



## Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Pete Hassemer, Chair | Merrick J. Burden, Executive Director

May 6, 2026

### **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (the Council) is soliciting proposals for contractual services listed below.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Council is actively exploring innovative gears and methods to target swordfish and other marketable HMS species, while minimizing bycatch. The Council adopted its HMS Roadmap to guide this effort and established an ad hoc committee (the Fisheries Innovation Workgroup (FIW)) to develop procedures which facilitate the more rapid creation of new HMS gears and achieve the goals of the Roadmap. The FIW is addressing complex and potentially contentious policy issues related to new HMS fishing gears and methods as well as bycatch in the HMS fishery. The goal is for the Contractor to support structured dialogue among diverse stakeholders, ensure balanced participation, and help the group work toward consensus recommendations where possible. The Council is a federally-funded entity and the selected Contractor must not be suspended, disbarred, or otherwise excluded from doing business with the Government.

**CONTRACT SERVICE:** Assist in planning and facilitating one or more meetings of the FIW, which is responsible for implementing portions of the Council's Highly Migratory Species (HMS) [Roadmap](#). The Contractor will also assist in the preparation of a report on outcomes and recommendations for Council consideration and final action at the November 2026 Council meeting. The Council anticipates one or two daylong FIW webinars and a two to three day in-person FIW meeting. Meeting dates have not been scheduled but are tentatively planned for the following time frames:

Webinar 1: June 18 or 19

Webinar 2: August 26 or 27

In-person meeting: October 21-23, La Jolla, California.

**CONTRACT PERIOD:** The contract period is June 1, 2026 to December 31, 2026.

**SCOPE OF WORK:** The Contractor will work with the Executive Director, Council staff, and members of the FIW to plan and implement the FIW in-person meeting and webinars. The

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primary task of the contractor will be to facilitate the FIW's discussion and development of recommendations for HMS Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) benchmarks. The FIW will provide a consensus set of recommendations for Council consideration, if possible, and may provide additional options as necessary.

The Contractor is expected to assist in the preparation and review of the report(s) that summarize outcomes of the FIW efforts. The FIW's report will be presented to the Council at its November 13 – 18, 2026 meeting. Depending on when the final FIW meeting is scheduled, there may be a very short timeframe in which to complete the report.

Working with Committee Co-Chairs and staff, the Contractor shall:

- Design and implement meeting processes that promote constructive, respectful dialogue
- Maintain neutrality and ensure that all perspectives are heard
- Manage challenging dynamics including conflict, disagreement, and power imbalances
- Assist Co-Chairs and Staff in agenda development, with a focus on facilitating consensus agreements and preparing
- Guide the FIW to agreement on the selection of specific benchmarks for comparing performance of HMS EFPs
- Serve as principal facilitator, working with the FIW Co-Chairs and staff to ensure discussions stay on track, avoid rehashing past decisions or history, and follow Council guidance
- Use tools and techniques to help the FIW make decisions, determine level of agreement on those decisions, and determine what to do if full consensus cannot be reached
- The contractor will assist the FIW Co-Chairs and staff by ensuring the final Committee report accurately reflects the areas of consensus and areas lacking consensus, supporting rationale, recommendations for Council consideration (or multiple options as necessary).

**DELIVERABLES:**

- Facilitation plan and proposed approach to running meetings.
- Post-meeting reports that document decisions, recommendations, and additional needs.

**ELIGIBILITY:** The Contractor should possess the following skills:

- History of facilitating complex fisheries issues while managing divergent viewpoints.
- Experience in conflict resolution, consensus building, and structured decision making.
- Strong facilitation skills including:
  - techniques to ensure all viewpoints are heard and understood
  - ability to identify barriers preventing consensus and techniques for overcoming those barriers.

- ability to identify when consensus is not likely and provide paths forward to capture varying viewpoints
- interpersonal skills sufficient to lead potentially contentious discussions among diverse workshop participants
- Familiarity with West Coast HMS fisheries and their management
- Familiarity with HMS EFPs, the Council's EFP procedures, and NMFS Federal EFP regulations

**HOW TO APPLY:** Proposal submissions should include the following materials:

- Cover letter describing the Contractor's approach and ideas on facilitating groups that are responsible for generating recommendations on complex issues
- A statement of how the Contractor would accomplish the scope of work
- Description of experience demonstrating facilitation of contentious topics
- Name, affiliation, and contact information
- A curriculum vitae or resume
- Applicants may submit a brief letter of intent prior to submitting a full proposal

Proposals should be submitted by e-mail (attach materials in PDF files) to the Executive Director ([Merrick.Burden@pcouncil.org](mailto:Merrick.Burden@pcouncil.org)) and may be submitted by mail to the following address:

Merrick Burden, Executive Director  
Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Pl., Ste 101  
Portland, OR 97220

Inquiries regarding this Request for Proposals should be directed to Executive Director Burden (503-820-2280; [Merrick.Burden@pcouncil.org](mailto:Merrick.Burden@pcouncil.org)) or Staff Officer Kerry Griffin (503-820-2409; [Kerry.griffin@pcouncil.org](mailto:Kerry.griffin@pcouncil.org)).

Applicants may wish to consult briefing materials presented at Council meetings (available on the Council website, [www.pcouncil.org](http://www.pcouncil.org)) to better understand the purpose of the scope of work:

- [November 2024](#), Agenda Items H.4 and C.5
- June 2025, [Agenda Item F.4](#)
- March 2026 [Agenda Item C.5](#)

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE:** Proposals may be submitted immediately. This Request for Proposals will remain open until May 29, 2026, or until a contractor is engaged, whichever is earlier.

**POTENTIAL AVAILABLE ASSISTANCE [MAXIMUM CONTRACT AWARD]**

- Contract award shall not exceed \$25,000
- Award should cover labor, supplies and materials, overhead
- Travel expenses will be reimbursed by the Pacific Fishery Management Council