DRAFT COUNCIL MEETING RECORD
286th Session of the
Pacific Fishery Management Council
March 3-9, 2026
Doubletree by Hilton Sacramento
2001 Point West Way, Sacramento, CA 95815

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INTRODUCTION

This document contains or identifies the various elements, documents, and sources comprising the complete and official record of Council meeting discussions and actions. In addition to the Meeting Summary, which follows this introductory section (see #7 below), it includes information or references that serve as the functional detailed minutes for this Council meeting as required by §302(i)(2)(E) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The full record is maintained at the Council office, is available on the Council website (http://www.pcouncil.org/) or upon request from the Council office, and consists of the following:

1. **Meeting Notice and Proposed Agenda** – These documents are available on the Council Website prior to and following each meeting at http://www.pcouncil.org/ .
2. **Attendance Records** – These documents are available for the Council meeting and each advisory body meeting by request from the Council office.
3. **All Documents, Reports, and Presentations for Council Consideration** – These items include (1) all documents produced or received for the meeting briefing book, validated by a label assigned by the Council Secretariat and distributed to Council Members; (2) written public comments received at the Council meeting in accordance with agenda labeling requirements; and (3) electronic material or handout materials used in presentations to Council Members during the open session. They are available from links in the Meeting Summary of this document or at https://www.pcouncil.org/council-meetings/previous-meetings/.
4. **Council Decisions Summary Document –** This document is distributed shortly after each Council meeting. It provides very brief descriptions of most key Council decisions and is available at https://www.pcouncil.org/council-meetings/previous-meetings/ and also provided by agenda item in the Meeting Summary of this document.
5. **Draft or Final Decision Documents Finalized after the Council Meeting** – Documents such as Environmental Impact Statements or Environmental Assessments are available on the Council website as they are completed.
6. **Gavel-to-Gavel Audio Recordings and Summary Transcripts** – These recordings contain the testimony, presentations, discussions, and actions occurring at the meeting. For additional reference, verbatim transcripts of Council Actions are available on the Council website. The recordings and transcripts may be accessed from the links contained within the Meeting Summary of this document or at https://www.pcouncil.org/council-meetings/previous-meetings/.
7. **Meeting Summary** (immediately follows this section) – The Meeting Summary lists, in agenda item order, the briefing book documents, reports, presentations, and Council motions and actions, including a brief summary from the Council Decisions Summary Document for each agenda item. It constitutes the meeting record formally approved by the Council. Links to the audio recordings may also be accessed at https://www.pcouncil.org/council-meetings/previous-meetings/.
8. **Voting Log –** The voting log lists, in Agenda order, the summarized Council motions and actions for each agenda item that took place during the meeting.

MEETING SUMMARY

A. Call to Order

1. Opening Remarks – Pete Hassemer, Chair

Mr. Pete Hassemer, Council Chair, called the 286th meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) to order at 9:00 a.m. on March 5, 2026. A closed session was held before this open session and on March 7 to discuss litigation and personnel matters.

2. Roll Call – Merrick Burden

Council Members present during the meeting week:

National Marine Fisheries Service:	Mr. Ryan Wulff, designee
	Ms. Susan Bishop, designee
	Ms. Keeley Kent, designee
Alaska State Official:	Ms. Dani Evenson, nonvoting designee
Washington State Official:	Mr. Kyle Adicks, designee
	Ms. Heather Hall, designee
	Mr. Corey Niles, designee
Washington Obligatory:	Mr. Butch Smith, Vice Chair
Oregon State Official:	Mr. John North, designee
	Mr. Justin Ainsworth, designee
	Ms. Lynn Mattes, designee
Oregon Obligatory:	Ms. Christa Svensson
California State Official:	Ms. Meghan Hertel
	Ms. Marci Yaremko, designee
	Mr. John Ugoretz, designee
	Ms. Caroline McKnight, designee
California Obligatory:	Ms. Corey Ridings
Idaho State Official:	Ms. Sharon Keifer, designee
Idaho Obligatory:	Mr. Pete Hassemer Chair
Tribal Official:	Mr. David Sones
At-Large:	Ms. Jaime Diamond
	Dr. Rebecca Lent
	Mr. Brad Pettinger
	Ms. Aja Szumylo
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:	Dr. Kyle Hanson, nonvoting designee
	Dr. Benjamin Cross, nonvoting designee
	Mr. Roger Root, nonvoting designee
	Mr. John Netto, nonvoting designee
Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission:	Mr. Barry Thom, nonvoting
	Dr. Caren Braby, nonvoting designee

Absent from the Meeting:

U.S. Coast Guard:	LT Karrie Jefferies, nonvoting designee
U.S. State Department:	Mr. Colin Brinkman, nonvoting designee

3. **Agenda – Pete Hassemer**

    e. **Council Action: Approve Agenda**

Motion 1: Adopt Agenda Item A.3, March 3-9, 2026 Council Meeting Agenda.
Sharon Kiefer/David Sones (Motion 1 carried unanimously)

4. **Executive Director's Report – Merrick Burden**

B. Open Comment Period

1. **Comments on Non-Agenda Items - Merrick Burden**

    c. **Council Discussion and Comment, as Appropriate**

Staff Summary: None

C. Salmon Management

1. **National Marine Fisheries Service Report - Angela Forristall**

    e. **Council Discussion and Comment, as Appropriate**

Staff Summary: None

2. **Review of 2025 Fisheries and Summary of 2026 Stock Forecasts - Angela Forristall**

    c. **Council Action: Review and Discuss Relevant Fishery Information, Adopt 2026 Abundance Forecasts and Annual Catch Limits, and Act on Relevant Conservation Objectives or Status Determinations, as Necessary**

Motion 2: Council adopt the 2026 stock abundance forecasts, acceptable biological catches (ABCs), and annual catch limits (ACLs) as presented in Agenda Item C.2, Supplemental Attachment 3, Preseason Report I, except for Klamath River fall Chinook. For Klamath River fall Chinook, adopt the 2026 stock abundance forecast, ABC, and ACL as presented in Agenda Item C.2.a, Supplemental STT Report 2, Preseason Report I, Chapter 2 and 5 updates.
Kyle Adicks/Marci Yaremko (Motion 2 passes unanimously)

Staff Summary: The Council received an update on salmon stock status and reviewed changes highlighted in the *Review of 2025 Ocean Salmon Fisheries* from the Salmon Technical Team (STT). Klamath River fall Chinook now meet the criteria for "not overfished-rebuilding," while Queets spring/summer Chinook continue to meet this status (no change from 2025). No coho stocks meet the criteria for an overfished designation, and the most recent data indicate that no Chinook or coho stocks are currently experiencing overfishing.

The Council also adopted the stock abundance forecasts, overfishing limits, acceptable biological catches (ABC), and annual catch limits (ACL) presented in the preliminary *2026 Preseason Report*

I for use in 2026 salmon management. The only exception was Klamath River fall Chinook, for which the Council adopted a corrected 2026 stock abundance forecast, ABC, and ACL based on updated information provided in a supplemental report from the STT. The Council noted that the supplemental report reflects the best scientific information available, using methods previously approved by the Scientific and Statistical Committee and incorporating the most recent data available.

An updated version of the *2026 Preseason Report I*, which incorporates the information included in the supplemental STT report, is now available on the Council's Salmon Management Documents webpage.

3. Identify Management Objectives and Preliminary 2026 Management Alternatives - Angela Forristall

g. Council Action: Adopt Council Recommendations for Initial Management Measure Alternatives for Salmon Technical Team Collation and Consider Inseason Adjustments to Fisheries Prior to May 16, 2026

Motion 5: Council adopt for Salmon Technical Team compilation and analysis the proposed initial salmon management alternatives for the 2026 non-Indian ocean fisheries as developed by the Salmon Advisory Subpanel and described in Agenda Item C.3.e, Supplemental SAS Report 1, dated March 5, 2026, with the following modifications:

- In Table 2, For the recreational fishery from Cape Falcon to OR/CA Border in Alternative III, show Humbug Mountain-OR/CA Border as closed from March 15-May 15
- In Table 2, California KMZ Subarea, in the 'In 2027' boilerplate language, change April 3 to May 1
- In Table 2, Monterey Subarea, in the 'In 2027' boilerplate language, change May 1 to April 3

John North/Christa Svensson (Motion 5 carried unanimously)

Motion 6: Council adopt for Salmon Technical Team compilation and analysis the proposed initial Treaty Troll salmon management Alternatives for ocean quotas:

Treaty Troll

Alternative I: 55,000 Chinook and 50,000 coho

Alternative II: 45,000 Chinook and 40,000 coho

Alternative III: 35,000 Chinook and 30,000 coho

The Alternatives consist of a May 1 – June 30 Chinook-directed fishery and a July 1 start date to the all-species fishery (Chinook and coho). An end date in September is to be determined. The Chinook quota in all Alternatives should be evenly split between the two time periods. Season structure is still under discussion among the tribes.

David Sones/Kyle Adicks (Motion 6 carried unanimously)

Staff Summary: None

4. 2026 Management Alternative Analysis Recommendations - Angela Forristall

c. Council Direction to the Salmon Technical Team and Salmon Advisory Subpanel on Alternative Development and Analysis

Staff Summary: None

5. Further Direction for 2026 Management Alternatives - Angela Forristall

c. Further Council Guidance and Direction, as Necessary

Staff Summary: None

6. Adopt 2026 Management Alternatives for Public Review - Angela Forristall

c. Council Action: Adopt Ocean Salmon Management Alternatives for Public Review

Motion 21: Council to adopt for STT collation, analysis and public review the salmon management measures for the 2026 non-Indian commercial and recreational ocean fisheries in the area from the Oregon/California border to the U.S./Mexico border as presented in Agenda Item C.6.a, Supplemental STT Report 1, dated March 9, 2026, including the commercial and recreational requirements, definitions, restrictions, and exceptions.
Marci Yaremko/Corey Ridings (Motion 21 carried unanimously)

Motion 22: Council to adopt for public review the alternatives for non-Indian commercial and recreational fisheries in the area from Cape Falcon south to the Oregon/California border as presented in Agenda Item C.6.a, Supplemental STT Report 1, dated March 9, 2026.
John North/Brad Pettinger (Motion 22 carried unanimously)

Motion 23: Council to adopt for public review the alternatives for non-Indian commercial and recreational fisheries in the area north of Cape Falcon as presented in Agenda Item C.6.a, Supplemental STT Report 1, dated March 9, 2026.
Kyle Adicks/Butch Smith (Motion 23 carried unanimously)

Motion 24: For tribal ocean fisheries in the area north of Cape Falcon, I move the Council adopt for public review the alternatives as presented in Agenda Item C.6.a, Supplemental STT Report 1, Table 3 (March 9, 2026).
David Sones/Sharon Kiefer (motion 24 carried unanimously)

Staff Summary: The Council adopted for public review three management measure alternatives for the 2026 non-Tribal ocean commercial and recreational salmon fisheries beginning May 16. The Council also adopted three alternatives proposed by the Tribes for 2026 treaty troll Indian ocean salmon fisheries. Details of the alternatives can be found on the PFMC 2026-2027 upcoming season management website. The Council is scheduled to adopt final 2026 ocean salmon regulations at its April 2026 Council meeting.

In 2026, options for the salmon ocean season north of Cape Falcon, Oregon (covering waters primarily off of Washington) are similar to past years. Salmon fisheries south of Cape Falcon (covering waters off Oregon and California) are expected to be more robust than recent years. While several Council advisory bodies advised that caution is still warranted, increased forecasts for both Sacramento and Klamath River fall Chinook compared to recent years has allowed for consideration of broader fishing opportunities relative to recent years. California fisheries will be managed with quotas or harvest guidelines and vessel limits to help assure conservation objectives are met for California salmon stocks. The Council's March 2026 News Release provides general information on the Alternatives adopted.

7. Appoint Salmon Hearing Officers - Angela Forristall

c. Council Action: Appoint Hearings Officers

Staff Summary: The Council appointed officers and reviewed plans for the 2026 public salmon hearings. The Washington and California hearings are scheduled in person for Monday, March 23 in Westport, WA and Santa Rosa, CA. The Oregon hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, March 24 and will be held in person in Newport, OR and via webinar.

Public comment will be accepted in person at each hearing and can also be submitted electronically via the E-portal in advance of the April Council meeting. It was noted that due to travel and other restrictions, Federal employees may not be able to attend or participate in these hearings.

D. Groundfish Management

1. National Marine Fisheries Service Report - Katrina Bernaus

e. Council Discussion and Comment, as Appropriate

Staff Summary: None

2. Adopt Stock Assessments - Jessi Waller

c. Council Action: Adopt Stock Assessments

Motion 3: Council adopt the 2026 widow rockfish assessment model for use in management. Corey Niles/Butch Smith (Motion 3 carried, Mr. Pettinger and Mr. Smith voted no)

Staff Summary: The Council adopted the widow rockfish assessment (Agenda Item D.2, Attachment 1) for use in management.

3. Phase 2 Stock Definitions: Remaining Nearshore Species - Final Action - Katrina Bernaus

c. Council Action: Adopt Final Preferred Alternative including a Fishery Management Plan Amendment

Motion 7: Council:

1. Adopt as the Final Preferred Alternative (FPA) Alternative 2, identifying the following species off Oregon as not in need of conservation and management in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and should be removed from the West Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP), no earlier than January 1, 2030 and only after a full-benchmark assessment for black rockfish in Federal and state waters off Oregon has been conducted and adopted:

☐

Species
Black rockfish
Blue and deacon rockfish
Cabezon
China rockfish
Copper rockfish
Kelp greenling
Quillback rockfish

2. Request NMFS work with the state of Oregon to develop Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), or something similar, for continued coordination of sampling, data collection, funding, and monitoring prior to the species being removed from the FMP.

Brad Pettinger/Christa Svensson

Amendment 1: Strike Cabezon and Kelp Greenling from the list of species.
Sharon Kiefer/Ryan Wulff (Amendment 1 carried unanimously)
Motion 7, as amended, carried; Ms. Ridings voted no

Motion 8: Council

1. Adopt as the Final Preferred Alternative (FPA), Alternative 3, identify the following species as not in need of conservation and management in the EEZ based on the 10-factor analysis in Agenda Item D.3, Attachment 1, March 2026, and redesignate them as Ecosystem Component Species in the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan:

Species	**Area(s)**
Blue and deacon rockfishes	Washington
Cabezon	Washington

China rockfish	Washington
Copper rockfish	Washington
Kelp greenling	Washington

2. Request NMFS continue discussing cooperative management of the Washington recreational fishery with WDFW.
3. Adopt the draft language in Attachment 2 with changes that reflect the FPA, as appropriate.

Heather Hall/Butch Smith (Motion 8 carried, Ms. Ridings voted no, and Ms. Kiefer abstained)

Staff Summary: For the species off Oregon in Table 1, below, the Council adopted Alternative 2 as the Final Preferred Alternative. These species were identified as not in need of conservation and management in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) off Oregon and will be removed from the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP).

Table 1. *Species off Oregon identified as not in need of conservation and management in the EEZ off Oregon and adopted under Alternative 2, to be removed from the FMP.*

Black rockfish
Blue rockfish
Deacon rockfish
China rockfish
Copper rockfish
Quillback rockfish

For the species off Washington in Table 2, below, the Council adopted Alternative 3 as the Final Preferred Alternative. These species were identified as not in need of conservation and management in the EEZ off Washington and will be designated as ecosystem component (EC) species in the FMP.

Table 2. *Species off Washington identified as not in need of conservation and management in the EEZ off Washington and adopted under Alternative 3, to be designated as EC species in the FMP.*

Blue rockfish
Deacon rockfish
Cabezon
China rockfish
Copper rockfish
Kelp greenling

The Council also adopted draft FMP amendment text (Agenda Item D.3, Attachment 2), to be updated by Council staff to reflect the Final Preferred Alternative described above, as needed.

Finally, the Council provided several recommendations for next steps to implement this action including:

- Requesting NMFS continue discussing cooperative management of the Washington recreational fishery with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Requesting NMFS work with the state of Oregon to develop Memoranda of Understanding, or something similar, for continued coordination of sampling, data collection, funding, and monitoring prior to the species being removed from the FMP
- Specifying that species off Oregon identified as not in need of conservation and management in the EEZ be removed from the FMP no earlier than January 1, 2030, and only after a full-benchmark assessment for black rockfish in Federal and state waters off Oregon has been conducted and adopted

4. Widow Rockfish Alternative Harvest Control Rule: Problem Statement, Range of Alternatives - Jessi Waller

c. Council Action: Adopt a Problem Statement, Range of Alternatives for Analysis

Motion 9: Council:

- Adopt the problem statement in Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1.
- Adopt the range of annual catch limit alternatives in Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, and the "Eq. MSY @ SB40" Alternative in Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1.
- Request that the NWFSC produce the analyses described in Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1 for the adopted range of alternatives. These analyses will provide information on the risk of overfishing so that the SSC can recommend OFLs and ABCs for review at the April 2026 Council meeting.

Aja Szumylo/Sharon Kiefer (Motion 9 carried unanimously)

Staff Summary: The Council adopted a revised problem statement as described in Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1:

The most recent widow rockfish assessment showed a substantial change in stock projections and estimated stock productivity compared with the previous assessment. Establishing harvest specifications under the default harvest policy, generated from the new assessment, could result in significant socio-economic impacts that are disproportionate to the stock's status, which is expected to remain well above target biomass level. With the goals of conducting a full benchmark assessment for widow rockfish in an upcoming cycle and setting 2027-2028 harvest levels consistently with the Magnuson-Stevens Act and National Standards 1, 2, and 8, the purpose of this item is to develop an alternative harvest control rule policy for setting harvest specifications for widow rockfish for the 2027-2028 biennium. The policy should continue to prevent overfishing and keep the long-term average stock status at or above target biomass (i.e., B_{msy}), while

moderating socio-economic disruption to the fishing fleet, processing landscape, and coastal communities.

The Council also adopted a range of annual catch limit (ACL) alternatives described below (note: Alternative numbering may change for April Council meeting). Alternatives 1 and 2 were recommended by both the Groundfish Advisory Subcommittee (GAP) and GMT, and were based on the Council's original November 2025 motion to look at a ramp-down from current expected catch levels to limit impact of the most recent stock assessment on fishing communities. The GAP specifically recommended that a constant catch ACL rather than a declining ACL from 2027 to 2028 was preferred to provide stability for both operations in developing business plans and maintaining markets (Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1). The GMT recommended Alternative 3 (Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1) as another option, which would provide more opportunity than the default harvest control rule, but would allow consideration of an intermediate alternative in assessing the trade-offs of short and long-term impacts (i.e., taking less yield out in the near term to have greater yield available in the long term).

Specification	Default Harvest Control Rule (from Agenda Item D.2, Attachment 1)		Alternative 1 (Modified Council "Request 2" Forecast Catch)		Alternative 2 (Modified 20% Decrease in Forecast Catch from Council "Request 2")		Alternative 3: Eq. MSY @ SB40%	
	2027	2028	2027	2028	2027	2028	2027	2028
OFL	4,916	5,172	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
ABC	4,596	4,810	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
ACL	4,596	4,810	8,400	8,400	6,720	6,720	5,858	5,858

Finally, the Council requested that the Northwest Fisheries Science Center produce the analyses described in Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1 for the adopted range of alternatives. These analyses will provide information on the risk of overfishing so that the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) can recommend OFLs and ABCs, as appropriate, at the April 2026 Council meeting.

5. Inseason Adjustments – Final Action - Katrina Bernaus

c. Council Action: Adopt Final Inseason Adjustments for 2026

Motion 10: Council adopt inseason action to:

- increase the commercial non-trawl canary rockfish trip limits north and south of 40° 10′ N. latitude to 4,000 lbs. per two months for limited entry fixed gear (LEFG), and 2,000 lbs. per two months for open access (OA)
- increase the canary rockfish sub-bag limit from 1-fish to 2-fish for the Oregon recreational long-leader fishery and reduce the long-leader fishery bag limit from 12-fish to 10-fish

as recommended by the GAP (Agenda Item D.5.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, March 2026) and GMT Option 2 in Table 1 (Agenda Item D.5.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1, March 2026).
Lynn Mattes/Brad Pettinger (Motion 10 carried unanimously)

Staff Summary: The Council adopted the following inseason adjustments for 2026:

- Non-trawl canary rockfish trip limits north and south of 40° 10′ N. latitude
  - 4,000 lbs. per two months for limited entry fixed gear (LEFG)
  - 2,000 lbs. per two months for open access (OA)
- Canary rockfish bag limits
  - Increase sub-bag from 1 fish to 2 fish for the Oregon recreational long-leader fishery
  - Reduce the long-leader fishery bag limit from 12 fish to 10 fish

6. Initial Harvest Specifications for 2027-28 - Jessi Waller

c. Council Action: Confirm Preliminary Preferred Acceptable Biological Catch and Annual Catch Limits for Stocks and Stock Complexes, As Appropriate

Motion 11: Council adopt the preliminary preferred 2027-28 acceptable biological catch and annual catch limits for canary rockfish, chilipepper rockfish, petrale sole, yelloweye rockfish, and yellowtail rockfish north of 40° 10' N. lat. as recommended by the GAP (Table 1 in Agenda Item D.6.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, March 2026) and GMT (Agenda Item D.6.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1, March 2026), shown in the table below:

Table 1. Summary of GAP/GMT Recommendations

Stock	Alt	Harvest Control Rule	ACL				GAP/GMT Recom-mendation
			2025[1]	2026[2]	2027	2028	
Canary Rockfish	Alt 1	Default: ABC>ACL (40-10 rule, P*=0.45)	572	626	606	623	
	Alt 2	ABC = ACL (P* = 0.45)			643	664	PPA
Chilipepper Rockfish	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=0.45)	2,815	2,643	3,211	3,086	
	Alt 2	ACL=2,114 mt for 2027-28, return to default in 2029			2,114a/	2,114a/	PPA
Petrale Sole	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=0.45)	2,354	2,489	2,449	2,423	
	Alt 2	ABC/ACL=2,489 mt for 2027-28, return to default in 2029			2,489	2,489	PPA
Yelloweye Rockfish	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=0.4)	55.8	56.6	113	113	
	Alt 2	ACL=85 mt for 2027-28, return to default in 2029			85	85	PPA
Yellowtail Rockfish North of 40°10' N. lat.	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=45)	6,241	6,023	4,723	4,540	
	Alt 2	Ad-hoc phase in			5,050	4,730	PPA

a/Apportioned 7 percent to north of 40° 10' N. lat. (148 mt) and 93 percent to south of 40° 10' N. lat. (1,966 mt).

Lynn Mattes/Caroline McKnight (Motion 11 carried unanimously)

Staff Summary: The Council confirmed the Preliminary Preferred Alternative for five stocks as recommended by the GAP (Table 1 in Agenda Item D.6.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, March 2026) and GMT (Agenda Item D.6.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1, March 2026), as follows:

Stock	Alt	Harvest Control Rule	ACLs		Recommendation
			2027	2028	
Canary Rockfish	Alt 1	Default: ABC>ACL (40-10 rule, P*=0.45)	606	623	
	Alt 2	ABC = ACL (P* = 0.45)	643	664	PPA
Chilipepper Rockfish	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=0.45)	3,211	3,086	
	Alt 2	ACL=2,114 mt for 2027-28, return to default in 2029	2,114a/	2,114a/	PPA
Petrale Sole	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=0.45)	2,449	2,423	
	Alt 2	ABC/ACL=2,489 mt for 2027-28, return to default in 2029	2,489	2,489	PPA
Yelloweye Rockfish	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=0.4)	113	113	
	Alt 2	ACL=85 mt for 2027-28, return to default in 2029	85	85	PPA
Yellowtail Rockfish North of 40°10' N. lat.	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=45)	4,723	4,540	
	Alt 2	Ad-hoc phase in	5,050	4,730	PPA

7. Implementation of the 2026 Pacific Whiting Fishery under the U.S./Canada Agreement - Katrina Bernaus

c. Council Action: Consider Necessary Actions for Implementing the 2026 Pacific Whiting Fishery

Staff Summary: None

8. Initial Stock Assessment Plan for 2027 and 2029 - Jessi Waller

c. Council Action: Adopt for Public Review a Preliminary List and Schedule of Stocks for Assessment

Staff Summary: The Council requested that the Science Centers work with partners to provide more information at the June 2026 Council meeting on age-reading capacity, data availability, and related issues to consider full benchmark assessments for the following:

For the 2027 cycle,

- Redbanded rockfish
- Lingcod
- Widow rockfish

- Yellowtail rockfish south of 40° 10’ N. lat.

For the 2029 cycle,

- Black rockfish off Oregon and Washington
- Spiny dogfish

The Council will adopt 2027 assessment priorities in June 2026, including species and type of assessments. This will also include the recommendation for catch-only projections. Additionally, the Council will consider a proposal from the Science Centers on a long-term stock assessment plan (including assessments for 2029).

9. 2027-28 Stock Assessment Terms of Reference – Scoping - Jessi Waller

c. Council Action: Identify the Scope of Proposed Changes to the Terms of Reference for Assessments, Methodology Reviews, and Rebuilding Analyses

Staff Summary: The Council discussed the comments and items for scoping changes to the stock assessment terms of reference (TOR) from the SSC (Agenda Item D.9.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1), GAP (Agenda Item D.9.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1) and GMT (Agenda Item D.9.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1) and gave guidance for Council staff along with Science Center staff to consider those comments in development of materials for the June 2026 meeting. The Council is expected to consider preliminary changes to the TOR and discuss other stock assessment process-related changes in June 2026. Final action on the TOR is expected at the November 2025 Council meeting.

10. 2027-28 Fisheries – Analytical Update and Limited Actions - Todd Phillips

c. Council Action: Review Draft Analysis, Recommend Modifications, and Provide Guidance, As Appropriate

Staff Summary: The Groundfish Management Team (GMT) gave an update on the overwinter analyses of management measures in support of the 2027-28 harvest specifications and management measures process to the Council.

The GMT informed the Council that several groundfish Yelloweye Rockfish Conservation Areas (YRCAs) under consideration for removal from regulation overlapped Pacific halibut YRCAs. This finding indicated if the Council wanted to consider an action to modify YRCAs, it would be important to do so for both the groundfish fishery and the Pacific halibut fishery to ensure consistent regulations, as participants often fish in both fisheries. Pacific halibut regulatory language is typically not modified during the groundfish biennial specifications process and to consider removing YRCAs in both fisheries, the April meeting notice will reflect this matter as both a groundfish and Pacific halibut action. The GMT also informed the Council that in the overwinter process they added an additional allocation option for blackgill rockfish into the

analysis and three recreational annual catch target (ACT) analyses for lingcod, quillback, and vermilion/sunset rockfishes south of 40° 10′ N. lat. for Council consideration.

The Council was also informed that there was a need to develop an Amendment to the Pacific Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan Amendment (FMP) to remove the rebuilding plans for the California stock of quillback rockfish and yelloweye rockfish, as both stocks are rebuilt. The Council acknowledged the updates and directed staff to revise the Pacific Coast Groundfish FMP to reflect the rebuilt status of these stocks.

E. Ecosystem Management

1. California Current Ecosystem Annual Status Report and 2026 Science Review Topics - Gilly Lyons

d. Council Action: Review the California Current Ecosystem Status Report and Consider Ecosystem Science Review Topics for 2026

Motion 4: Council endorse recommendations made by the EWG in Supplemental EWG Report 1. Corey Ridings/Lynn Mattes (Motion 4 carried unanimously)

Staff Summary: The Council received a presentation from the California Current Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Team (CCIEA) on the 2025-2026 California Current Ecosystem Status Report (ESR) and noted several new and ongoing components of the Report (including some recommended by Council Advisory Bodies in previous years) which continue to make it an accessible, streamlined, and highly informative document. The Council also endorsed the Scientific and Statistical Committee's (SSC) review of the following science topics at a meeting of the SSC Ecosystem-Based Management Subcommittee this Fall: a) Review of the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) index and its utility as an ecosystem indicator; b) Revisiting indicators to support management of groundfish stocks; and c) Review of changes to fishery diversification indices. Finally, the Council endorsed recommendations from Advisory Bodies to support the CCIEA team in providing "mini-ESRs" (two-page interim reports generated by the CCIEA team during the course of the year that summarize and present the most recent information available) as informational reports at times that align with appropriate Council agenda items, and to refer to the ESR in future Council agenda items related to the Council's Special Projects, given that the ESR can serve as a valuable source of information relevant to cross-FMP work.

2. Special Project 3: Workshop to Develop New Fishing Systems - Gilly Lyons

c. Provide Guidance on Workshop Objectives and Structure

Staff Summary: The Council discussed the focus, objectives, and potential structure of a workshop proposed under Special Project 3, *New Fishing Opportunities within Bycatch Allowances*, and provided guidance to Council staff on the development of the workshop. Council guidance included support for maintaining a focus on Dynamic Ocean Management and Monitoring (DOM) tools, with an emphasis on how these tools can best be operationalized in the

environmental, regulatory, and fisheries context of the California Current Ecosystem in order to improve management.

Specifically, the Council expressed support for a workshop where fishermen, scientists, and managers can co-develop, validate, and further refine DOM tools that allow for more effective targeting of healthy stocks while avoiding bycatch of protected species; consider how these tools can inform management that's more adaptive and responsive to rapidly changing or real-time ocean conditions; begin with a focus on Highly Migratory Species (HMS) but encourage the participation of representatives from other West Coast fisheries; and identify opportunities for collaboration and cooperative research where appropriate and possible. In terms of timing, the Council recommended that the workshop be scheduled at a time that aligns with the availability of fishermen and that is sequenced with the work of the Ad Hoc HMS Roadmap – Fisheries Innovation Workgroup.

F. Habitat Issues

1. Current Habitat Issues - Kerry Griffin

d. Council Action: Consider Habitat Committee Report and Recommendations

Staff Summary: The Council received updates on current habitat issues (F.1.a, Supplemental HC Report 1), including:

- Recent Council comment letters on the Hells Canyon Hydropower License Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Outer Continental Shelf National Oil and Gas Leasing Program
- A California State Lands Commission notice on plans for removing oil Platform Holly
- Cancelation of Nordic Aquafarm's planned development in Humboldt Bay, California
- An updated rocky reefs habitat areas of particular concern spatial dataset
- A Pacific Coast Groundfish spatial data technical assistance document

The Council also discussed a recently published BOEM Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a Programmatic EIS for the California oil and gas leasing Program Areas, with a comment period closing March 30, 2026. The Council directed the HC and Council staff to develop a succinct comment letter, incorporating input from the Marine Planning Committee, to be circulated via the Council's quick response procedure.

G. Highly Migratory Species Management

1. National Marine Fisheries Service Report - Kerry Griffin

d. Council Discussion and Comment, as Appropriate

Staff Summary: NMFS provided updates (G.1.a, NMFS Report 1) on deep-set buoy gear limited entry permits and noted that two exempted fishing permit applications endorsed by the Council in November 2025 were recently posted in the *Federal Register*.

2. International Management Activities - Kerry Griffin

c. Council Action: Provide Recommendations on U.S. Positions for Upcoming Regional Fishery Management Organization Meetings and Other Forums, as Appropriate

Staff Summary: The Council heard updates on several topics related to international highly migratory species management. Christa Svensson, Council representative to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), provided updates related to WCPFC activities:

- Stakeholder engagement continues to grow, with new observers participating in WCPFC 22 in December 2025
- WCPFC is now recognized as an observer at the International Seabed Authority, established under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
- During high seas boardings, WCPFC now allows questions regarding fair labor practices, such as asking workers if they're being paid and when they were last on land
- Ms. Svensson urged continued engagement in South Pacific Albacore (SPA) fishing and management activities, noting that up to 54 west coast vessels participated in that fishery in the late 1990s and that it is important to maintain relationships and markets

Ms. Svensson also emphasized the importance and the value of supporting participation in international HMS meetings and expressed appreciation of the Council's support for such involvement, including in the March 11 – 13 Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) – Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) Northern Committee Joint Working Group (Joint Working Group) meeting in Newport Beach, California.

Ryan Wulff summarized NMFS Report 1 and Supplemental NMFS Report 2. He noted that with David Hogan's retirement, the new U.S. State Department representative is Senior Foreign Affairs Officer Elana Mendelson. Ms. Mendelson hosted two stakeholder calls on the potential for negotiating a revised Pacific Albacore Tuna Treaty, including discussions on reciprocal port access and a fishing regime for U.S. and Canadian vessels. There was no agreement in 2025. The Pacific Albacore Tuna Treaty has expired and re-initiating a new treaty is complex. While a new agreement is highly unlikely in 2026, stakeholder discussions are anticipated to continue.

Mr. Wulff noted that a North Pacific albacore stock assessment is underway and likely to be completed this spring, with an executive summary available in May 2026.

The Council voiced support for continued engagement in international HMS management issues, including participation of stakeholders in U.S. delegations to the Joint Working Group, WCPFC, and other meetings. The Council also voiced support for active engagement and continued attention to issues related to Pacific blue fin, North Pacific albacore, and South Pacific albacore. The Council also endorsed the recommendations in Supplemental HMSAS Report 1 and directed staff to transmit those recommendations to NMFS as a basis for upcoming discussions and negotiations.

3. Exempted Fishing Permits – Preliminary or Final - Kerry Griffin

c. Council Action: Endorse EFP Applications and Recommend NMFS Issuance; Request Additional Review and Consideration, as Appropriate

Motion 12: Council recommend NMFS proceed with approval of EFPs to test the use of Hookless Ring Gear in HMS fisheries. In approving this, the Council recommends that NMFS use a broad definition and analysis, so that Hookless Ring Gear may be tested in a variety of configurations, beyond those described in the PIER proposal (Item G.3, Attachment 1).

John Ugoretz/Corey Ridings (Motion 12 carried, Mr. Wulff abstained)

Motion 13: Consistent with the request in Supplemental HMSAS Report 1, I move that the Council recommend that NMFS prioritize flexibility in the operative terms and conditions of its EFPs, as to build on lessons learned, and to support continued participation in fishery innovations (including consideration of more vessels), provided that such flexibilities can be accommodated within effort limits considered in the environmental review processes and analyses underpinning the issuance of EFPs for those configuration types.

Amendment 1: to amend the motion by changing in the third line "its EFPs" to "existing, approved, HMS EFPs".

Pete Hassemer/Sharon Kiefer (Motion 13, as amended, carried; Ms. Ridings voted no; Mr. Wulff abstained)

Staff Summary: The Council considered an exempted fishing permit (EFP) application (G.3, Attachment 1) that was first considered by the Council in November 2025. The Council requested the applicant to return in March with additional information regarding the gear configuration and species bycatch in other parts of the world where the gear type has been used. G.3.a, Supplemental HMSMT Report 1 provides bycatch data and other information, and the applicant was present to answer questions from the Council.

The Council recommended that NMFS approve the EFP application and expressed support for testing the use of hookless ring gear in a variety of EFP gear configurations. The Council recommended that NMFS prioritize flexibility in the operative terms and conditions of existing,

approved, HMS EFPs, to build on lessons learned, and to support continued participation in fishery innovations (including consideration of more vessels), provided that such flexibilities can be accommodated within effort limits considered in the environmental review processes and analyses underpinning the issuance of EFPs for those configuration types.

4. Highly Migratory Species Roadmap: Exempted Fishing Permit Metrics and Benchmarks – Final - Kerry Griffin

c. Council Action: Adopt Final Exempted Fishing Permit Metrics and Benchmarks; Consider EFP Process Improvements and Provide Guidance, As Appropriate

Motion 16: Council:

1) Endorse the FIW proposed edits to COP 20 (Item G.4.a, Supplemental FIW Report 2) with the change to the EFP Data Reporting Timeline found in the HMSMT Report (Item G.4.a, Supplemental HMSMT Report 1) for adoption when next considered on a Council agenda.
2) Endorse the FIW recommendations in Agenda Item G.4.a, FIW Report 1, regarding:
    a. The proposed economic metrics and benchmarks pending further recommendations in November;
    b. The use of benchmarks rather than acceptable levels of bycatch for evaluating EFP performance;
    c. The proposed list of species and species groups; and
    d. The recommendations on EFP guidance and materials.
3) Direct the FIW to develop an overall bycatch benchmark and individual species/species group bycatch benchmarks (either counts, catch rates, or catch ratios depending on species or species group) using the proposed species list and the information described in the report.
4) The Highly Migratory Species Roadmap be revised as follows. In the Action items section, item 1b:

    b. ~~Define acceptable levels of bycatch/bycatch mortality for protected and non-marketable species~~ Develop benchmarks for bycatch of identified species or species groups released dead to be used in evaluation and management of HMS EFPs. ~~and authorized fisheries. (Also supports EFP Framework Development)~~

    Bycatch benchmarks will be used to support Council consideration of whether to recommend that National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) renew HMS EFPs and to support Council evaluation of EFP results and potential recommended regulatory actions and/or FMP amendments, including authorization of new fishing gears or methods. Benchmarks are not regulatory in nature and will not be used as a basis for the Council to recommend that NMFS revoke EFPs.

John Ugoretz/Christa Svensson (Motion 16 carried unanimously)

Staff Summary: The Council considered Fisheries Innovation Workgroup (FIW) updates related to HMS EFP economic and bycatch performance metrics and benchmarks, an updated list of bycatch species and species groups, EFP process and guidance improvements, and potential edits to Council Operating Procedure (COP) 20.

The Council endorsed the following next steps for the HMS Roadmap tasks assigned to the FIW:

1. Endorse the FIW proposed edits to COP 20 (G.4.a, Supplemental FIW Report 2) with the change to the EFP Data Reporting Timeline found in G.4.a, Supplemental HMSMT Report 1 for adoption when next considered on a Council agenda.
2. Endorse the FIW recommendations in Agenda Item G.4.a, FIW Report 1, regarding:
    - The proposed economic metrics and benchmarks pending further recommendations in November;
    - The use of benchmarks rather than acceptable levels of bycatch for evaluating EFP performance;
    - The proposed list of species and species groups; and
    - The recommendations on EFP guidance and materials.
3. Direct the FIW to develop an overall bycatch benchmark and individual species/species group bycatch benchmarks (either counts, catch rates, or catch ratios depending on species or species group) using the proposed species list and the information described in the report.
4. The Highly Migratory Species Roadmap be revised as follows:
    - In the Action Items section, revise 1b as follows: ~~Define acceptable levels of bycatch/ bycatch mortality for protected and non-marketable species~~ Develop benchmarks for bycatch of identified species or species groups released dead to be used in evaluation and management of HMS EFPs. ~~and authorized fisheries. (Also supports EFP Framework Development)~~
    - Include this language in the Roadmap: Bycatch benchmarks will be used to support Council consideration of whether to recommend that National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) renew HMS EFPs and to support Council evaluation of EFP results and potential recommended regulatory actions and/or FMP amendments, including authorization of new fishing gears or methods. Benchmarks are not regulatory in nature and will not be used as a basis for the Council to recommend that NMFS revoke EFPs.

The Council will consider the proposed modifications to COP 20, including those in G.4.a, Supplemental EC Report 1, discussed at the March meeting in the context of broader COP changes to be considered at the April 2026 meeting under Agenda Item H.1 Special Project 1: Adaptive Management and Flexibility. Final modifications to COPs that guide the Council's EFP processes may be considered at a future Council meeting, under the Membership Appointments and COPs Administrative agenda item.

The Council agreed that the FIW should continue to develop and refine bycatch benchmarks, EFP guidance, and the list of bycatch species and groups, and bring a complete EFP evaluation framework and supporting materials for final Council action at the November 2026 meeting. The Council endorsed a 2-3 day in-person FIW meeting to finalize the EFP framework and associated

tasks. The Council also agreed that the Executive Director should consider securing the services of a meeting facilitator to allow the FIW Co-Chairs to more fully engage in discussions.

H. Pacific Halibut Management

1. Incidental Limits: Salmon Troll Options and Fixed Gear Sablefish Final Action - Angela Forristall

c. Council Action: Recommend Inseason Changes to April/May 2026 Retention Limits in the Salmon Troll Fishery, as Necessary; Adopt Options for Public Review on Retention in 2026 and April/May 2027 Salmon Troll Fishery; Adopt Final Retention Limits for 2026 Fixed Gear Sablefish Fishery

Motion 14: Council adopt for public review, the alternatives presented in Agenda Item H.1.a, Supplemental SAS Report 1, March 2026 for halibut landing restrictions in the salmon troll fishery in 2026 beginning May 16 through the end of the 2026 salmon troll fishery, and beginning April 1, 2027, unless modified through inseason action or superseded by 2027 management measures.

Heather Hall/Lynn Mattes (Motion 14 carried unanimously)

Motion 15: Council adopt a final trip limit ratio of 75 pounds of Pacific halibut per 1,000 pounds of sablefish plus 2 additional Pacific halibut for the primary sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis, Washington, as recommended in Agenda Item H.1.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, March 2026.

Heather Hall/Lynn Mattes (Motion 15 carried unanimously)

Staff Summary: The Council adopted three alternatives for incidental Pacific halibut retention in the 2026 salmon troll fishery after hearing from the Salmon Advisory Subpanel and the public. Each alternative included a landing and possession limit of one Pacific halibut for every two Chinook, plus one additional Pacific halibut beyond this ratio. The possession/landing limit per trip are 35 (status quo/Alternative 1), 30 (Alternative 2), and 25 (Alternative 3). The Council is scheduled to adopt a final alternative at its upcoming April meeting.

The Council's final recommendation for the 2026 incidental Pacific halibut catch limits in the fixed gear sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis, starting April 1, is 75 pounds of dressed weight Pacific halibut for every 1,000 pounds of dressed weight sablefish. Additionally, 2 extra Pacific halibut are allowed beyond this ratio. This aligns with the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel's recommendation.

I. Administrative Matters

1. Approve Council Meeting Records - Pete Hassemer

a. Council Action: Approve Previous Council Meeting Records

Motion 17: Council approve the Council meeting records for the 284th Session (November 2025) and the 285th Session (December 2025).
Sharon Kiefer/John Ugoretz (Motion 17 carried unanimously)

Staff Summary: None

2. Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures - Kelly Ames

c. Council Action: Consider Appointments to Council Committees and Advisory Bodies; Adopt Changes to Council Operating Procedures, As Appropriate

Motion 18: Council appoint Dr. Claudia Friess to one of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) positions on the Groundfish Management Team and Mr. Michael Garrity to the WDFW position on the Habitat Committee.
Heather Hall/Corey Ridings (Motion 18 carried unanimously)

Motion 19: Council appoint Mr. Mark Newell to fill the Processor position on the Salmon Advisory Subpanel.
Lynn Mattes/Sharon Kiefer (Motion 19 carried unanimously)

Motion 20: Council appoint Ms. Marlene Bellman to fill the Tribal position on the Salmon Technical Team.
David Sones/Lynn Mattes (Motion 20 carried unanimously)

Staff Summary: The Council appointed

- Dr. Claudia Friess to one of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) positions on the Groundfish Management Team
- Mr. Michael Garrity to the WDFW position on the Habitat Committee
- Mr. Mark Newell to fill the Processor position on the Salmon Advisory Subpanel
- Ms. Marlene Bellman to fill the Tribal position on the Salmon Technical Team

The Council will advertise for the following positions for consideration at their June Council meeting

- Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel (CPSAS) – 1 processor position
- Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel (EAS) – 1 Washington At-Large representative
- Habitat Committee (HC) – 1 Northwest or Columbia River tribal position; 1 At-Large position
- SSC -1 At-Large position

The Council provided feedback on the Sacramento River Fall Chinook S_{MSY} Peer Review panel including the role of the Chair, panel composition, and advisors; timelines; and review process for consideration at the April Council meeting.

3. **Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning - Merrick Burden**

    c. **Council Discussion and Guidance on Future Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning**

Staff Summary: None

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

Informational Report 1: IPHC Report of the 102nd Meeting
Informational Report 2: Outcomes of the 102nd Session of the IPHC Annual Meeting
Informational Report 3: U.S. Pacific Salmon Commission Letter to ODFW on SRKW
Informational Report 4: Technical Guidance for Estimating Refence Points used for Stock Status Determination in Accordance with the National Standard 1 Guidelines
Informational Report 5: CCC Exchange on Stocks for Management and Science
~~Supplemental Information Report 6a: Observed and Estimated Bycatch of Salmon in U.S. West Coast Fisheries, 2002-2024~~
~~Supplemental Informational Report 6b: Salmon Mortality Data~~
Supplemental Informational Report 7a: EO Response
Supplemental Informational Report 7b: Public Comments for RFMC (Excel File)
Supplemental Informational Report 8: FEP Initiative 4 Summary Report
Supplemental Informational Report 9: Remembering Mike Okoniewski

VOTING LOG

Motion 1: Adopt Agenda Item A.3, March 3-9, 2026 Council Meeting Agenda.
Sharon Kiefer/David Sones (Motion 1 carried unanimously)

Motion 2: Council adopt the 2026 stock abundance forecasts, acceptable biological catches (ABCs) and annual catch limits (ACLs) as presented in Agenda Item C.2, Supplemental Attachment 3, Preseason Report I, except for Klamath River fall Chinook. For Klamath River fall Chinook, adopt the 2026 stock abundance forecast, ABC, and ACL as presented in Agenda Item C.2.a, Supplemental STT Report 2, Preseason Report I Chapter 2 and 5 updates.
Kyle Adicks/Marci Yaremko (Motion 2 passes unanimously)

Motion 3: Council adopt the 2026 widow rockfish assessment model for use in management.
Corey Niles/Butch Smith (Motion 3 carried, Mr. Pettinger and Mr. Smith voted no)

Motion 4: Council endorse recommendations made by the EWG in Supplemental EWG Report 1.
Corey Ridings/Lynn Mattes (Motion 4 carried unanimously)

Motion 5: Council adopt for Salmon Technical Team compilation and analysis the proposed initial salmon management alternatives for the 2026 non-Indian ocean fisheries as developed by the Salmon Advisory Subpanel and described in Agenda Item C.3.e, Supplemental SAS Report 1, dated March 5, 2026, with the following modifications:

- In Table 2, For the recreational fishery from Cape Falcon to OR/CA Border in Alternative III, show Humbug Mountain-OR/CA Border as closed from March 15-May 15
- In Table 2, California KMZ Subarea, in the 'In 2027' boilerplate language, change April 3 to May 1
- In Table 2, Monterey Subarea, in the 'In 2027' boilerplate language, change May 1 to April 3

John North/Christa Svensson (Motion 5 carried unanimously)

Motion 6: Council adopt for Salmon Technical Team compilation and analysis the proposed initial Treaty Troll salmon management Alternatives for ocean quotas:

Treaty Troll

Alternative I: 55,000 Chinook and 50,000 coho

Alternative II: 45,000 Chinook and 40,000 coho

Alternative III: 35,000 Chinook and 30,000 coho

The Alternatives consist of a May 1 – June 30 Chinook-directed fishery and a July 1 start date to the all-species fishery (Chinook and coho). An end date in September is to be determined. The Chinook quota in all Alternatives should be evenly split between the two time periods. Season structure is still under discussion among the tribes.

David Sones/Kyle Adicks (Motion 6 carried unanimously)

Motion 7: Council:

1. Adopt as the Final Preferred Alternative (FPA) Alternative 2, identifying the following species off Oregon as not in need of conservation and management in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and should be removed from the West Coast Groundfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP), no earlier than January 1, 2030 and only after a full-benchmark assessment for black rockfish in Federal and state waters off Oregon has been conducted and adopted:

☐Species
Black rockfish
Blue and deacon rockfish
China rockfish
Copper rockfish
Quillback rockfish

2. Request NMFS work with the state of Oregon to develop Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), or something similar, for continued coordination of sampling, data collection, funding, and monitoring prior to the species being removed from the FMP.

Brad Pettinger/Christa Svensson (Motion 7, as amended, carried; Ms. Ridings voted no)

Motion 8: Council

1. Adopt as the Final Preferred Alternative (FPA), Alternative 3, identify the following species as not in need of conservation and management in the EEZ based on the 10-factor analysis in Agenda Item D.3, Attachment 1, March 2026, and redesignate them as Ecosystem Component Species in the Groundfish Fishery Management Plan:

Species	Area(s)
Blue and deacon rockfishes	Washington
Cabezon	Washington
China rockfish	Washington
Copper rockfish	Washington
Kelp greenling	Washington

2. Request NMFS continue discussing cooperative management of the Washington recreational fishery with WDFW.
3. Adopt the draft language in Attachment 2 with changes that reflect the FPA, as appropriate.

Heather Hall/Butch Smith (Motion 8 carried, Ms. Ridings voted no, and Ms. Kiefer abstained)

Motion 9: Council:

- Adopt the problem statement in Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1.
- Adopt the range of annual catch limit alternatives in Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, and the "Eq. MSY @ SB40" Alternative in Agenda Item D.4.a Supplemental GMT Report 1.
- Request that the NWFSC produce the analyses described in Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1 for the adopted range of alternatives. These analyses will provide information on the risk of overfishing so that the SSC can recommend OFLs and ABCs for review at the April 2026 Council meeting.

Aja Szumylo/Sharon Kiefer (Motion 9 carried unanimously)

Motion 10: Council adopt inseason action to:

- increase the commercial non-trawl canary rockfish trip limits north and south of 40° 10′ N. latitude to 4,000 lbs. per two months for limited entry fixed gear (LEFG), and 2,000 lbs. per two months for open access (OA)
- increase the canary rockfish sub-bag limit from 1 fish to 2 fish for the Oregon recreational long-leader fishery and reduce the long-leader fishery bag limit from 12 fish to 10 fish

as recommended by the GAP (Agenda Item D.5.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, March 2026) and GMT Option 2 in Table 1 (Agenda Item D.5.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1, March 2026).

Lynn Mattes/Brad Pettinger (Motion 10 carried unanimously)

Motion 11: Council adopt the preliminary preferred 2027-28 acceptable biological catch and annual catch limits for canary rockfish, chilipepper rockfish, petrale sole, yelloweye rockfish, and yellowtail rockfish north of 40° 10' N. lat. as recommended by the GAP (Table 1 in Agenda Item D.6.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, March 2026) and GMT (Agenda Item D.6.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1, March 2026), shown in the table below:

Table 1. Summary of GAP/GMT Recommendations

Stock	Alt	Harvest Control Rule	ACL				GAP/GMT Recom-mendation
			2025[1]	2026[2]	2027	2028	
Canary Rockfish	Alt 1	Default: ABC>ACL (40-10 rule, P*=0.45)	572	626	606	623	
	Alt 2	ABC = ACL (P* = 0.45)			643	664	PPA
Chilipepper Rockfish	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=0.45)	2,815	2,643	3,211	3,086	
	Alt 2	ACL=2,114 mt for 2027-28, return to default in 2029			2,114a/	2,114a/	PPA
Petrale Sole	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=0.45)	2,354	2,489	2,449	2,423	
	Alt 2	ABC/ACL=2,489 mt for 2027-28, return to default in 2029			2,489	2,489	PPA
Yelloweye Rockfish	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=0.4)	55.8	56.6	113	113	
	Alt 2	ACL=85 mt for 2027-28, return to default in 2029			85	85	PPA
Yellowtail Rockfish North of 40°10' N. lat.	Alt 1	Default: ABC=ACL (P*=45)	6,241	6,023	4,723	4,540	
	Alt 2	Ad-hoc phase in			5,050	4,730	PPA

a/Apportioned 7 percent to north of 40° 10' N. lat. (148 mt) and 93 percent to south of 40° 10' N. lat. (1,966 mt).

Lynn Mattes/Caroline McKnight (Motion 11 carried unanimously)

Motion 12: Council recommend NMFS proceed with approval of EFPs to test the use of Hookless Ring Gear in HMS fisheries. In approving this, the Council recommends that NMFS use a broad definition and analysis, so that Hookless Ring Gear may be tested in a variety of configurations, beyond those described in the PIER proposal (Item G.3, Attachment 1).

John Ugoretz/Corey Ridings (Motion 12 carried, Mr. Wulff abstained)

Motion 13: Consistent with the request in Supplemental HMSAS Report 1, I move that the Council recommend that NMFS prioritize flexibility in the operative terms and conditions of existing, approved HMS EFPs, as to build on lessons learned, and to support continued participation in fishery innovations (including consideration of more vessels), provided that such flexibilities can be accommodated within effort limits considered in the environmental review processes and analyses underpinning the issuance of EFPs for those configuration types.

Pete Hassemer/Sharon Kiefer (Motion 13, as amended carried; Ms. Ridings voted no; Mr. Wulff abstained)

Motion 14: Council adopt for public review, the alternatives presented in Agenda Item H.1.a, Supplemental SAS Report 1, March 2026, for halibut landing restrictions in the salmon troll fishery in 2026 beginning May 16 through the end of the 2026 salmon troll fishery, and

beginning April 1, 2027, unless modified through inseason action or superseded by 2027 management measures.

Heather Hall/Lynn Mattes (Motion 14 carried unanimously)

Motion 15: Council adopt a final trip limit ratio of 75 pounds of Pacific halibut per 1,000 pounds of sablefish plus 2 additional Pacific halibut for the primary sablefish fishery north of Point Chehalis, Washington, as recommended in Agenda Item H.1.a, Supplemental GAP Report 1, March 2026.

Heather Hall/Lynn Mattes (Motion 15 carried unanimously)

Motion 16: Council:

1) Endorse the FIW proposed edits to COP 20 (Item G.4.a, Supplemental FIW Report 2) with the change to the EFP Data Reporting Timeline found in the HMSMT Report (Item G.4.a, Supplemental HMSMT Report 1) for adoption when next considered on a Council agenda.
2) Endorse the FIW recommendations in Agenda Item G.4.a, FIW Report 1, regarding:
    a. The proposed economic metrics and benchmarks pending further recommendations in November;
    b. The use of benchmarks rather than acceptable levels of bycatch for evaluating EFP performance;
    c. The proposed list of species and species groups; and
    d. The recommendations on EFP guidance and materials.
3) Direct the FIW to develop an overall bycatch benchmark and individual species/species group bycatch benchmarks (either counts, catch rates, or catch ratios depending on species or species group) using the proposed species list and the information described in the report.
4) The Highly Migratory Species Roadmap be revised as follows. In the Action items section, item 1 b:
    b. ~~Define acceptable levels of bycatch/bycatch mortality for protected and non-marketable species~~ Develop benchmarks for bycatch of identified species or species groups released dead to be used in evaluation and management of HMS EFPs. ~~and authorized fisheries. (Also supports EFP Framework Development)~~
    Bycatch benchmarks will be used to support Council consideration of whether to recommend that National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) renew HMS EFPs and to support Council evaluation of EFP results and potential recommended regulatory actions and/or FMP amendments, including authorization of new fishing gears or methods. Benchmarks are not regulatory in nature and will not be used as a basis for the Council to recommend that NMFS revoke EFPs.

John Ugoretz/Christa Svensson (Motion 16 carried unanimously)

Motion 17: Council approve the Council meeting records for the 284th Session (November 2025) and the 285th Session (December 2025).

Sharon Kiefer/John Ugoretz (Motion 17 carried unanimously)

Motion 18: Council appoint Dr. Claudia Friess to one of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) positions on the Groundfish Management Team and Mr. Michael Garrity to the WDFW position on the Habitat Committee.
Heather Hall/Corey Ridings (Motion 18 carried unanimously)

Motion 19: Council appoint Mr. Mark Newell to fill the Processor position on the Salmon Advisory Subpanel.
Lynn Mattes/Sharon Kiefer (Motion 19 carried unanimously)

Motion 20: Council appoint Ms. Marlene Bellman to fill the Tribal position on the Salmon Technical Team.
David Sones/Lynn Mattes (Motion 20 carried unanimously)

Motion 21: Council to adopt for STT collation, analysis and public review the salmon management measures for the 2026 non-Indian commercial and recreational ocean fisheries in the area from the Oregon/California border to the U.S./Mexico border as presented in Agenda Item C.6.a, Supplemental STT Report 1, dated March 9, 2026, including the commercial and recreational requirements, definitions, restrictions, and exceptions.
Marci Yaremko/Corey Ridings (Motion 21 carried unanimously)

Motion 22: Council to adopt for public review the alternatives for non-Indian commercial and recreational fisheries in the area from Cape Falcon south to the Oregon/California border as presented in Agenda Item C.6.a, Supplemental STT Report 1, dated March 9, 2026.
John North/Brad Pettinger (Motion 22 carried unanimously)

Motion 23: Council to adopt for public review the alternatives for non-Indian commercial and recreational fisheries in the area north of Cape Falcon as presented in Agenda Item C.6.a, Supplemental STT Report 1, dated March 9, 2026.
Kyle Adicks/Butch Smith (Motion 23 carried unanimously)

Motion 24: For tribal ocean fisheries in the area north of Cape Falcon, I move the Council adopt for public review the alternatives as presented in Agenda Item C.6.a, Supplemental STT Report 1, Table 3 (March 9, 2026).
David Sones/Sharon Kiefer (motion 24 carried unanimously)

ADJOURN

The Council meeting adjourned on March 9, 2026 at 1:32 p.m.

Pete Hassemer
Council Chair

Date