Agenda Item D.1.a
Supplemental NMFS Report 1
November 2026

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NOAA Fisheries FY27 Priorities

Kristen Koch, Southwest Fisheries Science Center
Jeremy Rusin, Northwest Fisheries Science Center
Jen Quan, NMFS West Coast Region

Pacific Fishery Management Council
Garden Grove, CA
November 2026

FY27 Priorities:
West Coast Region (WCR)



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Regional Rebalancing Updates



Organizational

- "New" Salmon Management Division (early 2027)



Sustainable Fisheries Activities

- Executive Orders and Administration Priorities
  - PFMC
  - Agency Reform

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Focusing Capacity on Top Administration Priorities

EO 14276: *Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness*

Council Related:

- Shoreside Catch Monitoring
- Pacific Sardine Stock Definitions
- FMP Species Assessment
- Exempted Fishing Permits

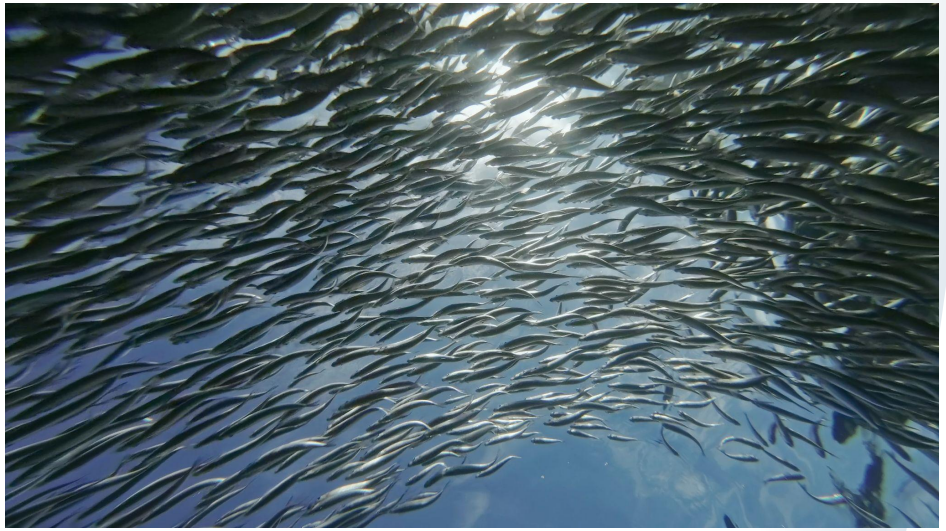




Photo: Adobe Stock

Focusing Capacity on Top Administration Priorities

EO 14276: *Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness*

Agency Reform Actions:

- Pinniped Predation/Depredation
- West Coast Take Reduction Team
- Pacific Salmon Management
- California MPA's/Channel Islands - Safe Harbor





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And There's More to Come!

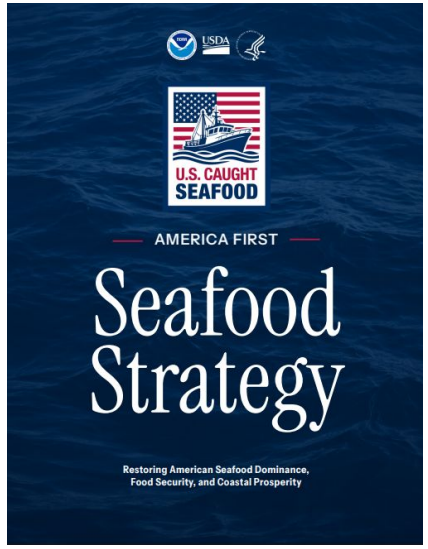
National Level Agency Reform Actions

- Endangered Species Act
- National Standards

EO 14430: *Restoring American Saltwater Angling and Recreation*

America First Seafood Strategy

Strengthening U.S. Fisheries, Coastal Economies, and Food Security







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RAPID and Executive Order 14430



- RAPID serves as the **catalyst** to achieve the recreational fishing data improvement goals outlined in the E.O.
- We do not anticipate any major changes to the RAPID approach or workshop design
- RAPID and the E.O. will result in an improved recreational data collection system founded in partnership and collaboration
- NOAA anticipates the opportunity for broad discussion of the E.O. directives during the RAPID regional workshops.

What Can We Expect from RAPID?

All recreational fishing data systems will be open to change.

Evaluation	Regionally flexible-Nationally cohesive	Preserved recreational data time series
Discussion of what is working well, what can be improved and what may need to be removed from our current recreational data systems	Opportunity to identify resources needed to improve our recreational data collection at a regional and national level	NOAA will maintain normal survey operations throughout RAPID and use existing surveys as a “bridge” post-RAPID, so there will be no abrupt management changes in regions that decide to implement new surveys

Angler Listening Sessions & Regional Workshops

National angler listening sessions

December 3, 2026
from 5–7 p.m. ET

December 9, 2026
from 8–10 p.m. ET

West Coast Regional Workshop

February 2 - 4, 2026
in San Diego, CA

- Details and invites are forthcoming

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FY27 Priorities: Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NWFSC)



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2027 Planned Surveys: West Coast Groundfish Bottom Trawl, So. CA Hook & Line Survey, and Integrated West Coast Pelagics Survey

Ship to Shore

- Utilizing data transfers from survey vessels to shore systems
- Improved Data Warehouse for bottom trawl user access
- HakeML leverages machine learning shoreside for multiple species from multiple platforms (survey, UxS, industry)

Working with key Partners

- Cross-science center (AK, NW, SW) UxS acoustic system project
- Scoping potential untrawlable habitat survey workshop with industry
- Upcoming regional Cooperative research summits



Survey scientist, Claire Rosemond, working with data scientist, James Fellows, on new software that allows captains to view previous tows and searches in stations. This has improved their ability to find trawlable habitat for survey operations.

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EM Investments: Cooperative Research Pilot Project - Machine Learning Assisted Electronic Monitoring of West Coast Fixed Gear Fisheries

Goals and Outcomes

- Develop Machine Learning (ML) Algorithm: automate species recognition and length estimation
- Develop New Protocols: establishes standardized EM protocols for hook-and-line "waterline" discards
- Improve Efficiency & Scaling: reduce manual video review costs and integrate with NMFS data pipeline

We need your help: Seeking partnerships with 3-5 longline vessels



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Modernize assessments for optimal impact

Right-size groundfish stock assessment enterprise

- Planned 2027 stock assessments
- Groundfish assessment 10-year plan
- Streamline assessments for lower priority species

Ageing efficiency & throughput

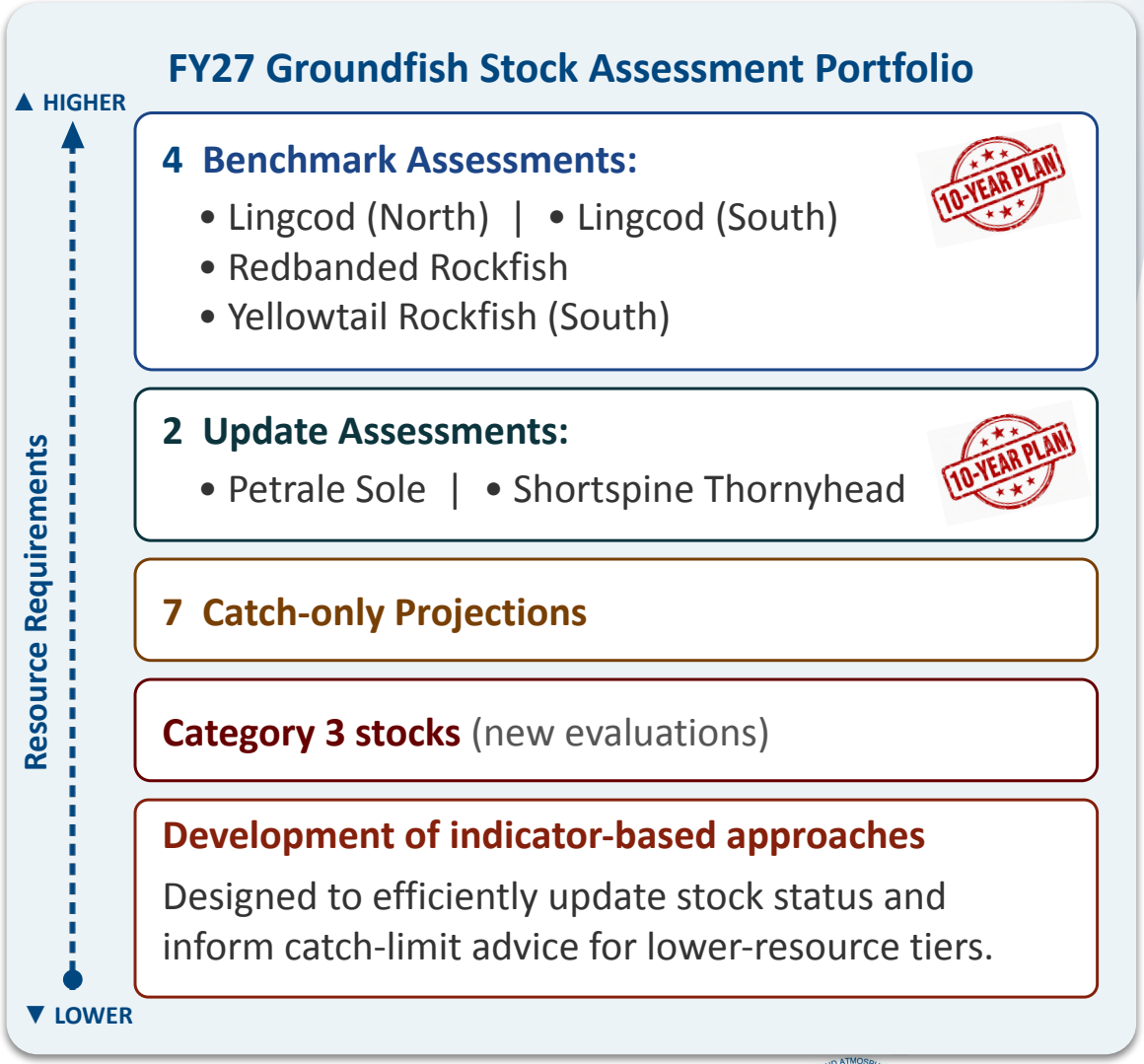
Increase efficiency and throughput with FT-NIRS technology

Collaborative & cooperative research

- Fishery-dependent index of abundance methods
- eDNA index of abundance methods

Next-generation software platform (FIMS)

Transitioning to a more flexible, modernized stock assessment software platform



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Advance science that improves the responsiveness of fisheries management to changing ocean conditions

- Provide frequent updates, including via groundfish risk tables, on current ocean conditions on the West Coast, especially in light of major El Niño currently underway.
- Convene and participate in fishermen roundtables and solicit fishermen's observations.
- Deliver bi-annual ecosystem status updates to PFMC (ESR in March and mini-ESR in September).
- Improve understanding of the dynamics of fisheries species, bycatch species, and fleets based on changing ocean conditions.
- Determine factors that improve economic resilience and continued participation of fishing communities given changing environmental and regulatory conditions.



Transform the NWFSC science enterprise by leaning into 'Omics (the study biological molecules within organisms)

- Integrate environmental DNA (eDNA) sample collection in NWFSC surveys. **Success: eDNA collection on IWCPS**
- Operationalize eDNA-based scientific advice for use in management pipelines. **Success: SSC reviews suitability of eDNA abundance indices in groundfish stock assessments**
- Modernizing 'omics techniques. **Success: building an epigenetic clock for vermilion/sunset rockfish & demonstration project on Close Kin Mark-Recapture**

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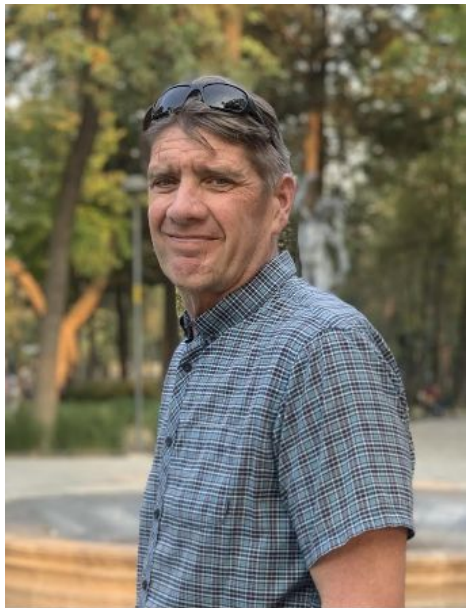
FY27 Priorities: Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC)



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Organizational Updates

SWFSC:



Fisheries Ecology Division Director
Dr. John Field



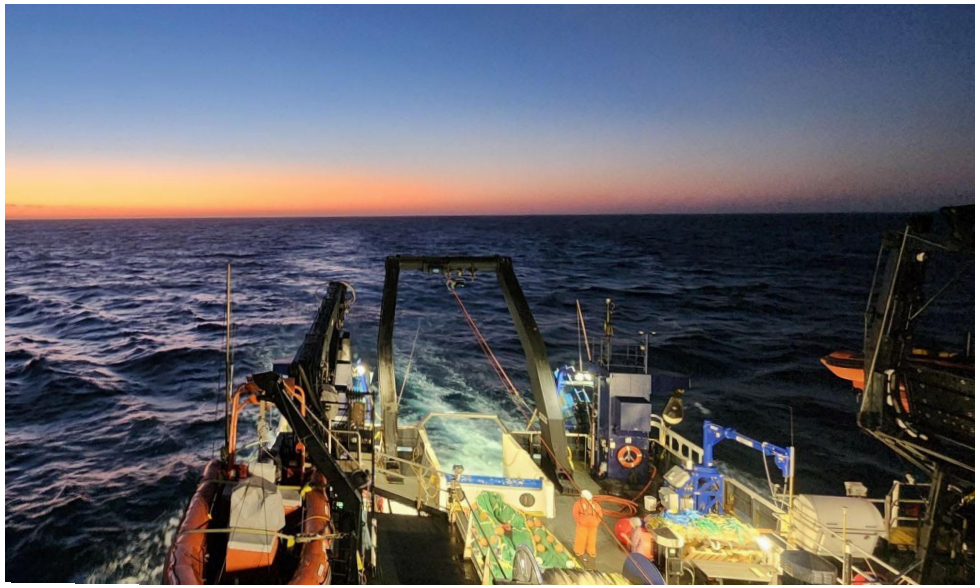
Ecosystem Science Division Director
Dr. Ryan Rykaczewski

NOAA Fisheries Science Enterprise supporting administration priorities:

- Four Pillars to Support Science
  - Deck to Decisions
  - Open Science/Open Data
  - External Partnerships
  - National Programs
- Taking a look across Science Centers at leveraging efficiencies

FY27 Planned Surveys & Stock Assessments

- Integrated West Coast Pelagics Survey
- CalCOFI (4 surveys)
- Rockfish Recruitment and Assessment survey
- Surge of glider deployments for ENSO



- **Coastal Pelagic Species (CPS)**
  - Pacific sardine coastwide biomass estimate ("NSP" update plus "SSP" survey estimate)
  - Pacific mackerel update assessments
  - Ongoing work: simulations in support of a 2028 Pacific sardine benchmark stock assessment
- **Highly Migratory Species (HMS)**
  - Pacific bluefin tuna health check
- **Groundfish**
  - Stock assessment of southern yellowtail rockfish
- **Salmon**
  - Pre-season reports for Ocean Salmon Fisheries
  - Klamath River fall Chinook salmon report

Advancing Deck-to-Decisions thru Advanced Tech and Open Science/Open Data

- Integrated West Coast Pelagics Survey
  - Continued eDNA sample collection
  - In addition to hake, analysis of samples for CPS and other species
  - Testing of tandem UMS for eDNA sample collection
- 'Omics architectures and scalable analytical workflows

Other advanced technology work

- Integrated West Coast Pelagics Survey while have tandem testing of USVs to collect acoustics data
- Continue to develop and improve salmon life cycle models and other decision-support tools through extensive acoustic tagging and telemetry efforts in both freshwater and marine ecosystems
- Advance regional modeling efforts to offer regular ocean forecasts

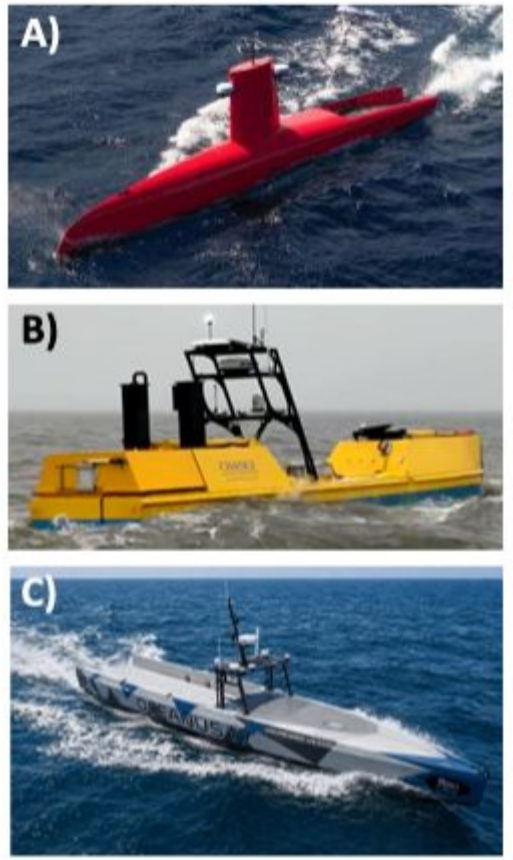
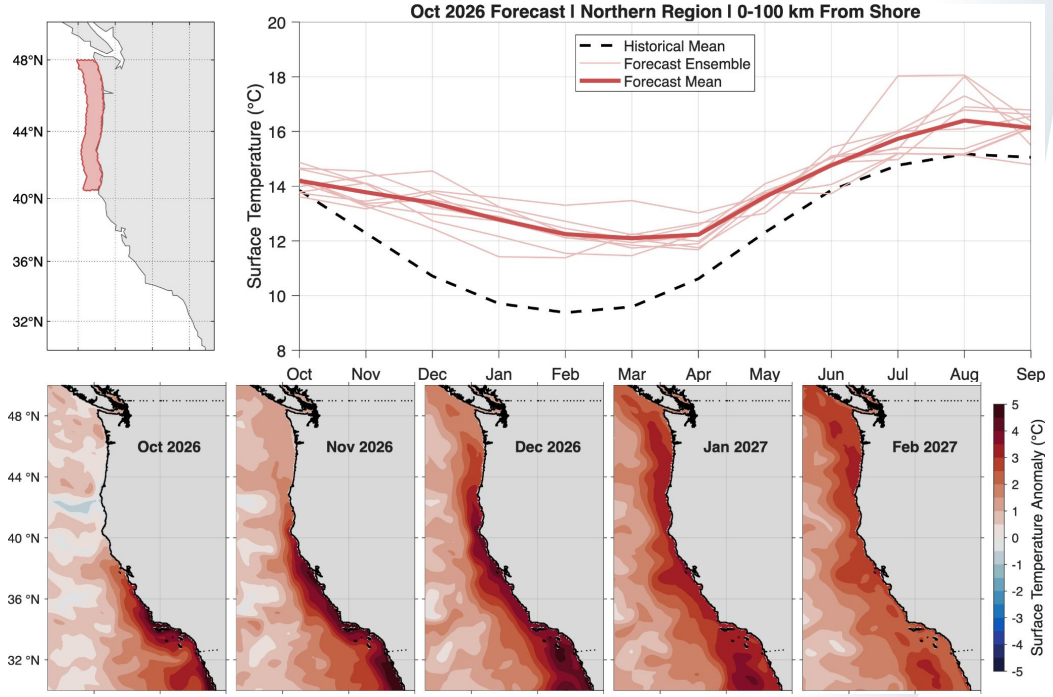
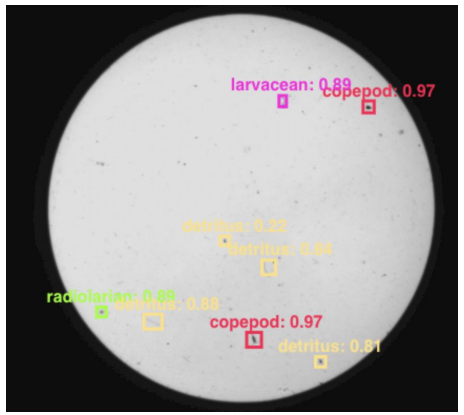


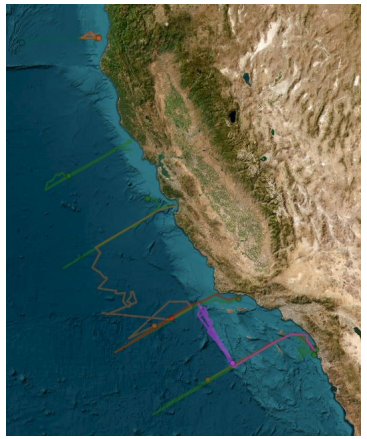
Fig. 1. Examples of long-endurance, motorized USVs. A) DriX O-16 (16 m), B) Chance MC40 (12 m), C) ZeroUSV OCEANUS17 (17 m).

Enhanced efforts to monitor and forecast the impact of El Niño

- Modeling and glider timelines have been accelerated to capture oceanographic conditions associated with the event
- Complements the CCIEA team's El Niño efforts.
- Includes:
  - New, regularly updated ocean forecasts of temperature and oxygen at regional scales
  - Surge of glider deployments in southern (San Diego) and northern (Trinidad Head) domains to assess ENSO changes







- NMFS glider observations are focused on capturing coastal anomalies and measure:
  - chlorophyll
  - temperature
  - salinity
  - oxygen
  - plankton imagery
  - optical backscatter

Cooperative Research and Collaborative Relationships

New efforts

- Increasing stakeholder engagement - e.g. Get to NOAA Fish
- Groundfish
  - Streamlining data entry and access with RecFIN
  - California scorpionfish life history studies
  - Vermilion/sunset rockfish research to support the 2029 assessment
    - Species-specific life history, close-kin mark-recapture





Continued efforts

- CPS
  - Integrated survey nearshore component to continue
  - Training and testing support from industry net manufacturers on Integrated Survey
- HMS
  - Sample collections with industry continues (e.g. stomachs, otoliths, muscle tissue)
  - Tuna lengths measured onboard by industry



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U.S. Department of Commerce | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | National Marine Fisheries Service