



## Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Brad Pettinger, Chair | Merrick J. Burden, Executive Director

### MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 30, 2024

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

FROM: Angela Forristall, Staff Officer

SUBJECT: September 2024 Council Meeting

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and the Advisory Bodies will meet in person and online for the [September meeting](#) September 17-23, 2024 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Spokane City Center, 322 N Spokane Falls Court, Spokane, WA 99201. The Salmon Technical Team (STT) and the Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) will meet virtually. The STT will meet on September 16<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, or when business concludes. The SAS will meet on September 18<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm, or when business concludes. 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. Other topics of interest on the Council agenda include Pacific halibut, Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) projects, marine planning, Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiative 4, and administrative matters.

The briefing book materials attached to this memorandum provide detailed information for these items on the Council's September 2024 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.

#### **E. Salmon Management**

Three salmon agenda items will be heard on the Council floor on Thursday, September 19 (Day 1). The first agenda item (*Agenda Item E.1 National Marine Fisheries Service Report*) is a briefing from National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to the Council on salmon-related topics, including performance reports for specific salmon stocks required under a Biological Opinion and any updates to Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing determinations or ESA petitions.

Under the next agenda item (*Agenda Item E.2 Methodology Review - Final Topic Selection*), the Council will consider candidate items for the salmon methodology review in 2024 (no items were selected in April 2024). Consistent with Council Operating Procedure 15, in September the Council is informed of the topics that will be ready for review in October and notified of any assistance needed from management entities to accomplish the review.

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Under the last salmon agenda item (*Agenda Item E.3 Queets Spring/Summer Chinook Rebuilding – Range of Alternatives and Preliminary Preferred Alternative*), the Council will review a draft rebuilding plan for Queets River spring/summer Chinook and adopt a range of alternatives and/or preliminary preferred alternative for public review. Final action on this agenda item is scheduled for the November Council meeting.

### **F. Pacific Halibut Management**

Two Pacific halibut agenda items will be discussed on Friday, September 20 (Day 2). Under the first agenda item (*Agenda Item F.1 2025 Catch Sharing Plan and Annual Regulations – Preliminary*), the Council is scheduled to adopt for public review preliminary recommendations for changes to the Catch Sharing Plan (CSP) and annual regulations for International Pacific Halibut Commission Area 2A for 2025. Final action on this agenda item is scheduled for the November Council meeting. The SAS may wish to submit a report under this agenda item.

Under the second agenda item (*Agenda Item F.2 Commercial Fishery Regulation Changes: Vessel Monitoring Systems, Seabird Avoidance, and Catch Reporting - Range of Alternatives, Preliminary Preferred Alternative*), proposed changes to the non-tribal directed commercial Pacific halibut fishery (DC halibut fishery) and dealers purchasing Pacific halibut in the incidental salmon troll or primary sablefish fishery north of Pt. Chehalis will be discussed. The measures under consideration include: (1) requiring all vessels participating in the DC halibut fishery to carry a vessel monitoring system (VMS) unit; (2) requiring all vessels in the DC halibut fishery to deploy seabird avoidance gear; and (3) requiring all non-tribal commercial fish tickets for Pacific halibut deliveries in the incidental salmon troll or primary sablefish fishery north of Pt. Chehalis to include the number of individual halibut landed. The Council is slated to adopt a range of alternatives and preliminary preferred alternative for public review. Final action on this agenda item is scheduled for the November Council meeting. The SAS should submit a report under this agenda item outlining their considerations on each of the three proposed management changes.

### **C. Cross Fishery Management Plan (FMP)**

Items under Cross FMP of interest include an update on Marine Planning (*Agenda Item C.1 Marine Planning*), which is scheduled to be on the Council floor on Thursday, September 19 (Day 1). The Council's Marine Planning Committee (MPC) met on August 12, 2024, and considered several issues related to offshore wind (OSW) energy planning. These topics included region-wide transmission planning for OSW energy, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and OSW energy development, a discussion of cumulative coastwide impacts and data gaps, as well as updates from the states, NMFS, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, and a tribal update. The meeting was recorded and available for viewing on the meeting [webpage](#). The MPC Report 1 is included in advanced September Briefing Book materials (C.1.a, MPC Report 1). Other Advisory Bodies typically only develop supplemental reports if MPC Report 1 is lacking certain information, or if the report warrants additional explanation.

The SAS will also receive an update on IRA projects, which is scheduled to be on the Council floor Saturday, September 21 (*Agenda Item C.3 Inflation Reduction Act Projects – Check In*). In May/June 2024, the Council was notified that its proposed IRA projects had been approved. During this agenda item, the Council will receive an update from Council staff on work plans and timelines for further developing and implementing the three projects, each of which focuses on an aspect of climate resilience and related Council management and decision-making processes. Draft project work plans

will be included in the Advanced Briefing Book under this agenda item and will highlight Council-specific milestones and products. Advisory Bodies are encouraged to review the draft plans and, if desired, provide any feedback or input to Council staff during Advisory Body meetings prior to or at the September Council meeting; staff will incorporate and share this feedback during their presentation to the Council, unless any Advisory Bodies would prefer to prepare their own statements. Also, as part of this agenda item, Council staff will provide recommendations on the role and future composition of the Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel and the Ecosystem Workgroup (EWG), particularly in light of the Council's focus on implementation of the IRA projects over the next three years.

## **H. Ecosystem Matters**

Under Ecosystem Matters, *Agenda Item H.1 Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiative 4: Groundfish and Salmon Risk Tables – Progress Review* will cover Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiative 4 and is scheduled to be on the Council floor on Friday, September 20. The purpose of this Fishery Ecosystem Plan Initiative is to develop on-ramps for integrating ecosystem and climate information into Council fishery management plan decision making, with a focus on harvest specifications processes. In March 2024 the Council directed the EWG to work with NMFS Science Center staff to further develop the methodological framework and apply it to groundfish for potential use as part of 2027-2028 groundfish harvest specifications decision-making. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Ecosystem Subcommittee reviewed the methodology, and the full SSC will report to the Council on this in September. The Council also directed that this type of methodology be applied to selected salmon stocks; however, to date a comparable methodology has not been developed or reviewed.

The Council may provide guidance on application of the risk table methodology in the groundfish harvest specifications process in 2025 and a work plan for development and review of a similar methodology for salmon stocks. There is also the broader question of whether the objectives of the initiative have been met and it can be considered completed. This would necessitate guidance on any further actions needed to integrate ecosystem and climate considerations into its fishery management plan management processes outside of future ecosystem agenda items.

The STT may wish to submit a supplemental report under this agenda item outlining how salmon risk tables may be utilized in the salmon management process.

## **K. Administrative**

Under Administrative Matters, *Agenda Item K.3 Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures – Including Final 2025-27 Advisory Body Composition* will cover membership appointments for the 2025-2028 advisory body term period and Council operations and priorities. At their June meeting, the Council reviewed the current Advisory Body compositions and adopted for public review a number of changes, including "Salmon Advisory Subpanel: Remove the gillnet position and one of the California sport positions originally created for inland fisheries." The SAS should submit a report under this agenda item reflecting their discussion of the potential removal of these two seats.

## **Other Items**

Advisory bodies will also receive an update from Mr. Eric Chavez (NMFS) on the upcoming salmon essential fish habitat (EFH) review. This item is not on the Council's September meeting agenda. Mr. Chavez will be discussing the potential roll-out date for the EFH review (April 2025) and the

expectations of advisory body members. The SAS and STT could submit a report (either individually or jointly) under *Agenda Item K.4 Future Council Meeting Agenda & Workload Planning* outlining their considerations of Mr. Chavez's update and proposed timeline.

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.

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Enclosures:

1. Agenda Item A – Council Agenda
2. Agenda Item C – Cross Fishery Management Plan
3. Agenda Item E – Salmon Management
4. Agenda Item F – Pacific Halibut Management
5. Agenda Item H – Ecosystem Matters
6. Agenda Item K – Council Administrative Matters
7. Informational Reports
8. Proposed SAS Agenda
9. Proposed STT Agenda
10. Hotel information and Council Roster

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