

GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON COUNCIL COORDINATION  
COMMITTEE UPDATE

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) discussed the [NOAA Fisheries Management and Budget Update](#) presented to the Council Coordination Committee and is concerned about the items with zero funds proposed for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 for several line items. Specifically, the GAP is concerned that zero funding for the Saltonstall-Kennedy (S-K) Program and the Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program (BREP) will harm West Coast and U.S. fishermen (see slide 18 of the above linked presentation).

The S-K Program funds projects that lead to the promotion, development, and marketing of US fisheries, using funds derived from duties on imported fisheries products. In this FY2024 cycle, the S-K Program funded two West Coast projects, Positively Groundfish's accelerator program and Get Hooked Seafood's Sea-to-School Program for the Santa Barbara Channel, which both work toward promotion and marketing of Pacific Coast groundfish at a critical juncture for our fisheries and seafood markets. Removing FY2025 funding from projects like this that are important not only to our West Coast fisheries but to the strength of U.S. fisheries and seafood as a whole is devastating at a time when fishermen are facing difficult management restrictions in several fisheries. The seafood industry produces sustainable food for our nation and currently does not receive the same support as other U.S. food industries. To lose S-K funding on top of the other challenges we are facing is unacceptable.

The BREP has been crucial in past efforts to develop innovative techniques to aid in keeping our fisheries sustainable and reducing interactions with not-targeted fish stocks, birds and marine mammals.

The GAP flags these items for the Council, and requests the Council write a letter in support of the S-K Program and BREP funding to the National Marine Fisheries Service. The GAP is ready to provide examples of how these programs have benefitted West Coast groundfish fisheries.

PFMC  
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