provide guidance on further responding to EEJ concerns.

F.2 Council and Process Efficiencies

In April 2022, the Council directed staff to bring forward recommendations to improve Council operational efficiency. Executive Director Merrick Burden delivered a staff white paper to the

Council in September 2022. The Council directed staff to focus initially on the tradeoffs associated with meeting formats. The white paper in this briefing book explores the feasibility and appropriateness of different meeting formats. Staff prepared a second white paper addressing the Council's request, including criteria that could be used to guide the selection of meeting format along with considerations for improving communications, team functions, and public accessibility. The GMT and GAP should consider the findings of this paper and comment, as appropriate, on any potential impacts to their meeting processes.

F.4 Marine Planning

The Council is scheduled to receive a report from the Marine Planning Committee. The Council's [Marine Planning](#) resource webpage is available on the Council website for more information.

G.2 Trawl Cost Recovery Annual Report

The Council will receive its annual report from the NMFS regarding the trawl Cost Recovery Program. The report covers costs and fee collections from the previous year along with fee rates for the current year. NMFS will also provide a report addressing questions raised by the Council and the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel about accounting for cost savings resulting and efficiencies in cost recovery fee determination. Under this agenda item, the Council has the opportunity to review the costs and fee collections data as well as fee rates for this year.

G.3 Trawl Catch Share Cost Project – Update

Under this agenda item, the Council will review an initial draft of a comparative cost study that includes a comparison of those costs and design elements to similar catch share programs elsewhere in the United States. The intent of the effort is to develop for managers and stakeholders a common level of understanding of how the design elements address program objectives and consequent costs. The GMT and GAP should consider the findings of the report and provide comment and guidance as appropriate.

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 2023 fisheries, as necessary, to achieve conservation and management objectives.

G.5 Sablefish Gear Switching – Check-in and Refine the Range of Alternatives

Under this agenda item, the Council will receive a staff summary on the alternatives adopted in November 2022, including questions that would need to be addressed if alternatives are to be fully specified before the selection of a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) in June 2023. The Council may also consider modifying the current range of alternatives and whether the details of each action alternative need to be completed before selecting a PPA.

G.6 Considerations for a Sablefish Assessment Update

The Council will consider the workload and process associated with adding a sablefish stock assessment update to the list of stocks to be assessed in 2023.

Other Items

The GMT will host its pre-April Council meeting [webinar](#) on March 27, 2023 from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. to discuss items on the Council's April agenda.

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.

BLW:rdd

Enclosures include:

1. Agenda Item A.3 – Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item B.1 – Open Comment Items
3. Agenda Item F – Administrative
4. Agenda Item G – Groundfish Management
5. Enforcement Consultants Agenda
6. GAP Agenda
7. GMT Agenda
8. Scientific and Statistical Committee Agenda and Draft Minutes
9. Informational Reports
10. Council Roster

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 21, 2023
TO: Habitat Committee and Interested Persons
FROM: Mr. Kerry Griffin, Habitat Staff Officer
SUBJECT: April 2023 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet in person with live streaming from April 1 - 7, 2023 at the Crowne Plaza Foster City, Foster City, CA 94404. The Habitat Committee (HC) will convene in an online format April 1 - 2. 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 April Council meeting [webpage](#). The Council will consider several important habitat-related topics as well as other agenda items, including the following.

Current Habitat Issues (C.1)

The HC will consider habitat-related issues that may be of interest to the Council, and will develop a supplemental HC Report for Council consideration. The supplemental HC report is designed to alert the Council of activities or issues they should be aware of, such as upcoming development projects that may affect fisheries habitat, or updates on issues previously considered by the Council. The HC may recommend a particular action such as writing a letter or other communication on relevant issues.

Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS) Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Amendment (H.5)

In June 2022, the Council adopted the Phase 2 Action Plan for CPS EFH. Over the winter, the CPS Management Team, Southwest Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and Council staff developed a proposed EFH appendix and an alternatives document for the Council to review and consider. The HC should consider proposed updates to the identification and description of CPS EFH, non-fishing impacts, and Habitat Areas of Particular Concern. The Council's action at this meeting is to adopt a Range of Alternatives and the Council may select Preliminary Preferred Alternatives. Any proposed modifications to the alternatives should be presented and considered at this meeting. Final action is scheduled for June 2023.

Klamath Dam Removal Update (E.9)

Under this Agenda Item, Jim Simondet, the Klamath Branch Supervisor from National Marine Fisheries Service, will provide an update to the HC and the Council on the status of the Klamath Dam removal project. This update will help inform the Council of the timeline and process for the

dam removal, and spur forward thinking on how the Council may need to adjust to the loss of monitoring stations and anticipate habitat changes that result from dam removal. This topic is tentatively scheduled for further discussion at the November 2023 Council meeting.

Regional Implementation of the National Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy (F.1)

In 2022, NMFS solicited comments on its draft Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy (EEJ). Since then, it has been working to finalize the national strategy and has begun making plans for development of a regional EEJ implementation plan. Part of that process will involve community engagement plans. At this meeting, NMFS will update the Council on its process, the Council will receive a staff report on what the Council already does that relates to EEJ concerns, and the Council will be asked to provide guidance on further responding to EEJ concerns.

Council Meeting and Process Efficiencies (F.2)

In September 2022, the Council considered a white paper on this topic and directed staff to return with a more detailed examination of the tradeoffs associated with meeting formats resulting from an initial staff white paper provided by Council staff at that meeting. The evaluation will include criteria that could be used to guide the selection of meeting format along with considerations for improving communications, team functions, public accessibility, and considerations for meeting format (online, in-person, hybrid). Staff prepared a second white paper addressing the Council's request (F.2, Attachment 1).

Marine Planning (F.4)

The Marine Planning Committee met on February 23, 2023, to prepare a report for the April Council meeting. Topics will include an update on offshore wind energy development, and an overview of the West Coast Fishing Communities Report that is in development by NMFS.

Sacramento and Klamath River Fall Chinook Conservation Objectives Scoping (E.5)

The Council is interested in reviewing, and potentially revising, the conservation objectives for both Sacramento River fall Chinook (SRFC) and Klamath River fall Chinook (KRFC). Both of these topics will require a stepwise and thorough process which would include multi-agency collaboration. The Council will be briefed on the importance of the review, what the process could look like for a full review and any resulting recommendations. The scoping process could cover the workload, timeframe, staffing, prioritization of stocks, etc. that would be needed to achieve the task.

Other topics will be addressed as needed. Please refer to the HC Agenda in the April Briefing Book for further details on issues before the HC. Please familiarize yourselves with the above topics and be prepared to discuss them during the HC meeting. Thank you for your participation in the Pacific Coast fisheries management process.

KFG:kma

Enclosures include:

1. Agenda Item A.3 – Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item B.1 – Comments on Non-Agenda Items
3. Agenda Item C – Habitat Issues
4. Agenda Item D – Pacific Halibut Management
5. Agenda Item E – Salmon Management
6. Agenda Item F – Administrative Matters
7. Agenda Item G – Groundfish Management
8. Informational Reports
9. Council Roster

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 21, 2023

TO: Salmon Advisory Subpanel, Salmon Technical Team, Model Evaluation Workgroup, and Interested Persons

FROM: Robin Ehlke, Staff Officer

SUBJECT: April Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet in person for their [April meeting](#) April 1-7, 2023 at the Crowne Plaza hotel, 1221 Chess Drive. Foster City, CA 94404. The Salmon Technical Team (STT) and the Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS), and the Model Evaluation Workgroup (MEW) will meet in person. The STT will meet in the Stanford room at 8 a.m. daily April 1-7. The SAS will meet in the Syracuse room at 8 a.m. daily April 1-6. The MEW will meet in the Alexandria room on April 1 starting at 10 a.m. 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 salmon 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 April 2023 agenda. The following agenda items summarized below may be of particular interest to the STT, SAS, and MEW. 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 nearly every day of the April meeting. Other topics of interest on the Council agenda include habitat, Administrative, and Pacific halibut.

The main salmon issue before the Council will be to adopt management measures for 2023 ocean salmon fisheries (Agenda Items E.2, E.3, E.8 and E.10). In addition, there are six additional salmon Agenda Items (E.1, E.4, E.5, E.6, ~~E.7~~, and E.9) that warrant your attention.

The Salmon agenda item will begin on Sunday, April 1 (Day 1) with two topics for discussion. The first (Agenda Item E.1) 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. Next (Agenda Item E.2), the Council will be briefed by the STT on any changes or new information available since the March 2023 meeting, and summarize information in *Preseason Report II: Proposed Alternatives and Environmental Assessment for 2023 Ocean Salmon Fishery Regulations*, which should be posted to the Council website by March 20. In addition, the SAS will propose 2023 management measures for tentative adoption.

Habitat issues (Agenda Item C.1) will be discussed on April 2 (Day 1). The Habitat Committee is meeting in person April 1-2, 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.

Pacific Halibut (Agenda Item (D.1) will also be covered on April 2 (Day 1). Under the halibut topic, the SAS will need to recommend landing restrictions for the 2023 troll salmon fisheries to allow for incidental halibut harvest.

As noted, on April 2 the SAS will present the Council with a recommendation for 2023 salmon management measures (Agenda Item E.2) and with a recommendation for landing restrictions for incidental halibut harvest in the salmon troll fishery (Agenda Item D.1), and potentially provide a statement under the Habitat (Agenda Item C.1). SAS representatives should finalize these SAS reports by mid-day on Saturday April 1 so that it can be processed and posted by the Secretariat prior to close of business.

Throughout the week, additional salmon topics will be discussed on the Council floor

- Salmon Methodology Review – preliminary topic selection (Agenda Item E.4, scheduled for Tuesday April 4). Under this agenda item the Council will look to the STT, MEW and Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) to provide a preliminary list of candidate items for review in 2023. Consistent with Council Operating Procedure 15, the Council will revisit this list in September to see if any progress has been made on the candidate items and if so, will move those items forward for review in October with the results reported to the Council in November.
- Sacramento and Klamath River Fall Chinook Conservation Objectives Scoping (Agenda Item E.5, scheduled for Tuesday April 4). The Council is interested in reviewing, and potentially revising, the conservation objectives for both Sacramento River Fall Chinook (SRFC) and Klamath River Fall Chinook (KRFC). Both of these topics will require a stepwise and thorough process which would include multi-agency collaboration. The Council will discuss the importance of the review, and the process considering the workload, timeframe, staffing, prioritization of stocks, etc. needed to achieve the task.
- Improvements to Southern Oregon/Northern California Coho Ocean Fishery Exploitation Rate Forecasts (Agenda Item E.6, scheduled for Tuesday April 4). The Council will re-visit the discussion from September 2022 when they considered the report from the STT that outlined the amount of work and time needed to explore potential improvements to forecasts of exploitation rates on Southern Oregon/ Northern California Coast (SONCC) coho.
- ~~Southern Resident Killer Whale Threshold and other Fishery Management Plan clarifications (Agenda Item E.7, scheduled for Tuesday April 4). In November 2023, the Council adopted an updated Chinook abundance threshold for SRKW. The FMP describes a protocol for updating the threshold; however, as the process began it became apparent that the language describing how the technical review of new threshold calculations should occur was unclear and this led to some confusion. The Council asked NMFS and Council staff (Joint Staff) to investigate the FMP language regarding SRKW and determine if the description of the technical review process for updating the threshold could be improved to help reduce confusion and improve clarity for future updates.~~

- Klamath Dam Removal Update (Agenda Item E.9, scheduled for Wednesday April 5) –NMFS will provide an update to the Council on the status of the Klamath Dam removal project. It is anticipated that as this project progresses, additional updates will occur to keep us all informed on the status of the dam decommissioning, habitat improvements and any unforeseen issues that may arise. This update will help inform the Council of the timeline and process for the dam removal, and spur forward thinking on how the Council may need to adjust to the loss of monitoring stations and anticipate habitat changes that result from dam removal.

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 – Habitat Issues
3. Agenda Item D – Pacific Halibut Management
4. Agenda Item E – Salmon Management
5. Agenda Item F – Council Administrative Matters
6. Informational Reports
7. Proposed SAS Agenda
8. Proposed STT Agenda
9. Proposed SSC Agenda
10. Proposed MEW Agenda
11. Proposed Habitat Committee Agenda
12. Council Roster
13. Hotel information

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 21, 2023
TO: Scientific and Statistical Committee
FROM: Marlene A. Bellman, Staff Officer
SUBJECT: April 2023 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) April 2023 meeting will be held in-person from April 1 through April 7, 2023, in Foster City, California. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will meet **remotely** on Saturday, April 1 and Sunday, April 2, starting at 8 a.m. each day. Your meeting materials are enclosed.

Instructions for how to connect to Council and Advisory Body meetings will be posted on the Council's [April 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. All meetings are open to the public and at least one opportunity for public comment has been scheduled for each meeting day.

SSC Administrative Matters

On Saturday April 1, 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 April 2023 meeting agenda and the March 2023 meeting minutes. Subcommittee assignments will be reviewed and updated as necessary.

F. Council Administrative Matters

F.6 Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures

Under membership appointments and Council Operating Procedures (COPs), the SSC will have a closed session to review the nomination of Dr. Aaron Mamula for the vacant Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) seat on the Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and Dr. Kayleigh Somers for the Observer Program Seat on the Groundfish Endangered Species Act (ESA) Workgroup. These nominations are as of advanced briefing book publication; the SSC may be asked to review any vacant management or technical team seats which come in before the April

Council meeting. The SSC recommendations will be offered during the Council Closed Executive Session on Sunday, April 2.

F.1 Regional Implementation of the National Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ) Strategy

In 2022, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS/NOAA Fisheries) published a [draft Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy](#) (EEJ) and invited comments, including from the Regional Fishery Management Councils. At its September 2022 meeting, the Council directed staff to develop a list of things the Council already does that relate to EEJ concerns (Agenda Item F.1, Attachment 1). Council staff has tentatively asked advisory bodies to take the EEJ strategy into account as they develop initial recommendations for the upcoming update of Council research and data needs. Comments from the SSC are optional, but if provided they would be reported to the Council on Monday, April 3.

F.2 Council Meeting and Process Efficiencies

In April 2022, the Council directed staff to bring forward recommendations to improve Council operational efficiency. Executive Director Merrick Burden delivered a staff white paper to the Council in September 2022 ([Agenda Item C.3, Attachment 1, Sept 2022](#)). At the September meeting, the Council further directed staff to focus initially on the tradeoffs associated with meeting formats, such as remote, hybrid and in-person. The white paper provided in this briefing book further explores the feasibility and appropriateness of these different meeting formats and contains staff recommendations, including criteria that could be used to guide the selection of meeting format along with considerations for improving communications, team functions, and public accessibility. The SSC may wish to consider the findings of this paper and comment, as appropriate, on any potential impacts to their meeting processes. Comments from the SSC are optional, but if provided they would be reported to the Council on Monday, April 3.

F.7 Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning

The SSC will discuss future workload planning matters and report to the Council on this matter under Agenda Item F.7 scheduled on Friday, April 7. Future workload planning will include discussion with multiple SSC subcommittees regarding updates to the groundfish stock assessment cycle, review of the trawl catch share cost project, and development of a coastal pelagic species (CPS) accepted practices guidelines for stock assessments. The SSC statement regularly provides a table with important meeting dates and timelines.

E. Salmon Management

E.4 Methodology Review Preliminary Topic Selection

Under Agenda Item E.4, the SSC plans to discuss preliminary salmon topics with the Salmon Technical Team (STT) and the Model Evaluation Workgroup (MEW) and provide recommendations for methodologies to be reviewed in 2023. The STT and MEW will be available for discussion or questions. The SSC will provide recommendations to the Council on Tuesday, April 4.

Each year, the SSC completes a methodology review to help assure new or significantly modified methodologies employed to estimate impacts of the Council's salmon management use the best available science. The process normally involves: 1) developing a list of potential topics for review at the April Council meeting, 2) development of analytical materials to be reviewed between April and September Council meetings, 3) final selection of review topics at the September Council meeting, 4) a review of selected topics in October by the SSC Salmon Subcommittee and the STT, and 5) review by the full SSC at the November Council meeting.

E.5 Sacramento and Klamath River Fall Chinook Conservation Objectives

Feedback from the SSC would be helpful in the scoping process for updating the Sacramento and Klamath River Fall Chinook Conservation Objectives, in order to understand timing, workload, and any analytical considerations for the overall process. SSC comments can be provided under Agenda Item E.5 scheduled on Tuesday, April 4.

~~E.7 Southern Resident Killer Whale Chinook Threshold and Other Fishery Management Plan Clarifications~~

~~The Council adopted management measures for Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW) in November 2020 as Amendment 21 of the Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP). A key component of the management measures is a Chinook abundance threshold (threshold), which would trigger management action if Chinook abundance was projected to be lower than the threshold.~~

~~Revisions to the threshold were first considered in 2022, and during this consideration it became clear that confusion exists regarding the process used to make and review threshold adjustments. In response, the Council tasked NMFS and Council staff with developing new language in the Salmon FMP. As of the Advanced Briefing Book deadline, new proposed FMP language had not been agreed upon by Council and NMFS staff and thus is not available for consideration. However, this meeting can be considered further "scoping" to determine the degree of language clarification that is needed, and to determine whether an FMP amendment process is necessary. The SSC may wish to consider this agenda topic and offer additional perspective for the Council regarding the scope of any new FMP language that has not been provided thus far. The Council is scheduled to take up this agenda topic on Tuesday, April 4.~~

G. Groundfish Management

G.6 Considerations for a Sablefish Assessment Update

Information reported to the Council during the March 2023 meeting led to consideration of a potential stock assessment update for sablefish in the current groundfish stock assessment cycle for 2023 and 2024 ([Agenda Item F.1.b, Supplemental NWFSC Presentation 1, March 2023](#)). The supplemental Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC) presentation summarized data from the 2021 and 2022 West Coast groundfish bottom trawl surveys that included above-average recruitment success for sablefish.

Under stock assessment prioritization in June 2022 ([Agenda Item F.3, Attachment 1, June 2022](#)), sablefish was identified as a candidate for possible full assessment in 2025. Sablefish was last fully

assessed in 2019, with an update to the full assessment conducted in 2021. The current option under consideration is to have the NWFSC conduct a new update to the last full assessment for review in August 2023, with some limitations on data availability.

During the March 2023 discussion, the Council requested the NWFSC provide an overview of the progress to date, including updates on ageing, for species already scheduled for assessments this cycle. The NWFSC is anticipated to provide a supplemental report to address questions and provide supporting information for Council consideration in April.

Council advisory bodies should provide feedback relative to workload capacity, timing, and other considerations. In particular, the SSC Groundfish subcommittee should consider the capacity to review a potential update to the full sablefish stock assessment in conjunction with responsibilities already planned for the fall of 2023. SSC recommendations would be reported to the Council on Friday, April 7.

H. Coastal Pelagic Species

H.1 National Marine Fisheries Service Report

A report on the Pacific Sardine stock structure workshop held in November 2022, will be presented to the Council from Dr. Annie Yau (SWFSC). The SSC CPS subcommittee will also have a report on outcomes of a March 20-21 meeting on numerous relevant topics. The SSC may provide additional comments under Agenda Item H.1 scheduled for Tuesday, April 4.

H.4 Pacific Sardine Harvest Specifications and Management Measures for 2023-2024

At this meeting, the Council plans to adopt harvest specifications and management measures for the 2023-24 Pacific sardine fishing season, which runs July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024. The SSC will make recommendations on the overfishing limit (OFL) and corresponding acceptable biological catch (ABC) to the Council based on the 2022 update assessment and other indicators, such as the recent acoustic trawl survey data. The SSC will provide recommendations under Agenda Item H.4 on Wednesday, April 5.

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

MAB:ael

Council Enclosures include:

- Agenda Item A – Council Meeting Agenda
- Agenda Item F – Administrative Matters
- Agenda Item E – Salmon Management
- Agenda Item G – Groundfish Management
- Agenda Item H – Coastal Pelagic Species Management

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

1. April 2023 SSC Agenda
2. Draft March 2023 SSC Minutes
3. Closed Session
4. Informational Reports
5. General Information and Council Roster

PFMC
03/17/23