



Pacific Fishery Management Council

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

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 23, 2025

TO: Groundfish Advisory Subpanel, Groundfish Management Team, and Groundfish Interested Persons

FROM: Todd Phillips, Groundfish Staff Officer

SUBJECT: June 2025 Council Meeting Materials

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet June 13-16, 2025 in Rohnert Park, California. The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) and the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel (GAP) will convene meetings starting Wednesday, June 11, 2025, at 8 a.m. and will adjourn at noon on Sunday, June 15, 2025. The GMT and GAP are scheduled to meet in the Sonoma and Vineyard Conference rooms, respectively. All meetings are open to the public and at least one opportunity for public comment has been scheduled for each meeting day.

The briefing book materials attached to this memorandum provide detailed information for items on the Council's June 2025 agenda. The following agenda items may be of particular interest to the GMT, the GAP, and other groundfish-interested stakeholders.

Cross Fishery Management Plan

D.1 Presidential Executive Orders and Administration Updates and D.2 Council Response to Executive Orders and Administration Updates

Under Agenda Item D.1, the Council will receive a presentation from National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on administrative updates, with a focus on Executive Order (EO) 14276: *Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness*. This is the opportunity for the Council and Advisory Bodies to gain clarity on the task for the Regional Fishery Management Councils necessary to generate the Council's response.

Under Agenda Item D.2, the Council is expected to identify actions that align with the objectives of EO 14276—including stabilizing seafood markets, improving access, enhancing economic profitability, and preventing fishery closures. The Council will also provide guidance on key factors to consider when setting priorities. Input from Advisory Bodies on potential actions and prioritization criteria is encouraged under Agenda Item D.2.

Groundfish Management

E.2 Limited Entry Fixed Gear Actions: Gear Endorsements, Cost Recovery, and Other Administrative Changes – Final Action

The Council completed its second review of the limited entry fixed gear (LEFG) permit stacking program (i.e., tier fishery) in June 2022 and adopted a series of recommendations for the program. In March 2023, the Council prioritized these changes and expanded the action to include all LEFG participants and adopted a purpose and need and range of alternatives in September 2023 followed by a Preliminary Preferred Alternative (PPA) in March 2025. The alternatives are centered around potential changes in gear endorsements to promote flexibility, development of a cost recovery program for the tier fishery, and other administrative changes. The GAP and GMT should consider the analysis provided in Attachment 1 and the proposed cost recovery program in NMFS Report 1 and recommend a Final Preferred Alternative (FPA) to the Council. Additionally, the advisory bodies should review the proposed Fishery Management Plan (FMP) amendment language in Supplemental Attachment 2 and provide any feedback.

E.3 Inseason Management – Final Action

This agenda item will consider progress to date of the groundfish fisheries as well as routine inseason adjustments to the 2025 fisheries, as necessary, to achieve conservation objectives. This agenda item is the opportunity for the GAP and public to request inseason adjustments. Due to the timing of this agenda item, any inseason adjustment requests should be brought to the GMT by no later than noon, Wednesday, June 11 to ensure the GMT can complete their analytical work.

E.4 Adopt Stock Assessments

The Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) will review the update stock assessments for widow rockfish and yelloweye rockfish and consider recommendations from the SSC Groundfish Subcommittee (GFSC). Per the [Terms of Reference for groundfish stock assessment review](#), update assessments are reviewed by the SSC GFSC and do not go through a Stock Assessment Review panel review process. The Council is scheduled to review the update assessments, as well as the advice of the SSC, other advisory bodies, and the public before considering the adoption of these assessments and projections for use in groundfish management .

E.5 Intersector Allocation Review – Final Action

NMFS Policy Directive 01-119, Fishery Allocation Review Policy, makes Councils responsible for identifying the triggers applicable to each of their FMPs that contain a fisheries allocation, as well as species that are managed internationally but for which a Council may have authority for a domestic quota allocation. The Council did the first intersector allocation review in conjunction with the first review of the Amendment 20 trawl catch share program. In September 2024, the Council expanded the scope of the allocation review to include all stocks allocated on a biennial basis in addition those stocks considered in the first review (i.e., formally allocated stocks). The intent behind including these stocks is to provide the Council, advisory bodies, and the public with information on what stocks may benefit from further investigation and consideration of an allocation change through the 2027-28 harvest specifications (Agenda Item E.8). At this meeting, the Council should provide any feedback on this review and adopt the review document.

E.6 Phase 2 Stock Definitions — Final Action

The Council is scheduled to accomplish three tasks for Phase 2 at this meeting. The first task is to adopt FPA for 47 groundfish species as analyzed in Attachment 1. The second task is to adopt PPA

for the species considered under the 10-factors at §600.305(c). The third task is to consider the results of the GMT (GMT Report 1) on ecosystem component (EC) species.

Task 1: The Council adopted Alternative 1 for 47 groundfish species as PPA in action March 2025. Alternative 1 identifies these species as in need of conservation and management in Federal waters. The Council also adopted Option 1, single stock area, for these species as PPA. The GMT and GAP should review the analysis in Attachment 1. Their recommendations should address if these species are in need of conservation and management in Federal waters and if the Option 1 stock definition is appropriate for these species.

Task 2: In March, the Council directed staff to analyze 39 species under the ten factors at §600.305(c) to assist them in determining if these species are in need of conservation and management. That analysis has been completed (Supplemental Attachment 2). The Council is scheduled to adopt a PPA for these species. The 39 species are to be considered under all three alternatives as follows. Alternative 1 would designate the species in need of conservation and stocks of these species will be defined. Alternative 2 would remove the species from the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan. Alternative 3 would designate the species as ecosystem component (EC) species. If the Council adopts Alternative 1, it will need to adopt a stock definition based on the stock delineation Options provided in the document. The GMT and GAP should recommend a preferred alternative for each species along with supporting rationale. If the GMT and GAP conclude that any of these species are in need of conservation and management in Federal waters (Alternative 1), they should provide recommendations a stock definition Option for the species.

Task 3: The Council requested an analysis to examine mortality of the current list of EC species. The GMT completed the analysis (GMT Report 2) on the historical mortality of these species. The GMT and GAP should review this analysis with the objective to recommend if the EC designation for any of these species should be reconsidered under Phase 2 based on the analysis.

E.7 Harvest Specifications Flexibility - Scoping

This item was initiated in response to the Council's groundfish workload and new management measures prioritization in March D1-D4 of [Agenda Item H.8.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, March 2025](#) and the Adaptive Management special project guidance in April. NMFS and Council staff collaborated to explore the viability and trade-offs of pathways to increase adaptability and flexibility within the Groundfish FMP in Supplemental Attachment 1. The GAP and GMT should offer feedback to help clarify the problems the action aims to address, define the desired outcomes, identify a range of alternatives (including new ideas), and outline the next steps, including the sequencing of actions.

E.8 2027-28 Harvest Specifications and Management Measures Planning

The Council is scheduled to adopt the process and timeline that will be used in developing the 2027-28 harvest specifications and management measures. This step in the biennial process is necessary to ensure deadlines are met so that the 2027-28 groundfish regulations are enacted by January 1, 2027. The SSC, GMT, and GAP should review this schedule and provide input to the Council, as appropriate. This agenda item also provides the opportunity to front load the management measure process. The GMT and GAP should consider recommending any

management measures modifications, such as biennial allocations, trip limits, etc. for scoping by the GMT over the summer to improve workflow in this process for Council consideration.

Other Items

The following are additional pre-Council meeting briefings that may be of interest:

- The GAP and GMT will host a [joint webinar](#) meeting to discuss items on the Council's June Agenda on Wednesday, May 28, 2025 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- The NMFS reports regarding endangered species interactions with West Coast Federal groundfish fisheries (2002-2023) and the fishing effort report in West Coast Federal fisheries (2002-2023) are available as Informational Reports 2 and 3, respectively. The data from these reports are provided as downloadable Microsoft Excel files.

Thank you for your commitment to the Council process and management of Pacific groundfish fisheries.

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Enclosures include:

1. Agenda Item A.3 – Council Meeting Agenda
2. Agenda Item B.1 – Comments on Non-Agenda Items
3. Agenda Item C – Administrative Matters
4. Agenda Item D – Cross Fishery Management Plan
5. Agenda Item E – Groundfish Management
6. Enforcement Consultants Agenda
7. GAP Agenda
8. GMT Agenda
9. SSC Agenda and Draft Minutes
10. Informational Reports
11. General and Hotel Information and Council Roster

PFMC
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