Executive Director's Assessment of Staff Capacity – December 2025 through May 2026

Introduction

This report is provided in the interest of helping provide the Council with information that assists with workload planning and prioritization. Partially as a result of the "Council efficiencies" discussion, the Executive and Deputy Directors have begun putting in place tools that forecast and monitor staff capacity and workload. These tools, along with internal processes, help with the internal prioritization, delegation, and sequencing of tasks among Council staff. As the Council grapples with limited resources, it will become important for the Council to intentionally prioritize agenda items and associated workload (and provide appropriate feedback to the Executive Director regarding those priorities) in order to facilitate the optimal use of Council resources. This in turn will help support the development and completion of agenda items the Council has a desire to address.

In the sections below, information is provided which outlines the planned utilization of staff capacity. Where uncertainties exist regarding those capacity utilization forecasts, that uncertainty is described. Adjacent to this information, the Executive Director has made note of where capacity exists that could accommodate additional workload or workload refinement.

Staff capacity and workload forecast

At the end of 2025, the Council will have two Staff Officer vacancies. While those vacancies will be filled over the next couple of months, this presents a challenge with capacity due to the vacancy period and the time needed to bring new staff up to speed. This will diminish the capacity of staff for much of 2026. The implication of these vacancies depends on how workload is prioritized, however it is apparent that staff will need to have relatively greater focus on core tasks, such as salmon season setting as well as sardine, groundfish, and highly migratory species specifications and management measures.

An assessment of staff capacity from December through May indicates that, on average, staff workload will be roughly 110 percent to 130 percent of budgeted time from month to month. The range exists due to some uncertainty over the implications of departing staff and how best to pick up associated workload. This estimated workload range accounts for the workload of staff officers, administrative staff, and IT staff.

Administrative and IT staff demands tend to be relatively predictable, while Staff Officer capacity can vary substantially based on Council priorities. On a Fishery Management Plan/project specific basis, utilized capacity varies. The table below outlines workload forecasts for Staff Officers by Fishery Management Plan/project area:

Salmon	• The salmon staff officer is forecast to work roughly 115% of full time during the period, with a peak of nearly 150% during the March to April period. • During the first half of 2026 salmon staff will be working above full time capacity. Recovery time following the April meeting is encouraged, meaning capacity in June is limited.
Groundfish	• Groundfish staff officers are forecast to work roughly 115% of full time during the period, with peak workload nearing 150% as final action on groundfish specifications nears. • It is likely that average workload for groundfish staff officers will increase as they absorb workload during staff vacancy period. • 2026 is the groundfish specifications action year, meaning a substantial amount of work from groundfish staff officers will take place throughout the spring and into June. Capacity after June is unclear until current vacancies are filled.
Halibut	• Staff officers that work on halibut are forecasted to work on average 115% of full time during the period, with the likelihood of working more due to staff vacancies. • The halibut staff officers also staff salmon and groundfish. Adding halibut matters to staff workload would require reprioritization of other workload, which is not possible in the first half of 2026 (spring salmon matters and groundfish spex matters cannot be reprioritized). Capacity after June is unclear until current vacancies are filled.
CPS	• CPS staff officer workload forecasts are approximately 110% of full time during the period. • The CPS staff officer also works on groundfish. Due to current staff vacancies, workload is relatively uncertain over the next few months. It is possible that workload will be higher than forecasts.
HMS	• HMS staff officer workload forecasts are roughly full time and supplemented with contractor support. Staff officers working on HMS also work on marine planning, habitat, and special projects so workload capacity is affected by these other matters.
Ecosystem/MP/ Habitat/Special Projects	• Ecosystem/MP/Habitat staff officer capacity is estimated to be full time.

PFMC
11/19/2025