

## GROUND FISH ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON TRAWL CATCH SHARE PROGRAM AND INTERSECTOR ALLOCATION REVIEWS: HEARING OFFICERS AND LOCATIONS

The Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) recommends holding three in-person trawl catch share program review public hearings in Astoria, Newport, and the San Francisco Bay Area, as well as three online webinars where participants could join individually or with other members of their local community. We do not recommend holding an intersector allocation review hearing.

### **Intersector Allocation Review**

The Preliminary Year-at-a-Glance ([C.6 Supplemental Revised Attachment 2, November 2024](#)) retains final adoption of the intersector allocation review at the June 2025 Council meeting, but moves the trawl catch share program review to September 2025.

The GAP considered whether to recommend a hearing for the intersector allocation review prior to finalizing the review at the June Council meeting. However, the intersector allocation review will only analyze performance of catch, revenue, and other statistics by species and sector. Biennial stocks will be analyzed in addition to formally allocated stocks in order to provide information early in the 2027-2028 biennium process, but the review will not analyze future allocation changes. Therefore, the GAP does not find utility in holding a public hearing just to provide feedback on the document, as stakeholder be able to do that at the June meeting. In fact, if an intersector allocation hearing was held, we anticipate comments would be submitted to adjust future-looking allocations, which are not within the scope of the action. Therefore we recommend putting off the inevitable food fight until the 2027-2028 harvest specifications and management measures process, rather than holding an intersector allocation review hearing.

### **Trawl Catch Share Program Review**

Although hearings are not mandated, the GAP considers trawl catch share program public hearings critical in order to receive feedback from stakeholders who do not often participate in Council meetings. In 2016, the Council conducted nine in-person hearings from San Luis Obispo to Seattle ([2016 Catch Share Review Summary](#)), and those hearings provided many benefits, such as:

- Port-specific and local concerns to be raised in a smaller group
- Participation without significant travel
- Providing public comment in a less formal setting than a Council meeting
- Understanding program effects and impacts
- Valuable discussions, networking, idea creation, and a sense of community
- An opportunity for learning between sectors
- An opportunity for new Council members and staff, new advisory body and management team members, and other new Council and non-Council participants to learn about the trawl catch share program

Since 2016, our Council membership has changed, with fewer participants and managers who were involved in the trawl catch share program development and implementation. Outside of the

Council process, the country has gone through three presidential elections and a global pandemic, and the local, regional, national, and international landscape and markets have changed drastically. The GAP believes it is important to hold public hearings to capture and document some of these changes and their relationship to the trawl catch share program, and provide a baseline and foundation for the next and most important step once the review is finalized: where do we go from here?

The GAP values in person meetings when possible, to build understanding, respect, and relationships. While we wish there was capacity to conduct all of the hearings in person, the GAP considered the tradeoffs of in-person versus online hearings, as well as trade-offs to other Council workload. Therefore, we recommend three in-person hearings and three remote hearings. With the trawl catch share program review moved to September 2025 on the Preliminary Year-at-a-Glance ([C.6 Supplemental Revised Attachment 2, November 2024](#)), there should now be more flexibility on when to hold these hearings (rather than trying to cram them in before June), and holding three remotely would reduce travel demands on Council staff.

### **In Person Hearings**

We want the in-person hearings to be truly in person, and do not recommend that these meetings be hybrid. If the Council does decide to offer an online option for these in-person meetings, we recommend that online participants be in listen-only mode. Hybrid meetings can minimize the in-person experience of participants in the room, and reduce the benefits we described in bulleted form above. Because we also recommend online hearings, people who want to provide comments in webinar format can participate and comment during the online hearings.

The GAP spent a considerable amount of time discussing where the in-person hearings should be held. We started off thinking there should be a hearing in each coastal state, but we recommend the in-person hearings be held in Astoria, Newport, and the San Francisco Bay Area for the reasons described below.

- **Astoria** - We first considered Westport in order to have a meeting in each coastal state, but we recommend Astoria instead for several reasons: (1) Astoria has the largest concentration of processors and historical participants in the trawl catch share program, (2) there was very low turnout at the Westport meeting during the 2016 round of hearings, and (3) Westport participants could attend the Astoria meeting in person since it is relatively close. We also considered holding a hearing in Seattle since there is significant program participation there, but at the September meeting the GAP discussed that many Seattle companies would have capacity to send someone to the coastal meetings, and/or could attend one of the online hearings.
- **Newport** - Newport is central in Oregon, and is home to processing, a significant amount of active catcher vessels and program participants, quota holders, and many gear-switching participants.
- **San Francisco Bay Area** - The Bay Area is centrally located and easily accessible from most places in California. The GAP considered recommending Eureka, but received public comment from a California industry leader that Eureka could be difficult for some folks to get to, and that holding the meeting in the San Francisco Bay Area would get better turnout.

## Online Hearings

The GAP envisions the online hearings to be conducted completely online, except that any community or group that wants to can gather in person and attend the online meeting together can. The GAP recommends holding three separate online hearings in order to:

- Provide multiple opportunities for participants who don't live in one of the in-person hearing locations (Astoria, Newport, and San Francisco Bay Area) to attend
- Provide multiple opportunities for certain groups or communities who want to attend the online hearing together
- Potentially reduce the length of each individual hearing

Because the trawl catch share review was moved to September 2025 on the Preliminary Year-at-a-Glance, there could be opportunity to spread these in-person and online hearings out, which would benefit overall attendance. The GAP recommends holding at least one in-person (at a minimum, the Astoria meeting) and one online hearing in April before the hake fishery starts and/or some participants go north to Alaska. The other hearings could be spread out into the spring and summer. Delaying some of the hearings from the earlier proposed timeline may allow for more information to become available for consideration and comment at the later hearings.

PFMC  
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