

TRAWL CATCH SHARE PROJECT – UPDATE

In 2022, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) provided the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) with funds for a contract to look more closely at catch share fishery costs that are borne by industry and NMFS. Council staff engaged Mr. Darrell Brannan to conduct the work.

The cost project covers three broad objectives:

- documentation of industry concerns and identifying costs related to specific program elements;
- comparison of those costs to similar catch share programs, and
- organization and presentation of the information to inform future deliberations.

The initial work covered under the contract is to identify stakeholder concerns associated with specific program costs and look at all costs as they relate to the design elements of the catch share program (for example, requirements for both at-sea and shoreside monitoring). The project also 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.

Under this agenda item, an initial draft will be presented for Council review and the Council will have an opportunity to provide additional guidance. After the April meeting, the contractor will develop for inclusion in the final report a high-level discussion of the trawl catch share program elements and their relationship to costs for consideration at the September 2023 Council meeting. That report is expected to facilitate identification of potential program changes that could reduce costs, along with implications of those changes for the program's achievement of goals and objectives. The final report will also include suggestions for how the information in the report could provide a basis for future studies that may consider possible changes to the program design.

It should be noted that the focus of the project is on current costs and their relationship to the way the program is designed, not to delve into cost recovery, which is the topic of Agenda Item G.2. At the same time, results from this project may eventually lead to program changes that influence those cost recovery fees.

NMFS was asked for a second year of funding related to this project and has indicated it will be providing that funding. Content for the second year of the contract can be taken up when the Council receives the final report under the current contract, at its September 2023 meeting. At that time, the Council may be in a good position to identify aspects of the program that might potentially be modified to reduce costs.

Council Action:

Council discussion and guidance on next steps, as appropriate.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item G.3, Attachment 1: An Initial Review Draft of a Comparative Cost Study for the West Coast Groundfish Trawl Catch Share Program. (**Electronic Only**).
2. If received, Public Comments are electronic only ([see e-portal](#)).

Agenda Order:

- G.3 Trawl Catch Share Cost Project – Update
- a. Project Development and Update
 - b. Reports and Comments of Management Entities and Advisory Bodies
 - c. Public Comment
 - d. **Council Action:** Council Discussion and Guidance on Next Steps, as Appropriate
- Jim Seger
Darrell Brannan

PFMC
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