

February 2025

## **Pacific Coast Groundfish Trawl Rationalization Program**

### **2025 Cost Recovery Annual Report**

Fee Calculation for 2025 and Fishing Year 2024 Payments



## Overview

The Magnuson-Stevens Act requires the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to collect fees to recover the costs directly related to the management, data collection and analysis, and enforcement of a limited access privilege program (LAPP) (16 U.S.C. § 1854(d)(2)), also called "cost recovery." The Pacific Coast Groundfish Trawl Rationalization Program (Trawl Program) is a LAPP and consists of three sectors: the Shorebased Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program, the Mothership (MS) Co-op Program, and the Catcher/Processor (C/P) Co-op Program.

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and based on a recommended structure and methodology developed in coordination with the Council, NMFS collects mandatory fees of up to three percent of the ex-vessel value of groundfish by sector (IFQ Program, MS Co-op Program, and C/P Co-op Program). NMFS collects the fees to cover the incremental costs of management, data collection and analysis, and enforcement of the Trawl Program.

Cost recovery for the Trawl Program was implemented in January 2014. The details of cost recovery for the Trawl Program are in regulation at [50 CFR 660.115](#).

### What is in this annual report?

NMFS is committed to transparent cost accounting practices, including publishing this annual report detailing recoverable costs. This annual report includes information on the fee percentage calculation, program costs, ex-vessel value by sector, and total fees collected by NMFS from the previous year.

### Detail on Cost Recovery Calculations

For cost recovery, NMFS must make two calculations during the last quarter of every calendar year, after each fiscal year ends, and announce those values in a Federal Register notice before they go into effect on January 1 of the following year. The 2025 fee percentages are calculated based on the 2024 fiscal year, which was October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024. The data and calculations used in the fee calculation are detailed in this report. The two calculations are:

1. Fee Percentage Calculation by Sector
2. MS Pricing for the C/P Co-op Program

## Fee Percentage Calculation by Sector

For the Trawl Program, NMFS calculates the fee percentage by sector using the best available information, not to exceed three percent of the ex-vessel value of the fishery. To calculate the fee percentage by sector, NMFS uses the formula specified in regulation at §660.115(b)(1), where the fee percentage by sector equals the lower of either three percent of ex-vessel value or direct program costs (DPC) for that sector divided by total ex-vessel value (V) for that sector multiplied by 100.

$$\text{Fee percentage} = \text{the lower of 3\% or } (DPC/V) \times 100$$

“V” or ex-vessel value, specified in regulation at §660.115(b)(1)(ii), is the total ex-vessel value for each sector from the previous calendar year. The ex-vessel value for each sector is defined at §660.111 and includes the total ex-vessel value for all groundfish species in the IFQ sector and for whiting only in the MS and C/P sectors (see page eight for more detail).

“DPC” or direct program costs, defined in regulation at §660.115(b)(1)(i), are the actual incremental costs for the previous fiscal year directly related to the management, data collection and analysis, and enforcement of each sector. Actual incremental costs means those costs that would not have been incurred but for the implementation of the Trawl Program. NMFS does not recover costs for agency activities that would be required for the management of the trawl fishery were it not rationalized, so DPCs represent a fraction of the total costs of managing the trawl fishery. The 2025 fee percentages, accounting for any adjustments, were published in the Federal Register ([89 FR 101568](#), December 16, 2024) and are as follows:

Shorebased IFQ Program - 3.0%

C/P Co-op Program - 0.1%

MS Co-op Program - 3.0%

## Cost of Management, Data Collection, and Enforcement

As described earlier, DPC in the calculation are the actual incremental costs for the previous fiscal year directly related to the management, data collection and analysis, and enforcement of each sector. Consistent with the [Cost Recovery Committee’s final recommendation in September 2011](#) (page 3,059), they are costs that would not have been incurred but for the implementation of the Trawl Rationalization Program.

The recoverable costs of employee and contractor time spent working on the Trawl Program are the incremental costs of their time. In other words, it is the cost of staff’s<sup>1</sup> time that would not

---

<sup>1</sup> Hereinafter staff refers to full time NMFS employees (FTEs) and contractors.

have been incurred but for the implementation of the Trawl Program. NMFS staff have tracked their time spent on the Trawl Program by sector (IFQ, MS, C/P) since 2011.

NMFS determines which tasks are incremental before staff attribute their time spent on these tasks to the cost recovery program. Staff and their supervisors discuss the task and consult with the cost recovery coordinator, supervisors, and/or General Counsel, if necessary. If they determine that the task would not have occurred if the Trawl Program were not in place, then NMFS staff record their actual time spent on the task with the appropriate cost recovery code. NMFS seeks to make this determination early in the process. For example, when the Council begins consideration of a new groundfish action, NMFS discusses whether the action would be considered incremental before any NMFS work begins.

When evaluating the incremental status of tasks, NMFS may determine that some tasks are partially incremental. If NMFS makes such a determination, NMFS staff would be instructed to allocate their time into incremental and non-incremental hours. These same methods would be used if it is determined that a task, such as the Cost Recovery Annual Report, is relevant to more than one sector. For example:

1. Hours Based: NMFS could instruct staff members to allocate their time based on the specific time spent on each task. Time spent on the recoverable tasks would be recorded separately from the time spent on the non-recoverable tasks.
2. Ratio Based: NMFS could determine that a ratio of a task is recoverable and staff members will split their time spent on the project by the ratio.

In addition to the costs of employees' time (salary and benefits) spent working on the program, NMFS also tracks travel, supply, and equipment costs that are incremental to the Trawl Rationalization Program. At this time, NMFS is not including rent/utilities or any federal costs resulting from duties performed by the states of Washington, Oregon, or California in the calculation of DPC.

Table 1 provides a summary of the total incremental costs from fiscal year 2024 (FY2024) from each Financial Management Center (FMC). These costs were used to determine the DPC for each sector for the calculation of the 2025 fee percentages. Information including labor hours, number of staff, and FTE equivalent calculations for the FY2024 DPCs can be found in Appendix 1. Details on new or ad-hoc incremental tasks that contributed to the FY2024 DPC are included below and Appendix 2 provides the recurring incremental tasks by office and program.

Table 1. DPC associated with management, data collection and analysis, and enforcement of all sectors of the Trawl Program, FY2024 (October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024).

| FMC Office  | Branch/Program  | IFQ                   | C/P                | MS                   |
|---|---|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| West Coast Region (WCR) <sup>2</sup>                    | Groundfish  | \$41,178.63           | \$18,174.42        | \$25,751.29          |
|   | Permits & Monitoring  | \$61,508.61           | \$0.00             | \$36,297.14          |
|   | Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) <sup>3</sup> | \$1,077,046.53        | \$0.00             | \$42,838.92          |
|   | <i>Total</i>  | <b>\$1,179,733.77</b> | <b>\$19,713.48</b> | <b>\$98,757.120</b>  |
| Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC) <sup>2</sup> | Fisheries Observation Science                                   | \$ 584,415.32         | \$ 119.39          | \$ 150,883.03        |
|   | Economics & Social Science Research                             | \$ 114,975.27         | \$ 5,943.51        | \$ 7,636.59          |
|   | Scientific Data Management grant (SDM) <sup>4</sup>             | \$141,906.35          | \$4.17             | \$60,626.51          |
|   | <i>Total</i>  | <b>\$841,296.94</b>   | <b>\$6,067.07</b>  | <b>\$219,146.135</b> |
| Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) <sup>5</sup>            |   | <b>\$52,969.98</b>    | <b>\$2,216.30</b>  | <b>\$1,358.13</b>    |
| Total personnel and contract/grant costs                |   | \$2,074,000.69        | \$27,996.85        | \$319,261.39         |
| Non-labor costs   |   | \$ 38,277             | \$ 618             | \$ 3,205             |
| Total costs   |   | <b>\$2,112,277.92</b> | <b>\$28,615.21</b> | <b>\$322,466.75</b>  |

<sup>2</sup> Includes FTE and contractors

<sup>3</sup> Includes EM video review and reimbursement program, catch monitor program, and IFQ E-tix

<sup>4</sup> Includes database license fees and overhead

<sup>5</sup> Includes FTE costs only

## Summary of Major Changes for 2025 MS Fee Percentage

- There were two main factors in the increase in the fee percentage for the MS Program for 2025. There was an increase in recoverable costs for the Electronic Monitoring (EM) program, including the EFPs and the regulatory program. In addition, there was a substantial decrease in ex-vessel revenue (fishery value) for the MS Program in 2023. The decline in fishery value from 2022 to 2023 had a bigger impact on the 2025 fee than the increase in incremental costs from FY23 to FY24.
- **Increased MS costs in 2024 (~14% increase)**
  - Costs: For 2024 (\$280,187) and 2025 (\$322,466), the change in costs were largely due to EM implementation
    - Issuance of EM permits
    - Final build-out of EM databases
- **Decreased MS revenue in 2023 (>50% drop in fishery value)**
  - The 2024 rate calculation was based on 2022 catch (129 million pounds) and the 2025 rate calculation is based on 2023 data (71 million pounds), a 45% decrease.
  - The ex-vessel price used for the 2025 fee calculation is \$0.09/lb, an 18% decrease compared to \$0.11 price used for the 2024 fee calculation
  - The estimated total ex-vessel value for the 2025 calculation is \$6.3 million, a 59% decrease compared to 2024 (\$15 million).

## New or Ad-Hoc Tasks for FY2024

### *Groundfish Branch*

- Support of Council sablefish gear switching action, development of implementation details (IFQ)
- Electronic monitoring (EM) rulemaking (IFQ, MS)
- Trawl rationalization program review support and planning (IFQ, MS, C/P)

### *Permits and Monitoring Branch*

- Electronic monitoring (EM)
  - Implementation of EM program (IFQ, MS)
    - Development of policies and procedures, and database architecture
    - Issuance of EM service provider permits
    - Maintenance of individual vessel monitoring plans (VMP)
    - Tracking of vessel performance, including review of PSMFC drive report feedback
  - Development and implementation of EM discard EFP (IFQ)
    - Issuance of 2024 EFPs
- Responding to data requests and providing information for development and analysis of sablefish gear switching action, including providing implementation details for proposed measures (IFQ)

### *NWFSC Data Management (SDM) (on behalf of Permits and Monitoring Branch)*

- Implementation of Council actions, including development of use cases, and development, testing, and, deployment of database modifications:
  - EM applications and drive report databases (IFQ, MS)
- Responding to data requests and providing information for development and analysis of sablefish gear switching action, including providing implementation details for proposed measures (IFQ)

#### *NWFSC Observer Program*

- Conducting secondary review for the EM program (IFQ, MS)

#### *NWFSC Economics and Social Science Research*

- Trawl Catch Share Program Review (IFQ, MS, C/P)

#### *OLE*

- Evaluate related enforcement implications in regards to new actions, rulemaking; reviewed proposed and final rules (IFQ, MS, C/P)

### **Adjusted DPCs**

Cost recovery regulations at § 660.115(b)(1)(i) specify that, if the amount of fees collected by NMFS is greater or less than the actual net incremental costs incurred, the DPC will be adjusted accordingly for calculation of the fee percentage in the following year.

In the process of generating this report, NMFS identified \$36,690 in EM administrative costs from the PSMFC that were not included in the 2025 fee calculation. These costs would have been attributed to the IFQ and MS sector. However, as these costs would not have changed the 2025 fee percentage for either sector (capped at 3.0%), there will be no adjustments to the FY2024 DPC.

### **Determining the Value of the Fishery (V)**

The cost recovery program regulations define ex-vessel value for each sector (IFQ, MS, and C/P). To determine the ex-vessel value for the Shorebased IFQ Program, NMFS used the ex-vessel value for calendar year 2023 as reported in the Pacific Fisheries Information Network (PacFIN) from Shorebased IFQ electronic fish tickets as this was the most recent complete set of data. To determine the ex-vessel value for the MS Co-op Program and the C/P Co-op Program, NMFS used the retained catch estimates (weight) for each sector as reported in the North Pacific Observer Program database multiplied by the 2023 MS average price (\$0.09) reported by the MS Co-op (per regulations at § 660.113(c)(5)(i)(B)).

To determine “V” by sector for calendar year 2023, NMFS queried the PacFIN database. Shorebased IFQ landings and revenue estimates (including all groundfish species) were taken from the PacFIN Comprehensive FT table where nominal ticket species categories are distributed to individual rockfish species at the daily level, using area and species composition proportions supplied by the state sampling programs (Table 2). For the MS and C/P fisheries, retained catch estimates and corresponding Pacific whiting values were taken from the NORPAC Comprehensive table within PacFIN (Table 3).

Table 2. Retained catch estimates and value, for all groundfish species, by month for Shorebased IFQ Program in 2023. IFQ estimates were queried from the PacFIN Comprehensive FT table.

| 2023       | IFQ lbs                | IFQ value              |
|------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Sum</b> | <b>283,574,239 lbs</b> | <b>\$46,413,264.00</b> |

Table 3. Retained catch estimates by month and sector (NORPAC) in 2023.

| 2023         | C/P retained catch     | MS retained catch     |
|--------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Sum</b>   | 236,002,976 lbs        | 71,030,585 lbs        |
| Price        | \$0.09                 | \$0.09                |
| <b>Value</b> | <b>\$21,004,264.86</b> | <b>\$6,321,722.07</b> |

### Calculating the Fee as a Percentage of Total Fishery Value

Using the formula described above in “Fee Percentage Calculation by Sector” and the values for V and adjusted DPC, the fee percentage by sector is as follows:

$$\text{Fee percentage} = \text{the lower of 3\% or } (DPC/V) \times 100$$

- IFQ Program:  $4.6\% = (\$2,112,277.92/\$46,413,264.00) \times 100$
- C/P Program:  $0.1\% = (\$28,615.21/\$21,004,264.86) \times 100$
- MS Program:  $5.1\% = (\$322,466.75/\$6,321,722.07) \times 100$

The calculated fee percentage cannot exceed the statutory limit of 3 percent. The IFQ Program fee calculation (4.6 percent) and the MS Program (5.1 percent) exceed this limit, therefore, the 2025 fee percentage for these Programs is 3 percent. The final 2025 fee percentages are 3.0 percent for the IFQ Program, 0.1 percent for the C/P Co-op Program, and 3.0 percent for the MS Co-op Program.



## Fees Collected during Fishing Year 2024

The fees collected in 2024 can be found in Table 4 below.

*Table 4. Cost recovery fees collected through Pay.gov for 2024 catch.*

| <b>Sector</b>          | <b>2024 Fees Collected</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Shorebased IFQ Program | \$1,180,943.28             |
| C/P Program            | \$16,647.32                |
| MS Program             | \$77,480.80                |
| <b>Total</b>           | <b>\$1,275,071.40</b>      |

## Use of Funds

Payments received by NMFS as a result of cost recovery are deposited in the Limited Access System Administrative Fund as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Funds deposited in this account are available only to the Secretary of Commerce and may only be used to administer and implement the Magnuson-Stevens Act in the fishery in which the fees were collected. All cost recovery fees will be used for current and future management, data collection and analysis, and enforcement of the Trawl Program.

## Appendix 1

Tables 1-1, 1-2, and 1-3 only capture personnel and contract/grant costs, except database license fees are included in the SDM costs. See Table 1 in the main document for other costs.,

*Table 1-1. FY2024 DPC, Staff Hours, and FTE Equivalent for the IFQ Sector:*

| <b>Office</b>                                     | <b>Branch/Program</b>                          | <b>IFQ</b>     |              |              |                       |
|---|--|----------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|
|   |  | <i>Costs</i>   | <i>Hours</i> | <i>Staff</i> | <i>FTE equivalent</i> |
| <b>West Coast Region (WCR)</b>                    | Groundfish                                     | \$41,178.63    | 583.5        | 3            | 0.28                  |
|   | Permits & Monitoring                           | \$61,508.61    | 429.5        | 3            | 0.2                   |
|   | Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission     | \$1,077,046.53 | -            | -            | -                     |
| <b>Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC)</b> | Fisheries Observation Science (FTE)            | \$ 146,737.99  | 2,179.69     | 7            | 1.048                 |
|   | Fisheries Observation Science (contract)       | \$ 437,677.33  | -            | 11           | -                     |
|   | Economics & Social Science Research (FTE)      | \$ 44,283.27   | 571.29       | 4            | 0.27                  |
|   | Economics & Social Science Research (contract) | \$ 70,692.00   | -            | 1            | -                     |
|   | Scientific Data Management contract (SDM)      | \$141,906.35   | -            | -            | -                     |
| <b>Office of Law Enforcement (OLE)</b>            |  | \$52,969.98    | 1,041        | 9            | 0.5                   |

Table 1-2. FY2024 DPC, Staff Hours, and FTE Equivalent for C/P sector.

| <b>Office</b>                                     | <b>Branch/Program</b>                            | <b>CP</b>    |              |              |                       |
|---|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|
|   |  | <i>Costs</i> | <i>Hours</i> | <i>Staff</i> | <i>FTE equivalent</i> |
| <b>West Coast Region (WCR)</b>                    | Groundfish                                       | \$19,713.48  | 334.5        | 2            | 0.16                  |
|   | Permits & Monitoring                             | -            | -            | -            | -                     |
|   | Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission grant | -            | -            | -            | -                     |
| <b>Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC)</b> | Fisheries Observation Science (FTE)              | \$119.39     | 1.00         | 1            | <0.00                 |
|   | Fisheries Observation Science (contract)         | -            | -            | -            | -                     |
|   | Economics & Social Science Research (FTE)        | \$5,943.51   | 77.25        | 2            | 0.037                 |
|   | Economics & Social Science Research (contract)   | -            | -            | -            | -                     |
|   | Scientific Data Management contract (SDM)        | \$4.17       | -            | -            | <0.00                 |
| <b>Office of Law Enforcement (OLE)</b>            |  | \$2,216.30   | 38           | 6            | 0.018                 |

Table 1-3. FY2024 DPC, Staff Hours, and FTE Equivalent for MS sector.

| <b>Office</b>                                     | <b>Branch/Program</b>                            | <b>MS</b>    |              |              |                       |
|---|--|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------|
|   |  | <i>Costs</i> | <i>Hours</i> | <i>Staff</i> | <i>FTE equivalent</i> |
| <b>West Coast Region (WCR)</b>                    | Groundfish                                       | \$19,621.06  | 334.25       | 2            | 0.16                  |
|   | Permits & Monitoring                             | \$36,297.14  | 547.12       | 2            | 0.26                  |
|   | Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission grant | \$42,838.92  | -            | -            | -                     |
| <b>Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC)</b> | Fisheries Observation Science (FTE)              | \$65,506.46  | 838.00       | 3            | 0.40                  |
|   | Fisheries Observation Science (contract)         | \$85,376.57  | -            | 11           | -                     |
|   | Economics & Social Science Research (FTE)        | \$7,636.59   | 98.75        | 2            | 0.05                  |
|   | Economics & Social Science Research (contract)   | -            | -            | -            | -                     |
|   | Scientific Data Management contract (SDM)        | \$60,626.51  | -            | -            | -                     |
| <b>Office of Law Enforcement (OLE)</b>            |  | \$1,358.13   | 23           | 5            | 0.011                 |

## Appendix 2

*Table 2-1. Nominal ex-vessel value (as defined at § 660.111) and direct program costs (not adjusted for inflation) before adjustment (if any) by sector 2021-2025. The data in each column is what was used to determine the cost recovery fee percentage for that year.*

| Sector            | Fee Collection Year |              |              |                 |                 |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                   | 2021                | 2022         | 2023         | 2024            | 2025            |
| IFQ Fishery Value | \$60,388,316        | \$40,008,494 | \$48,344,359 | \$54,406,343.00 | \$46,413,264.00 |
| IFQ DPC           | \$1,525,104         | \$1,689,034  | \$1,701,903  | \$1,927,301.37  | \$2,112,277.92  |
| C/P Fishery Value | \$23,703,578        | \$22,052,787 | \$22,901,112 | \$33,367,530.60 | \$21,004,264.86 |
| C/P DPC           | \$63,381            | \$35,958     | \$33,840     | \$29,364.40     | \$28,615.21     |
| MS Fishery Value  | \$10,625,816        | \$7,367,455  | \$7,674,928  | \$15,425,857.68 | \$6,321,722.07  |
| MS DPC            | \$145,378           | \$127,650    | \$128,759    | \$280,187.19    | \$322,466.75    |

*Table 2-2. Fee percentages by sector for 2020-2025 including all adjustments to direct program costs. Note any calculated fee percentage over three percent was capped at three percent.*

|           | 2020  | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
|-----------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| IFQ fee % | 2.88% | 2.5% | 4.5% | 3.5% | 3.5% | 4.6% |
| C/P fee % | 0.08% | 0.2% | 0.2% | 0.1% | 0.1% | 0.1% |
| MS fee %  | 0.29% | 1.3% | 1.7% | 1.7% | 1.8% | 5.1% |

*Table 2-3. MS pricing used in fee percentage calculations 2020-2025.*

|            | 2020   | 2021   | 2022   | 2023   | 2024   | 2025   |
|------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| MS pricing | \$0.08 | \$0.09 | \$0.09 | \$0.10 | \$0.11 | \$0.09 |

## Appendix 3

### Determination of Recoverable Costs

NMFS uses a “but for” approach when determining the actual costs of managing the Trawl Program as specified in 50 CFR 660.115(b)(1)(i). This approach looks at incremental costs that would not have been incurred but for the implementation of the Trawl Program, and is consistent with the “with and without” language in “[The Design and Use of Limited Access Privilege Programs](#)” tech memo (NOAA, 2007). This approach results in tasks being categorized as incremental, partially incremental, or non-incremental.

**Non-incremental tasks** may support the trawl fishery but are not directly related to the Trawl Program provisions (i.e., not part of Amendment 20 or other trailing Amendments). These tasks would have occurred without the implementation of the LAPP program. Examples include:

- NWFSC groundfish trawl survey work.
- Groundfish stock assessments.
- Groundfish harvest specifications.
- Participation in the Pacific Whiting Treaty discussions and the rulemaking for annual specifications.
- Database work that is not specific to the Trawl Program such as maintenance and upgrades to limited entry permits-specific portions of the permits database.
- Reapportioning quota pounds as a result of the finalization of Pacific whiting quotas (“top-up”) or tribal re-apportionments.
- Observer coverage levels that were in place prior to rationalization.

**Incremental tasks** are those that would not have occurred but for the implementation of the Trawl Program. Partially incremental tasks are those for which a portion of the tasks is incremental and a portion is non-incremental.

Further details of the on-going tasks previously determined to be incremental costs for management, data collection and analysis, and enforcement of the Trawl Program by sector are described below. The details are grouped by FMC within NMFS: WCR, NWFSC, and OLE.

### **West Coast Region (WCR)**

The WCR manages the Trawl Program by working on policy issues, drafting and implementing regulations, tracking the fishery, and issuing permits. This includes work done by WCR Groundfish, Permits and Monitoring, and Operations and Policy Branches. It also includes WCR costs for work done by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission for the Catch Monitor Program and electronic fish tickets for Shorebased IFQ Program landings. The specific tasks identified to be recoverable are outlined in greater detail later in this document.

Examples of WCR, PSMFC, and NWFSC SDM incremental tasks in FY2024 and which sectors were charged are described below.

### Groundfish Branch

*Ongoing and Annual Tasks* - these activities are performed on an annual or ongoing basis to administer the program and for which staff time fluctuates minimally.

- Trawl Program Support & Compliance - Provide support to constituents to understand and comply with program requirements.
  - Coordinate with the Permits Branch for annual issuance of quota pound (QP) and carryover (IFQ).
  - Respond to requests for clarification of Trawl Program regulations by phone, email, and in person (IFQ).
  - Assist the Permits Branch in the review of annual MS and C/P co-op applications (MS, C/P).
- Website Updates - Prepare and update information for the [West Coast Groundfish Trawl Catch Share Program website](#) (ALL).
- Assist the Permits Branch, West Coast Groundfish Observer Program (WCGOP), and OLE in monitoring and investigation of compliance with Trawl Program regulations (ALL, mostly IFQ).
- Groundfish Management Team (GMT) analysis for recoverable tasks, as appropriate (ALL). Time spent at GMT meetings working on incremental tasks is not charged but time spent analyzing tasks identified as incremental outside a Council meeting is charged.
- Cost recovery tracking, accounting, and reporting (ALL).
- Cost recovery policy, fee percentage calculation and notice, preparation of annual report and presentation to the Council, providing assistance to industry in paying cost recovery fees, coordinating the dispersal of cost recovery funds, attending meetings (ALL).

### Permits and Monitoring Branch

*Ongoing and Annual Tasks* - these activities are performed on an annual or ongoing basis to administer the Trawl Program and for which staff time fluctuates minimally.

- Permits and Licenses - Process and administer permit and license applications and programs.
  - Review new applications and renewals for QS permits/accounts (IFQ), vessel accounts (IFQ), observer-catch monitor provider permits (ALL), and co-op permits (MS, C/P).
  - Work with applicants to understand requirements, and complete and submit forms (ALL, mostly IFQ).
  - Enter data into the database, issue permits, and establish new accounts. Maintain paper and electronic files associated with permits, licenses, and accounts (ALL, mostly IFQ).
- Trawl Program Support & Compliance - Provide support to constituents to understand

and comply with program requirements.

- Respond to constituents' requests for information and assistance by phone, email, and in person (IFQ).
  - Clarify Trawl Program regulations.
  - Reset passwords and provide support for vessel and QS accounts.
  - Train new entrants on how to use the IFQ account system.
  - Complete administrative transfers for deceased QS permit owners and work with families to understand requirements.
- Proactive outreach with constituents about deadlines and changes in regulations (IFQ).
  - Contact constituents with an upcoming renewal, application, or quota pound transfer deadline.
  - Post messages on the IFQ website.
- Data entry and Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC):
  - Enter QA/QC data.
  - Reconcile data discrepancies found in the IFQ account system (IFQ).
- Update catch monitor plan guidelines and template for first receivers (IFQ).
- Data requests - Prepare Trawl Program data reports in response to various constituents (i.e., Council staff industry, Non-governmental organizations, Congressional, members of the public) and internal requests (IFQ).
- Database Maintenance/Troubleshoot Reported System Errors - Work with NWFSC IT to maintain and make enhancements to online databases (ALL, mostly IFQ).
  - Prepare business rules and use cases for programming staff to code system enhancements/revisions, such as password reset functionality.
  - Work with programming staff to test new functionality of systems before release.
  - Carry out QA/QC of the system.
- Quota Pound Allocations - Calculate and allocate quota pounds to QS accounts and carryover quota pounds to vessel accounts (IFQ).
  - Prepare memos documenting QP allocation and carryover actions.
- Website Updates - Prepare and update information for the [West Coast Groundfish Trawl Catch Share Program website](#) (year-end notice, carryover notice, updated forms, etc.) (ALL).
- Cost recovery tracking, accounting, and reporting (ALL).

## PSMFC

*Ongoing and Annual Tasks* - these activities are performed on an annual or ongoing basis to administer the Trawl Program and for which staff time fluctuates minimally. Costs include wages, benefits, communications, shipping, rent, software, supplies, and overhead.

- Catch Monitor (CM) Program Management (IFQ).
  - Manage the CM program, including training and overseeing CM certifications.
  - Debrief CMs, manage, and QA/QC CM data.
  - Review catch monitor plans for FRSL applications, conduct site inspections, work



- with applicants to revise and resubmit final CM plans.
- Respond to constituent requests for information about the CM program and requirements.
- Participate in the development of policies and protocols for the CM program, including implementation of changes (e.g., as a result of regulatory actions).
- E-Tickets Support (IFQ)
  - Respond to constituent requests for assistance with e-tickets, train new users, manage and troubleshoot data entry and transmission.

## NWFSC

NWFSC collects and analyzes data on the Trawl Program through observers on vessels and through economic and social surveys. This includes work done by the NWFSC Fishery Resource Assessment and Monitoring Program (FRAM) and SDM and additional staff paid through PSMFC, and other contracts.

FRAM staff timecards were coded with project and task codes by sector in a similar manner as those from the WCR. Only costs attributable to the implementation of the 2011 Trawl Program were included. Because the mothership processing vessels (i.e., not the mothership catcher vessels) and C/P vessels were fully observed with mandatory observers and debriefers from the At-Sea Hake Observer Program (A-SHOP) before the Trawl Program, these debriefer costs were not included. The A-SHOP manages observers for the at-sea whiting processors, which includes mothership processors (not the catcher vessels), and the C/Ps. The WCGOP administers the observer program for the shorebased catcher vessels (IFQ) and the catcher vessels fishing for and delivering to motherships. We deducted 25% of the costs attributed to the WCGOP for the Shorebased IFQ Program to account for observer coverage of the limited entry trawl fishery by the WCGOP prior to the implementation of the Trawl Program.

The PSMFC observer costs are also only for IFQ and MS catcher vessel Trawl Program activities. Costs are reported at the Trawl Program and non-Trawl Program level; the bulk of these costs are for the Shorebased IFQ Program. The PSMFC observer costs include the salary, benefits, and overhead for PSMFC observer staff working on Trawl Program activities. These values only cover staff time for observer program activities, not Catch Monitor Program activities, or any other PSMFC activities. In addition to the Shorebased IFQ Program, some of the costs are also attributable to the MS fishery for debriefing and training observers deployed on MS/catcher vessels (CV) and not for any A-SHOP costs associated with MS vessels. As with the other NWFSC observer estimates, 25% of the hours and costs were deducted from the IFQ shorebased amounts to account for coverage of the limited entry trawl fishery prior to the implementation of the Trawl Program.

## Fisheries Observation Science

*Ongoing and Annual Tasks* - these activities are performed on an annual or ongoing basis to administer the Trawl Program and for which staff time fluctuates minimally. Time should be allocated directly to the sector in which work is being done when possible. For tasks that apply to all sectors, time should be split equally across applicable sectors as noted below.

- Trawl Program data review, reporting, and observer debriefings (WCGOP only, no A-SHOP costs reported) (IFQ, MS).
  - Debrief observers, error check observer data, and provide guidance to observers deployed in the Trawl Program.
  - QA/QC observer data to ensure it is of the highest quality.
  - Maintain nightly automated reporting of discard data to the vessel account system.
  - Prepare, package, file, and archive Trawl Program observer program data.
- Trawl Program observer trainings and briefings (WCGOP only, no A-SHOP costs reported) (IFQ, MS).
  - Conduct high-quality annual trainings and briefings (refresher training) to deploy and certify observers for the Trawl Program. Develop and modify manuals and lesson plans to meet observer sampling requirements of the Trawl Program.
  - Document and track observer certifications and endorsements for Trawl Program observer deployments as established in regulation. Review observer candidate applications from observer providers to ensure they meet regulatory standards and maintain appropriate records.
- Support to constituents with their vessel accounts with regard to observer discards (IFQ).
  - Maintain phone and email service to constituents to address questions regarding observer discard debits from vessel accounts. Explain how discard is calculated in specific circumstances based on observer sampling. Provide data as requested to support debits.
  - Manually calculate discard estimates using best available data for unforeseen instances such as gear loss or improper catch handling.
- Develop and execute the EM program secondary review capabilities (IFQ, MS).
  - Design data systems to store and deliver EM data, and apply business rules as directed.
  - Collaborate with WCR, PSMFC, and EM 3rd party providers to help develop business rules, manuals, and other documents/guidance as needed.
  - Build and execute video review capabilities and feedback mechanisms for secondary review of information.
- Observer Program Data Systems and Database (ALL).
  - Conduct database maintenance and enhancements, and address issues for those systems and processes related to the Trawl Program and discard reporting to the Vessel Accounting System.
- Manage and error check trawl catch data with PSMFC, WCGOP, and OLE (ALL)
  - Provide data and support as requested by OLE or EM program to support the Trawl Program.
- Cost recovery, data analysis and reporting (ALL).
  - Query, aggregate, modify, and provide recoverable cost data to cost-recovery coordinator.
  - Determine and provide annual guidance regarding cost recoverable activities and time keeping.
- Cost recovery tracking, accounting, and reporting (ALL).

Economics and Social Science Research

*Ongoing and Annual Tasks* - these activities are performed on an annual or ongoing basis to administer the Trawl Program and for which staff time fluctuates minimally. The costs for these ongoing tasks are apportioned based on the following criteria. For sector specific tasks, IFQ, MS, and C/P costs are apportioned to the particular sector. For non-sector specific tasks, such as database maintenance, costs are apportioned as 33.3% to each sector. For catcher-vessel related tasks, some cost is apportioned to the MS sector because catcher-vessels also participate. The apportionment is 88% to IFQ and 12% to MS based on the average percentage of active fishing vessels that participate in the MS sector.

- Economic Data Collection (EDC) form administration and mailings (ALL).
  - Update paper surveys to reflect general survey upkeep from year-to-year.
  - Design and implement survey updates and improvements based on feedback from participants and users of data and data products.
  - Acquire Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) approval of surveys.
  - Order paper copies of surveys and other supplies needed for annual mailing of survey packets.
  - Identify entities that owe an EDC survey in a given year.
  - Update survey packets, which include cover letters and instructions as well as the current year's EDC survey.
  - Compile and mail survey packets as well as creating new file folders for current year's incoming surveys.
- EDC development and maintenance of web-based forms (ALL).
  - Add any survey updates (including new questions) to web-based forms.
  - Test web-based forms each year to ensure forms are functioning properly and data is recorded.
  - General updates to web-based forms to increase usability.
  - Generate new unique form IDs for each survey that is owed.
- EDC data QA/QC (ALL).
  - Double-key entry of any surveys submitted via paper forms.
  - Update and improve automated QA/QC business rules.
  - Data validation using external data sources, including the Pacific Fisheries Information Network (PacFIN), Alaska Fisheries Information Network (AKFIN), At-Sea Hake Observer Program, and the West Coast Regional Permit Office.
  - Data validation using internal data sources, including data submitted by participants in other years and data submitted by other participants.
  - Communicate QA/QC items to participants and work with them to clarify any items that have been flagged (via phone calls, emails, and letters).
  - Mail audit letters to participants that have not clarified existing items.
  - Record electronic and paper logs of communications with participants.
- EDC database maintenance (ALL).
  - Clean and transform raw data into data files for analyses.
  - Design and implement updates and improvements to data cleaning process, including cost disaggregation, fishery designations, categorizing entities, etc.
- Produce EDC reporting through EDC reports and web-site (ALL).
  - General upkeep of code to generate annual EDC reports and web-site, including updating language to reflect current year, additional formatting associated with including an additional year of data, etc.

- Update report overviews to reflect current year's data. Report overviews focus on presenting the most recent year of data, so from year-to-year the language and discussions must be updated.
- Design and implement updates and improvements to data presentation, including generating new figures and tables.
- Regularly coordinate and provide OLE information to determine actions pertaining to delinquent and inaccurate submissions, which include delinquency letters, audit letters, warnings, site visits, and fines (ALL).
- Cost recovery tracking, accounting, and reporting (ALL).

## SDM

The NWFSC SDM team provides the user interface and database architecture that allows IFQ QS and vessel account owners to manage QS and QP through transfers and balance reporting of fish landings and discards. The NWFSC SDM has developed and maintained the IFQ Catch Share web application since the initial launch on January 11, 2011, and continues to provide enhancements as user needs and regulations have warranted. The NWFSC SDM provides a data reporting interface available to key NMFS and state law enforcement agents, NMFS WCR Permits Office, NMFS economists, PSMFC staff, and Council staff.

*Ongoing and Annual Tasks* - these activities are performed on an annual or ongoing basis to administer the Trawl Program and for which staff time fluctuates minimally.

- Database Enhancements, Maintenance, Troubleshoot Reported System Errors – Design and develop enhancements for the online IFQ and permit systems; revise user interface; prepare use cases for programming staff to code system enhancements/revisions; test new functionality of systems before release; on an ongoing basis carry out QA/QC of system (ALL, mostly IFQ).
- Administrative quota actions in the vessel account system – e.g., top-ups, QP allocations, carryover, reapportionment (IFQ).
- Posting messages to the vessel account system (IFQ).
- Cost recovery tracking, accounting, and reporting (ALL).

## NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement (OLE)

OLE enforces the requirements of the Trawl Program. OLE tracks labor costs by one project/task code, but sworn law enforcement officers and agents track their daily hours by activity codes on their timecards (1 for each sector – IFQ, MS, C/P). Law enforcement officers and agents recorded recoverable activities in FY2024 associated with IFQ, C/P, and MS programs.

OLE investigative support technicians (ISTs) also perform recoverable activities for all three categories (IFQ, C/P, MS). IST activities apply to all categories and include, but are not limited to, tracking QS and vessel account balances, contacting vessel owners if an account is negative, assisting with fishery declarations, and tracking fishing status and activity through the vessel monitoring system.

Examples of OLE incremental tasks considered recoverable include:

*Ongoing and Annual Tasks* - these activities are performed on an annual or ongoing basis to administer the Trawl Program and for which staff time fluctuates minimally.

- Evaluate enforcement issues related to permit renewals and new applications (e.g., co-op permits, QS and vessel accounts, FRSL) (ALL, mostly IFQ).
- Monitor QS and vessel accounts for regulatory compliance (IFQ).
- Monitor trawl catch data on a daily basis to ensure compliance with regulations (IFQ).
  - Ongoing monitoring and subsequent investigations of alleged violations of Trawl Program regulations by vessel owners, operators, processors, and First Receivers (FRs).
  - Take enforcement action where appropriate to include verbal communication, compliance assistance, correction letters, and formal investigation leading to the issuance of written warnings, summary settlements and Notice of Violation Assessments (NOVA) (ALL).
- Analysis and evaluation of EDC report submittals for regulation compliance, inclusive of issuing compliance correction letters, and conducting investigations leading to the issuance of written warnings, summary settlements and NOVA's (ALL).
- Evaluation of numerous regulation complexities and proposed regulation changes specific to IFQ midwater and bottom trawl fishing activity that have emerged because of the implementation of the IFQ program (IFQ).
- Participate in the analysis, creation, and QA/QC of IFQ program outreach materials; i.e., compliance guides (IFQ).
- Data Requests/Reports – Prepare Trawl Program data reports in response to various constituents (e.g., Council staff, industry, NGOs, Congressional, members of the public) and internal NMFS requests (IFQ).
- Investigation of alleged observer and catch monitor violations (IFQ).
- Investigation of alleged Electronic Monitoring violations (All).
- Investigation of alleged violations of ownership interest for the IFQ trawl fleet across permits and vessels (IFQ).
- Develop procedures and processes of monitoring, analyzing, and investigating alleged excessive QS holdings (IFQ).
- Participate in designing programming updates for the online IFQ system to improve monitoring and investigative capabilities (IFQ).
- Cost recovery tracking, accounting, and reporting (ALL).

### **Northwest Section of General Council**

NMFS did not include the cost of staff from the Northwest Section of NOAA General Counsel in the cost recovery calculation. Of the other Regions around the country collecting cost recovery fees for LAPPs under the MSA, no other Region includes NOAA General Counsel in recoverable costs. The Alaska Region did recover their NOAA General Counsel costs in the past, but has stopped doing so.