

COUNCIL MEETING TRANSCRIPTS
289th Session of the
Pacific Fishery Management Council
September 16-21, 2026

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Meeting Transcript Summary

Verbatim transcripts of Council Actions are available on the Council website. The transcripts may be accessed at <https://www.pcouncil.org/council-meetings/previous-meetings/>.

A. Call to Order

4. Agenda

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] We have an agenda. That proposed or draft agenda that has been published in the advanced briefing book. Look for any discussion on that.

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:13] Mr. Chairman, not to cut off discussion but I have a motion.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:17] Please proceed.

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:22] I move the Council approve the Detailed Agenda for the 289th Session presented as A.4 in the September 2026 briefing book.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:32] Language on the screen looks accurate and complete?

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:34] Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:35] Thank you. Is there a second to the motion? Seconded by David Sones. Speak to your motion as necessary?

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:41] Mr. Chairman, I think the motion speaks for itself.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:46] Thank you. Any questions or discussion regarding the motion? Seeing none I will call the question. All those in favor say "Aye".

Council [00:00:54] Aye.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:57] Opposed? Abstentions? The motion passes unanimously. Thank you Sharon.

B. Open Comment Period

1. Comments on Non-Agenda Items

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] So that completes our public comment. And before we close it, is there any Council discussion regarding that? And Lynn Mattes.

Lynn Mattes [00:00:12] Thank you Chair. I don't know if it's....hopefully this is appropriate, I had a chance to talk with Miss Nowak in the hallway during the lunch break and primarily what she was going to let us know was she is leaving the Oregon Trawl Commission at the end of the year. So she wanted to just let everybody know that the Trawl Commission is going to have new leadership and appreciated the work and the communication we've all had. That's what she relayed to me at lunchtime. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:39] All right, thank you. With that I think we've completed our public comment period.

C. Cross Fishery Management Plan

1. Office of Law Enforcement, United States Coast Guard, and Tri-State Enforcement Biennial Report – Alyssa Seibt

No transcription for this agenda item.

2. Office of National Marine Sanctuaries (ONMS) Report – Kerry Griffin

Christa Svensson [00:00:00] So with that, I believe we move into Council discussion and guidance.

Jaime Diamond [00:00:11] Discussion. I don't know if anything like this has been done before but just thinking about Amendment 34, which was the action to close Sur Ridge as a Groundfish Exclusion Area for a specific purpose, but that hasn't happened and potentially won't happen for awhile. I'm wondering if there's any way to temporarily do something about that to allow access until this project actually starts? And I don't know who that would be a question for, but throwing it out there.

Christa Svensson [00:00:47] All right, thank you. I see the hand of the Executive Director come up, so I will call on our Executive Director.

Merrick Burden [00:00:55] Thank you for the question. And I'll also invite NOAA General Counsel to weigh-in if they think it's appropriate. But to your question Miss Diamond, essentially what you're describing is a clawing back of a previous motion, so I forget the technical word, rescind? Rescission? I don't remember, anyway, and that's something that we can do. This agenda item hasn't been noticed like that, so if you wanted to discuss that we would schedule it for a future Council meeting. We would consider that. We would gather more information from ourselves, from the groundfish branch of NMFS, from the sanctuaries, and then allow you to make an informed decision, and that may involve like changing your prior motion. Whether we've done something like that, like this particular thing in the past, I don't know. I guess I would look to Miss Lynch to see if she has anything else that she might want to add from NOAA General Counsel's perspective?

Sheila Lynch [00:02:01] Thank you. I don't have anything else to add to that. I've never been in that situation. So if it's something the Council's interested in we could talk about it and figure it out.

Christa Svensson [00:02:18] Thank you. Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:02:20] Yes, thank you Madam Vice-Chair. Maybe I'll ask the question in a slightly different manner and ask it of NOAA Fisheries. We have a regulation that is on the books that establishes a GEA which prevents groundfish fishing in this area because the area is set aside as a Research and Restoration Site. The need for the GEA was predicated entirely upon the implementation of this research and restoration activity, and I believe that's what your rulemaking indicated when the rule was proposed and finalized. So I guess my question would be, is there any possibility, and this is just a question, I'm not recommending this, I'm just wondering procedurally, is there a way that NMFS might be able to pause temporarily effectiveness of the regulation until the activity commences?

Sheila Lynch [00:03:44] Thanks. Not to speak for NMFS, but Frank and I were just chatting and it seems like this is something that when groundfish is on the floor the folks who are in the seat can probably address more effectively, just because we're not sure where this rule is in the process and that would heavily influence the answer to the question.

Christa Svensson [00:04:11] Thank you. Mr. Lockhart also you have your hand up.

Frank Lockhart [00:04:14] Maybe I'll just try to fill in a little bit there. Let's just say it is a final rule and then I.....I just got a text from amazing staff that it has moved through the final rule phase, so it's effective, and so in my opinion we could not just choose to not implement that. It is a final rule. It is effective. We would have to take some sort of action to do that, to make it not effective. Beyond getting into the specifics of that, whether it would take a full Council, you know, action of some sort, or if it's

something that we could potentially do, I don't want to hazard a guess right now.

Christa Svensson [00:05:09] All right. Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:05:12] Thank you. I guess kind of just another process question. So, is there a distinction with the final rule of being able to suspend a final rule versus rescind a final rule?

Christa Svensson [00:05:32] Mr. Lockhart.

Frank Lockhart [00:05:35] I must admit I'm not quite sure of the distinction there. Could you explain a little bit more what you mean?

Sharon Kiefer [00:05:42] Well a suspension is enforcement of the rule, is suspended. I guess in my mind a rescension means you claw back the rule. The rule is no longer on the books versus something that's on the books but implementation of that rule has been suspended for time certain or something like that. I'm just curious if you've ever done anything like that?

Frank Lockhart [00:06:16] Going back on my experience, I'm not totally up to speed on recent activities, but I think that once something is on the books it's very hard not to enforce that, you know. And I think they're obviously, you know, we heard from the enforcement folks earlier today, they do have discretion, but I think it would be very awkward for NMFS to ask them to do certain things. But I think that we can acknowledge that they do have some discretion on enforcement. But I think once it's in place ideally it would be enforced.

Christa Svensson [00:07:11] Further questions or discussion or guidance? Chair Hassemer.

Pete Hassemer [00:07:18] Thank you. Just maybe a path forward because for lack of a better definition this is getting messy on pathways. What I gather is that you know one thing we started with is the Council could reconsider a prior action, which was to recommend that, but my guess is if we reconsidered that the law that was put in place wouldn't go away so that's....anyway, maybe we have time to think about this before we get to day last, whether it's a prioritization of a new thing or a scheduling or something, what are the possible avenues to approach this if the Council wanted to do something about that.

Christa Svensson [00:08:14] Okay, It's the Executive Director.

Merrick Burden [00:08:18] Thank you Miss Svensson. So this agenda item is, the way it's been noticed is that there is no action, so there's nothing for us to do here. If you do want to do something like this we would need to schedule an agenda item specifically to take this up at a future meeting. So to your point Mr. Chairman, we could take this up on day last and discuss whether you want to schedule something like that in the context of everything else that may be on the wish list. November is quite crowded, March and April. Actually, April has a little bit of space on it. March is already crowded. So we would just have to talk about when we would schedule that agenda item if that's something that you would like to do. But at this meeting there is nothing to be done because we have not noticed this potential action as part of this meeting. So hopefully that's consistent somewhat with our Chairman's message here a second ago. And I see NOAA General Counsel is not giving me a death glare so....

Christa Svensson [00:09:20] No, but they do have their hand raised so.

Sheila Lynch [00:09:26] No, no death glare because I completely agree with that. And just for clarification, the action that you'd be considering, because this has already gone to NMFS and NMFS

has already done a rulemaking, would be to recommend that NMFS basically do a new rulemaking to remove the exclusion area.

Christa Svensson [00:09:49] Okay, thank you.

Jaime Diamond [00:09:52] I'm just going to apologize for the can of tacks I threw in front of us. It was a thought that kind of came through as we were discussing and this was not a fully baked, otherwise I would have probably done a little more legwork on what this means and what this takes, so I apologize for derailing things a little bit, that was not my intention. But just thinking about, you know, we're in the business of helping people fish and we have something that we put in place for a reason and that reason isn't happening and to me logically I was like, well, can this be done? And I apologize for doing that on the floor right here. But thank you for answering the question.

Christa Svensson [00:10:31] No, appreciated. And it was an interesting exercise in how the process works once we've taken a decision but the environment changes. Is there other conversation, discussion, or guidance that we want to talk about before we move forward with this agenda item? Looking closely I don't see any hands. So with that, I will turn to our staff officer and see where we are.

Kerry Griffin [00:11:05] Yes, thank you Co-Chair Svensson. If there's no further discussion or guidance from the Council then that would conclude this agenda item. I mean, I didn't hear any decision to look at this under future workload planning or any sort of other direction to staff. So if there's no other discussion then you'll get another sanctuary's report in April of next year.

Christa Svensson [00:11:36] All right, well thank you. With that I will close this agenda item and return control of the gavel to our Chair.

3. Special Projects Updates and Timelines – Gilly Lyons

Butch Smith [00:00:00] So now we come to a place where we have Council discussions, motions, and I will open the floor to Council discussions. Put those hands down. Go ahead Corey.

Corey Ridings [00:00:16] Don't tempt me Butch....(laughter).... I'll just start by saying I do have a motion for this at some point, but I want to leave it open for folks for discussions and questions and whatnot. I guess I'll just start discussion with what is kind of a question slash a request, I think, for Council staff. So I'll pose this as a request, but please respond if it feels like a question, which to say, thinking about the funding piece of this, at first reading the document and saying, oh wow, we've kind of planned ahead and got over our skis, and that is something I think the Council needs to be very thoughtful of. You know in recent history we've have been struggling a lot with budget in the sense that we have not had sort of money come in when we thought it would and we've had to be thoughtful about how we're spending, and I think this Council does a good job of that actually. My point being, reflecting on sort of how this was happening, my thoughts went around to, okay, well if we're going to start dipping into core funding what does that mean exactly? And then I was actually reminded yesterday in the Budget Committee that these special projects and sort of the long history we've had of these special projects, IRA money, it was climate money, then it was special projects, there's been a lot of iteration. So just recognizing that we've been sort of spending IRA money on core projects and now we're proposing I think to spend core money on IRA projects, so those blurred lines are consistent and it makes sense to me. In terms of trying to avoid getting out over our skis in the future, I would request maybe as part of whenever this comes up on the agenda again, a report from Council staff describing sort of how we got there? Where the spending was? What project it was on? We heard a lot from Director Burden and the Budget Committee yesterday so thanks to him for that, but seeing something written on paper just so we have a sense of where that money actually went and what it was for, I think....I don't want to quite use the word 'forensic', but a forensic like that might help us all understand and help us do better next time. So I'll stop there for now.

Butch Smith [00:02:52] Thank you Corey. Lynn Mattes.

Lynn Mattes [00:02:57] Thank you Vice-Chair Smith. Miss Ridings hit on some of the concerns I had and that I brought up in the Budget Committee. When the motions were being made on some of these it did seem like we were biting off a lot, and I will take my ownership as a Council member in voting yes for this and not being more vocal that maybe we have too much. This is now showing us that we did bite off too much. It is a bit of a struggle that we're going to now have to use some of our base funding for, or to complete these special projects when just two years ago we were tightening the belt, shaking couch cushions, looking in the coats we haven't worn in 10 years looking for money. We're no longer doing international fisheries management because it saved us \$2,500. Looking back at some of the Committee-of-the-Whole numbers, in 2023 dollars an average Council meeting cost us about \$265,000. And now we're going to take, we need to move 363, 336....350, we'll just round it there, thousand dollars out of our base funding to work on these special projects, that's more than a Council meeting. I'm not saying the work isn't important. There's some good strides being made in it and things to provide more flexibility, more efficiency, but where is that trade-off with the work that we normally should be doing? I do think we need some, we should have had some check-ins maybe before we got this far down the road having spent as much of this grant as we have. I am fully supportive of applying for a no-cost extension for this grant, but it was brought up in our delegation meeting this morning that a lot of IRA money is getting pulled back. So the question to be thinking about, I don't expect there to be an answer right now, but do we have a contingency plan if we don't get the no-cost extension? If we come to November and we don't get that extension, what do we do? Another kind of overarching thought question, not one I'm expecting an answer right now is, and I think Miss Ridings brought it up

a little bit, is do we have a mechanism to have a check-in sooner so that we don't run into something quite this drastic in the future? And then if we move forward with what is in the staff recommendations on Attachment 5, how will the IRA related work be prioritized moving forward given that we've already prioritized this by making motions and guidance along with all of our other funding demands and workload demands? Again, I don't expect answers right now. I know Merrick's kind of looking at me like, will you please shut up and quit asking questions? But just some thoughts that myself and some others at ODFW who have been heavily involved in this have been thinking about. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:06:02] Thanks Lynn. Any other? I didn't see you on it first. I'll go with Aja.

Aja Szumylo [00:06:11] Thanks. I just wanted to add a different spin to how I've been thinking about what ended up happening with these projects, and I know that I was a big part in creating the larger scope for what we were thinking through. But you know we passed through a really unreasonable set of circumstances from like a really drastic shift in government from when we got the money to today. And so I just want to remind people of that, that like we could not have predicted that the world would play out like this. And so some of the like the whiplash that you're discussing Lynn about going from excess to lack was simply just the circumstances of what happened over the last several years. I don't think any of the work was wasted thinking about how we could be more flexible and more adaptive to face all the things that we're going to be up against in the future. And some of what was created with what happened so far is playbooks for what we do when things go a little bit awry, and I'm thinking in particular about the If, Then Statement study of what's happening nationally. There are a number of times, especially with what led to the Spex Flex action, that there are these tools that we could have had in place and that we could have thought through in advance of running into a problem that we didn't have the time and space to do that thinking for, and so I think what we created here is a lot of thinking around directions that we could take to address flexibility in the future. I think it is not wasted to spend base funds on these things later on. And I really like the way the GAP described it as like, again we have some exploration of tools, if we can't finish them in the scope of the money that we have for these special projects, if we start to plan them into FMP time, I think that that's a really reasonable way forward. I, actually when I first heard about what we were running into I was a lot more concerned that we would have to drop things, but then shifting the thinking to say like, okay, we have to shift more into the general prioritization that we would do about things seems really reasonable to me. So I mean I get....yeah, it's hard to get to a place in a project and realize that you've gone astray of timelines or funding scopes, but I think this is what happens in the course of projects that you recognize that you're somewhere and that you are not where you thought you would be and then you reroute a little bit. And so I guess I'm not disappointed with the way things played out and I'm really excited about some of the groundwork that we've laid here. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:08:56] Jaime.

Jaime Diamond [00:08:58] Thank you. And thank you Aja for that kind of thought. I was starting... between yesterday and today I've really been thinking about this and this kind of separation between special project versus core and realizing that these special projects, the intent is that they will become part of our core ability to function. They will help us do what we need to do, things like Spex Flex, things like getting fishermen's knowledge validated and inputted into stock assessments. That is, I think, a core function that all of these things, while they are special right now, they are going to contribute to and be part of our general array of tools in the toolbox that will get used. And so....yeah the GAP, the way, I'll just reiterate, the way the GAP kind of phrased it as moving these things into just different bins. I think the staff supplemental attachment and their kind of outline of doing this kind of parsed things out pretty well and I appreciate the concern. And I absolutely agree with the concern and where we were, just the Council was just a cycle ago funding-wise versus looking forward. I just I do see these actually as part of what our core function will be or should be, could be. And I do have a motion.

Butch Smith [00:10:37] Go ahead Merrick, interject, and then I got Dr. Lent and then I have Marci.

Rebecca Lent [00:10:51] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair, and thank you Mr. Executive Director. I'll just say simply that my understanding is every time you mentioned that we have IRA funds available that you had a budget, and maybe see this track, you had the regular budget, you had over here the IRA funds, and when you needed some cash you took out of that one knowing and keeping track and putting the money back into the IRA budget line, I think. That's one way.....if that's what was done then we shouldn't be coming up short, unless, as was mentioned, we may have overplanned and been too ambitious. So it would be important for me to know the difference between that. I just always assumed it was an IOU that was going to go back to IRA. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:11:38] Marci.

Marci Yaremko [00:11:38] Yeah, thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. I want to I guess seek clarification on a remark Lynn made earlier with regard to the estimated savings in Table 7 of Attachment....Page 7, sorry, the table in Supplemental Attachment 5. My understanding is that these items that are shown in the bottom table, the estimated savings items, it is not foregone or there's no conclusion yet as to whether or not we will do those things. They would become part of our regular workload prioritization and, I think as the GAP recommends, would be components of other agenda items. That we would not pursue these items automatically. We would look to incorporating them in agenda items that are yet to be scheduled and would just kind of automatically slide into future work and be combined with the whole. So my impression was we don't need to carve out money out of our base grant to like earmark it for these line items that?....I think my question is to Merrick. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:13:13] Sounds like a Merrick question to me too.

Merrick Burden [00:13:16] Yes, thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman. And I'm glad I let you all go first because you teed up my comments quite well. So I would say that just big picture, I think most of the time we do quite well prioritizing and using our resources. The IRA projects have just been bumpy and there have been several occasions where the scope of the work was defined without a corresponding discussion about our resources, and so we need to fix that. We need to be having discussions about our resources when we identify our priorities. So I've been....various pieces of our briefing book here I've made proposals about how we can do this better. So that's this example is where that's coming from. By and large we do well. This project has been bumpy. I do want to be clear that we are being very good with our accounting. The IRA work and the work coming out of the IRA funds is specific to the IRA grant. We are not mixing money. I think that might be confused here. We are not mixing money. These are discreetly different projects. To Marci's point, and I think also to Lynn's point, yeah this last table, we have not committed to that. So if I look at the first row, the DOM workshop, you all provided guidance that we do that. I don't take guidance to be binding. So we have outlined what it would take to do that workshop. And then before we execute I would come back to you and say, is this really what you want to do? You haven't done that yet. The associated staff time, because you haven't determined that you want to do those workshops, the staff time isn't there. The Council floor time hasn't happened. None of that has happened yet. The local knowledge piece, the Council made a motion to scope out a local knowledge workshop, not yet to do it. So this table are things that we anticipate you wanting to do but you haven't actually decided to do yet. So we are not on the hook to do this. We haven't committed to doing these things yet. I think that's what Miss Yaremko is getting at.

Butch Smith [00:15:38] Miss Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:15:38] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. Yes, that is what I am getting at. I would ask one bit of clarification on the DOM workshop execution that I now understand the execution, should it

move forward, would come out of our base grant and we would take that up as a matter of prioritization at some point in the future. But I do need to check on the checkbox above regarding the workshop facilitator RFP, because then the line item in the table below says, "eliminate standalone facilitator". So maybe you can update us on the status of whether an RFP has been issued and what our plan is? Thank you.

Merrick Burden [00:16:32] Mr. Vice-Chairman I can answer that question. So in anticipation of you wanting to do a workshop, we did submit an RFP. We have received some bids on that. We have been in communication with the bidding entities that this Council is still needing to resolve a few things and that we will be back in touch with them at an appropriate time. So we have not made any commitments from that RFP.

Butch Smith [00:17:03] Marci.

Marci Yaremko [00:17:03] Thank you. If I may, one follow-up. So in the event that we approve the recommendations in Attachment 5, my understanding is that we would proceed with canceling that RFP in light of what's in this table about eliminating the standalone facilitator?

Merrick Burden [00:17:27] And Mr. Vice-Chairman I can respond to that also. I think you basically got it Miss Yaremko. The RFP has closed and so it's no longer open, so we would not proceed with awarding a contract until this Council decides how it would like to proceed.

Marci Yaremko [00:17:46] Great. Thank you for the clarification.

Butch Smith [00:17:53] Any other discussion? Corey.

Corey Ridings [00:18:04] Thanks Vice. As I offered earlier, I do have a motion if that is appropriate?

Butch Smith [00:18:12] It is appropriate. I do have a maybe a.....and I guess there's two motions. Would it be a good thing to take 5 minutes and you two look at your two motions and see if they're common or do you just want to go ahead and put the motions on the floor and see where everything falls out? I am.....

Corey Ridings [00:18:34] I'm happy to talk it over. Why don't we take a.....yes, a 5 minute break works....

Butch Smith [00:18:40] I think that might be a better way to go and and if they're common, you know, we can or you can add and distract and Just give her a whirl. Is that all right? 5 minutes.

Corey Ridings [00:18:50] Okay. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:18:51] All right. Thank you Corey.....(BREAK).... I want to thank you two ladies for getting together there and appreciate that. Corey, you're up my friend.

Corey Ridings [00:19:11] Thank you Vice. I move the Council adopt the recommendations in Agenda Item C.3, Supplemental Attachment 5 to refine the scope of the Council's special projects. Advance the actions in Agenda Item C.3, Supplemental Attachment 5 specified under a no-cost extension of the current Inflation Reduction Act Grant to be completed by December 31, 2027.

Butch Smith [00:19:42] Okay, is the language on the screen accurate and complete?

Corey Ridings [00:19:47] Yes it is.

Butch Smith [00:19:49] Okay. I'm calling for a second? Jaime Diamond. Alrighty would you like to speak to your motion?

Corey Ridings [00:19:58] Sure. I'll be brief here. The work that the Council has previously decided upon is worth doing. We have spent floor time, had many discussions about this and I think it's worth continuing. In the process of preparing for this agenda item I just I couldn't find any reason to stop any of the projects that were unfinished with the materials and knowledge I have before me now. And as just discussed, we are going to have....things are going to come back. We will still have options to decide how things move forward. I don't really want to start picking at details here, I'm just going to add a few notes based on what came up in the AB reports. It is my preference to have a local knowledge workshop in-person if practicable. The FIW needed it and so I don't see why, with okay, it would be any different. And so just to the extent that we can, it would be great to have that in-person. I'll note that like the rec round tables that NMFS has been providing, I know that's not the same thing, but I've really enjoyed going to those in the past few years and I think they've been really excellent examples of how to engage with folks. So I note that those have been in-person, leaving this all open for later discussion, but I did note and I did see that in one of the reports and I think that's wise. I want to thank the staff for their efforts to work with the tribes on the indigenous knowledge piece. Please note that this will take some time and I that's right and I just appreciate that ongoing engagement. Also Project 2, the community resilience decision tool, we heard for an update in winter, I think would be a great idea. And then just to wrap up, yeah, look for us to come back as plans with our options open on how to continue.

Butch Smith [00:21:56] All right, thank you. Any discussion on the motion? Seeing none I'll call for the question. All those in favor?

Council [00:22:09] Aye.

Butch Smith [00:22:12] Any opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries unanimously. Thank you. So Gilly I think we managed to do..... Oh, Merrick, go ahead.

Merrick Burden [00:22:30] Yeah, just consistent with my theme for this meeting that we get clearer about what it is we're asking everyone to do. There have been a couple of requests around this table made by individuals. I don't know if that's the consensus of this Council. So, one of the requests was made by Miss Ridings, and Miss Ridings I'm sorry I may be not quite remembering your request, but it was to basically do an accounting of how the IRA grant has been spent across the various projects. I heard you vocalize that. I didn't hear a response to that. And so my first question is, does anyone else want us to do that? And is that a Council consensus request?

Butch Smith [00:23:17] Jaime.

Jaime Diamond [00:23:18] Thank you. I believe this is something we kind of spoke about in the Budget Committee and I think it would be an appropriate place for that to happen if that was something we wanted to do would be in the Budget Committee to go over that. Just a thought if that is something that others want. Just a place for it to land.

Butch Smith [00:23:45] Christa.

Christa Svensson [00:23:50] Yeah, thank you.

Butch Smith [00:23:50] Sorry, Vice-Chair Svensson. I apologize.

Christa Svensson [00:23:53] I would be supportive of having a little more information on it, in part because when we started these projects we had relatively clear ideas, and then we had some pretty strong headwinds in terms of finances, not necessarily through the choice of ourselves, but just in terms financing in general. And that over time has helped really change the course of some of these projects, so I think it would be helpful to understand how we have spent, not necessarily down to every dime and quarter, but kind of, hey, are the projects as we outlined them still spending in kind of the category where we were looking at, or have we had kind of mission creep from Project 3 that is taking extra from Project 1 or vice-versa. And I just want to reflect that, you know some of the items, things like Spex Flex before we were in the financial situation that we are, probably would have just been agendized under one of the FMPs and and not put in this category. I don't think that that's a good or a bad thing, it's just kind of a recognition that as our needs have changed, how we have looked at these projects has changed, and that probably will be reflected in the budgeting of projects and how we've actually spent. So I do think forensic accounting, if you want to call it that, would be beneficial.

Butch Smith [00:25:40] Thanks Christa. Sharon.

Sharon Kiefer [00:25:45] I take a different view. I believe that really Merrick manages his staff and related budget appropriately. And we've got already with this motion, which I support, still a heavy lift of work and I want to be forward focused on our commitment to getting this through the knot hole and not looking backward. So I am not overly supportive of a forensic accounting exercise, recognizing having had to manage a budget, multiple budgets, and having had do that before, it takes a lot of time and staff work and brain power. And so I just, if we had all the time in the world and all the money in the world that would be great, but I really think we really need to focus on moving forward and not looking backwards. So I really don't....I'm not supportive of that particular exercise.

Butch Smith [00:26:50] Thank you Sharon. Anyone else for discussion? Oh, Pete and then Lynn Mattes.

Pete Hassemer [00:26:59] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. Similarly, right now I can't capture the value of that audit considering the work that has to be done and thinking about the project closeout when this is all done in the grant and the reporting we have to do. It wasn't....you know, it was a good chunk of money, it was not substantial. I think we've completed quite a large where we've accomplished quite a bit with the money we've had. It was money well spent, but I'm sorry right now I can't capture the value of as was expressed, the forensic audit and how we spent that versus let's keep moving forward. And when this is all completed then maybe we can, when we look at everything, we can think about how we might want to assess that, but not at this time. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:28:00] Thank you Mr. Chairman. Anyone else? Jeff Lackey.

Jeff Lackey [00:28:09] I tend to agree with Sharon and her rationale. I'm new here. I haven't sat through a Budget Committee meeting, but it just kind of seemed to me that a closer look at things would be done through there, and that's why you have committees so you don't do everything on the Council floor because you can't.

Butch Smith [00:28:34] Thank you sir. Dr. Lent.

Rebecca Lent [00:28:37] Thank you. Someone just mentioned the closeout. When you do the closeout and you finish up the grant, I assume that there's a report that comes from the Council as the accounting, how we did it and so forth, so we will get some information at least from that. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:28:52] Director.

Merrick Burden [00:28:53] Yeah, thank you Dr. Lent. That's...if there's going to be no other comment that was going to be my comment, was that there will be a final report that will show you how the money was spent. It's fairly high level. That is part of our normal grant reporting process. It's not a deep dive diagnosis, but it does give you a sense of how the money was spend and for what purposes. So maybe that's a happy medium there.

Butch Smith [00:29:15] Corey.

Corey Ridings [00:29:18] Thanks Vice. I want to thank you Executive Director Burden for bringing us up again. The reason I actually had brought it up to start with is that it's not a fully completely baked idea in my head and I wanted to have this discussion at some point. I didn't realize it was going to be today or now, but I think for me what is important for me is to understand what this Council is spending money on, and if it's, you know, we can parse it down super, super fine, that's not actually what I'm looking for. Maybe what I'm looking for will be in the final project report. I don't know what that looks like so I can't speak to it now, but ultimately my goal with this is for us to understand, okay, we got this money, it was to do these three projects that we ended up laying down and there was a lot of up and downs and all-overs, so we've heard different words for that process, but it was hard. And at the end of the day I just want to know what we spent money on? What we ended up prioritizing? Where we went with it? And for my own head, in terms of understanding, as I spoke to earlier, the kind of this difference between the, and I used the wrong word, it's not core, it's base. I apologize, it's the wrong four-letter word, base funding, and recognizing that there was that gray area there and we did that for a variety of reasons. So at the end of the day I would like to know how that came out and even just to understand things like, well, did we spend a million dollars on Spex Flex? If we did, what did we get for that? Did we spend \$10 on Spex Flex and a million on the FIW? That's also really good to know just to see what we're getting our bang for our buck with this money and to think about how we plan moving forward. So maybe that helps clarify for some folks around the table what I intended. Forensic might have been too detailed a word that brought to mind other sorts of activities, but I hope that helps.

Butch Smith [00:31:37] Thank you. Heather.

Heather Hall [00:31:43] Just to add here and my thought on a deep dive in how the money was spent. I agree with with Jeff and Sharon, like maybe not the best use of our time, particularly if some of that comes out in the report. This is how....this is what we did, this is how we spent the money, I think that would be helpful. Because I think also want to....maybe what where we're trying to get is to do better next time. And one of the things I think we could do without having to do the forensic look, even though I didn't want to say that word, is to just have an estimate of the cost of things at the beginning, and that feels like maybe something we didn't do. We said we wanted these things, but we didn't at the beginning say how much we would spend on that. Maybe in the future we do that so we can track and, not that we wouldn't end up at the same place, you know, we're remodeling our kitchen and it's costing more than we thought it was going to cost but we're still really happy with what we're getting because it's what we need so....

Butch Smith [00:33:01] Those damn granite counters.....(laughter)....Anyway, any other..... Thank you Heather. Merrick.

Merrick Burden [00:33:09] Yeah, if I could, I guess I'm not hearing consensus about this request. But I do think it's important that this Council has adequate ability to provide oversight of our finances, that's one of your key roles on the Budget Committee. And then the Council is the fiscal steward of the

Council's resources, so it's important you understand that. So Patricia and I can provide more detail to the Budget Committee just about our finances in general. It's the analysis of assigning all of that to different projects it's very hard, but we can provide you with more detail. And so I think that's what I will plan to do for the next Budget Committee. And then when we do have our final grant report there will be some added information in that way. So absent of consensus that's what I'll do, unless you want to make a motion and vote on this.

Butch Smith [00:34:04] I think we've got direction. I think we're going in the right way. I think that, you know, we don't need a penny audit but we want to know, you know at the end of the day where the money was spent and I think you've provided a path forward. So I'm seeing some heads shake yes and so I think that's the best way to move forward. And if we want to make our own Chairman's reception we probably should think about making a path forward. So anyway, I think....Gilly, did we.....any other discussion? I'm sorry. Gilly, did we do our job here? I think you did a marvelous job, but did we do our job?

Gilly Lyons [00:34:53] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. And yes, I'd say that you definitely completed your tasks and action for this agenda item and you've adopted a motion to provide some very helpful direction going forward with the remaining prioritization of the work. And you had a helpful conversation about budget details and where those might surface in the near future. And I think with that, your work here is done.

Butch Smith [00:35:20] Alrighty, thank you for your great work. And I will be turning the gavel back over to Chairman Pete who always tasks me with these easy agenda items and I appreciate that Pete. One day we'll have a party. Thank you.

4. Council Efficiencies – Kelly Ames

Butch Smith [00:00:00] Okay, I don't see any public comment. Zero public comment, so we are entering in and open up to Council discussion. All right, put all those hands down. I can't call on everybody. Dr. Lent.

Rebecca Lent [00:00:16] Thank you Vice-Chair, and good morning everyone. I think I've asked this question before, and maybe I just need to go to the Budget Committee meetings, but when you're looking at efficiencies you have to say, yeah, this would be helpful. It would be good to know what it costs. What does it cost when these advisory boards come? What does the cost per day? Travel, salaries, et cetera. Do we have those numbers at hand so that we can at least have a sense of the impact of these decisions and the relative impact? Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:00:48] Question for you, Director.

Merrick Burden [00:00:50] Yeah, thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman. And thank you Miss Lent for the question. We do have those numbers at hand. And I would sort of add the context that the conversation that sounds like you're desiring to have was really the focus of the Committee-of-the-Whole that's been referenced several times. So when we decided to have that meeting this Council was running, I believe in some years it was almost a 20% budget deficit, and so we spent quite a bit of time combing through the budget situation and identified really our travel and meeting expenses as one of the places where we could rein in expenses without fundamentally and structurally changing what the Council does and potentially compromising what the Council does. So that was really a heavy focus. And so at the end of that meeting, I would really say that the conclusion asked everyone to give a little, right? And so on the one hand we have the GAP, and I think a GAP meeting will run us 40 to \$50,000 per meeting. Some of our smaller advisory bodies are in the hundreds of thousands and everyone gave a little, including, you know, Council staff and others. And so that those numbers are available. I think we had a very rich discussion a couple of years ago and ended up with the plan that we have in front of you now. And so really the question now, unless we want to start revisiting structurally how we function as a Council, the question in front of you now is to really pin down the schedule of in-person versus remote operations. And if we want to have a bigger discussion about structurally what we do, I think we should invite all of the advisory bodies to weigh-in on that conversation so. That was a longer answer than you're looking for I'm sure, but maybe that's helpful.

Butch Smith [00:02:43] Keep going. Dr. Lent.

Rebecca Lent [00:02:44] Thank you Vice-Chair, and thank you Executive Director. Clearly I needed to learn the history on this. I wasn't here for the Committee-of-the-Whole. I don't know, I think I asked somebody exactly what that was, so I will look at that history and that's great. That works already been done. I know it's been carefully considered. That's all. Thank you so much.

Butch Smith [00:03:08] Thank you. And I always forget this, real quick. The tasks at hand are on the screens before you. I always forget to announce that. Did you want to say something Merrick? Lynn.

Lynn Mattes [00:03:19] Thank you Vice-Chair. The EWG Report has a link to a document from the Committee-of-the-Whole meeting. Page 11 has a table of at that time what each FMP cost. So there's a really easy place to look and find that information. I know that also too because I asked Kelly Ames for the same link yesterday to help with that. Looking at our task for this meeting or under this agenda item, I appreciate having this in front because there's a lot of pieces to this one and trying to figure out how

to organize thoughts and provide feedback. On the EWG, the EAS, just hearing from folks involved with that, I think with how and where those two groups have been involved with these special projects has led to, I don't know if confusion, or has led to some concerns about the scheduling. Hopefully when the special projects are concluded we'll get back to more of a normal use of that EWG/EAS, or maybe we need to re-examine their charge, for lack of a better term. I think that's where some of the consternation is coming from with those groups. In one of the documents there's some discussion about changing how we do our business under the last agenda item of the meeting on day last, having that just be a calendar exercise. I have heard some concerns about removing the prioritization from there. If we're doing prioritization FMP by FMP, when are we going to look holistically at all of our FMPs? Groundfish and salmon are big topics, they require a lot of our attention. Worried that CPS is going to get pushed to the side if we're not looking at things holistically. I don't know what the answer there is, but just something I've heard from a number of folks is worrying that if we're not looking at everything together are some things going to get missed in the prioritization? Thank you for listening to my rambling thoughts to get things going under this item.

Butch Smith [00:05:46] Thank you. Merrick.

Merrick Burden [00:05:50] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman. Miss Mattes, thank you for offering up those thoughts. They've triggered some thinking on my part, and I'll start with your last point. And certainly we don't want to try to eliminate the Council's ability to prioritize. The point that you've made is a good one. When do we have the holistic discussion? All of our recommendations here about separating the schedule from the prioritization, the bottom line recommendation is that we be very intentional about when we have a priority discussion. Our workload planning discussions on day last have not been that and it has caused some problems with our workload and our scheduling and use of resources, and we've had to grapple with that earlier in this meeting. So what my very strong recommendation is that if this Council wants to consider its resources and its priorities, that we schedule something intentionally on the agenda to do that rather than having an ad hoc discussion at the end of the meeting.

Lynn Mattes [00:06:59] Thank you for that clarification. Much appreciated.

Butch Smith [00:07:05] Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:07:08] Thanks Vice. My....actually had a very similar line of thinking, and it was an appreciation for the delineation of these two concepts, which we have traditionally done under the last agenda item and it has been messy, and so I appreciate the staff's thinking on this. I think it's really, really good, actually. It sets us on a path for being more deliberate and open and thoughtful about how we choose what we do. I had a similar reaction to Miss Mattes thinking about, okay, well this is starting to look at within FMPs, but what about between FMPs? So Director Burden thank you for what you just described. I'm wondering if you can go a little deeper for us here and say, in terms of that deliberation between sort of FMPs, including Cross and Ecosystem, do you have a vision or ideas for how that would happen? Would it be its own sort of separate standalone agenda item? Would it be somehow integrated into another thing that we do? Just trying to get our brains going here. I sense this is going to be an ongoing thing that we're going to continue discussing, but if you have any other thoughts I would like to hear them now.

Merrick Burden [00:08:24] Yeah, I can respond to that Mr. Vice-Chairman. Yeah, I appreciate that question and I have spent quite a bit of time thinking about that. I feel like that's a core part of my job is how do we align the resources to suit the Council's needs. There are a couple of places to have those Cross FMP discussions. The way I think about it is in several layers. So the most detailed layer is the FMP by FMP discussion. We tend to do a pretty good job at that. So you might think of the groundfish

prioritization discussion that we do each spring. That works well because our structure is fairly siloed. We have staff officers that specialize in groundfish. We have advisory bodies that focus on groundfish. Many of you sit in your chairs because of groundfish and then you swap out for another designee, for example. When it comes to the Cross FMP and ecosystem matters, those are different. We don't have that routine schedule. And so the idea is that if there is a initiative or a problem that we want to solve that is best thought of as Cross FMP or Ecosystem, we would put that on the agenda and label it a Cross FMP prioritization agenda item. So it would functionally be the same, but we don't have a regular schedule because of the nature of that work, right? It tends to be.....it's not as routine as say an FMP might be. The highest order way of thinking about this is our Committee-of-the-Whole. So I would actually like to do that again. Not every year. I think there's a cadence at which we might do that. And that begs the question, what is the structure of this Council and is it suiting, is it fit for purpose based on what this Council wants to do? And that is how we would prioritize and identify the charge of our advisory bodies. I might get some feedback from you all about how you want staffing to look based on the priorities that you have, so that's a very higher order discussion. So those are sort of three layers of thinking about it. Each one of those is a deliberate conversation. Is that answering your question Miss Ridings?

Butch Smith [00:10:42] Corey.

Corey Ridings [00:10:43] Thanks. That is helpful. I feel like it may be....yeah, that's very helpful and thanks for outlining how you're thinking about it. I think the layers is a really good way to think about this because it's not just sort of a single scale issue. I think for me there comes a really hard point here, which you didn't quite address, and that is how we do say prioritization of agenda items between FMPs. And I'm going to include Ecosystem and Cross FMP as sort of FMPs a shorthand in this context. But to say, how is a Council in a given year, say, how do we say we'd like to spend our time and money on salmon versus groundfish? To pull from what Miss Mattes said. And I bring this up because I think it's a real rub point. I think this is really tricky. It's something we sort of do, I don't want to say tacitly, but ad hoc or it's embedded in sort of how we do things. And I think something more deliberate is beneficial for all and it's also something I think that our co-managers and stakeholders and just public in general really, this matters a lot to them. So sorry to sort of be digging a little deeper there. If you have any thoughts on that, appreciated.

Merrick Burden [00:12:05] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman. I could address that too. Yeah, I think if we think about....essentially what I hear you describing is when do we have the conversation about shifting our resources from, say, one FMP to another? And what's implied in that question is that we can. And we can, it's a matter of timing. And so I'll start with sort of the 6 month view that I've been giving you all about our staffing and workload. And so my intention is to continue doing that. And what you often see on those outlooks is that three, four, five months down the road we start to free up the time of say a staff officer or two. And so what that's signaling to you is that there's some capacity that's available several months into the future, how do you want to use that? Some of those staff officers know one FMP. Some of the staff officers know two FMPs. And so the ability to shift in the manner that you're describing is actually very hard to do on a month-to-month timeline. That's where the Committee-of-the-Whole structure comes in. And so one of the conversations that we might have is we have all these salmon problems and we want to be staffed to be able to tackle more salmon problems than we have now. That's a signal to me to have a staff officer, more than one staff officer that could do salmon, so I would staff accordingly. But that's a much longer time trajectory than the month to month or meeting to meeting pace that we work at, but that's the venue to do that. So there is a bit of wiggle room that is signaled to you in those 6 month staffing forecasts that I provide. There's more wiggle room in the Committee-of-the-Whole, but that's a longer, more structural conversation about what the Council wants to be doing.

Butch Smith [00:14:06] Marci.

Marci Yaremko [00:14:10] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. Appreciate this discussion. Maybe I'll just, I'd like to drill down a little bit. Since you've done a lot of holistic thinking about our advisory body meeting format and our capacity to fund in-person and remote meetings, I heard you discussing with regard to Cross FMP and ecosystem items that they may not be on a set schedule so much and that we need to adapt and we can, we're able to add those items onto the agenda kind of as needed. But then I kind of get to thinking about some of our advisory bodies where they're meeting in-person once a year and then maybe a second meeting remotely, and I was just wondering if you had given any thought to at what point is an advisory body....like at what, where is that balance between having a group of appointed individuals speaking with one voice as an advisory body versus what we might get from those same individuals participating just as members of the public? And then the cost benefit of maintaining a group versus affording those opportunities only just via public comment. So I was wondering if you could maybe think about or explain a little more, especially in light of this situation where we've got scheduling that's kind of not always on a set schedule for Cross FMP items. So where's that benefit, cost value, benefit analysis in your mind?

Butch Smith [00:16:07] Merrick.

Merrick Burden [00:16:08] Thank you Miss Yaremko. That's a really interesting question. It is one I've thought about and I don't know that I have a good answer for you, so part of me wants to kick that question back to you to be honest. But if I think about the value that is provided to this Council by the management teams and advisory bodies and workgroups, those recommendations or insights are fundamentally different than public comment in my view, and they often, those forums often provide a benefit of working through some of the sticky issues that on the floor are really hard to resolve. And so by the time those reports come to you, a lot of times the matter has been worked through by various stakeholders and management experts and whatnot and so your decision is made much easier. The public doesn't have that forum, right? Their insights are equally valuable but the mechanism that they provide, their comments, doesn't allow for that resolution of the sticky things that you may be grappling with. So I think the....I think maybe the way to think about it is that if there's a fishery management problem that you're trying to solve, is it easy? Is it simple? There are very few fishery management problems that are easy or simple. If it is a straightforward thing, I think you could just lean on the expertise of yourself and your trusty Council staff and that might be enough. And there are times that we do that, but by and large I think the management teams and advisory subpanels and workgroups give this Council a lot of value in helping to resolve some of the things that you otherwise would not have a forum, a good forum to resolve on your own. Is that helpful?

Butch Smith [00:18:10] Thank you. Other comments? Aja.

Aja Szumylo [00:18:19] Thank you Vice-Chair. I have some draft guidance. I'd like to channel the energy of this agenda item and try to put forward guidance that we can agree on rather than a motion so that the Council has some flexibility with how to work through things, if everyone is up for hearing and starting to debate over that at this point, okay?

Butch Smith [00:18:43] I think that would be most helpful.

Aja Szumylo [00:18:45] Great. Okay, so not a motion but I'll read it aloud and talk through it so that folks understand where I'm coming from on this. So the Council offers guidance that Council staff continue with the ongoing efficiency efforts outlined in Agenda Item C.4, Attachments 1 and 2, and implement the schedule in Agenda Item C.4, Attachment 3 with the following changes: So the first is to make the GMT and GAP September of even years a light remote meeting instead of inseason only.

Scheduling the HMSAS and HMSMT as in-person in June of even years and remote in September of even years. So that one's just aligning those management team or advisory bodies into a single meeting. And then providing Council staff the latitude to make any additional adjustments as necessary. And I'll kind of talk through my overarching thoughts. So I recognize what a big effort this has been over a lot of years. I wasn't here when this activity started, but I have been seeing over the last couple of years how it's played out in discussions. And I know it's valuable for everybody to be together and to get to participate in this process and that this process is really meaningful to people, so that's been the heartburn around shifting to spending less time in-person together. But I also think that in time as we work through these shifts and as they start to play out in reality that it'll just be our new way of operating and that some of the heartburn about it will calm and that we'll figure out how to relate to each other still within the lighter constraints of the schedule. And then the schedule itself I know is important for....I know how much effort the Council puts into negotiating with hotels, setting up logistics for all of our meetings, and how much it's important for all of us to hear what the shape of the schedule is beforehand so that we could plan our lives outside of the meetings to get here to be with each other. And so I think having that framework locked in as much as possible, even if there are adjustments to address little changes, is important for a lot of different logistic reasons. And so I really just focus on keeping the framework that was put forward, but then making the adjustments that the advisory bodies offer because I trust that they understand the flow of their work and what's necessary for them. The big things I heard again is that....I was able to listen into the GAP and GMT discussion on making the September meeting a light meeting, and I don't think it's something that would need to happen every year necessarily, or every September of even years necessarily, but that some years it may be helpful for them to have a forum to discuss a couple more things and keep them moving as the year goes on. I do also know that there's a big concern about some of the rationale for keeping that meeting light is workload and making sure that especially the GMT has a chance to rest after a really demanding spex cycle, but I think having the intention for it to be very light might play out easily. This particular meeting did not end up being light because we had a lot of special projects and a lot of Cross FMP stuff, but I think that this could be accomplished well in the future. And then yeah, it makes a lot sense for the HMSMT and the HMSAS to be together in-person at the same time. I think that that's a really easy concession and matches the intent of keeping some away time. I want to highlight a couple things that the advisory bodies listed in their reports that I think are good practices for everyone. So, one or a couple that the GAP Report highlighted was just making sure to adjust the schedule for the weeks that we're together to make sure that advisory body members can attend sessions that are of interest to them. And so the GAP cited halibut, but Cross FMP items are a really good example of that, like kind of pushing them later in the meeting so that advisory body members can get to them. And then I always support incentivizing verbal summarization of reports and putting the bottom line up front, even for the states, all of us doing that together, all of committing to do that together I think could save time and make sure that we get through our days in an efficient way. I like the SSC suggestion to limit the length of remote meetings. I think that's prudent for every advisory body. None of us like sitting in chairs for week long remote meetings. And then the last thing with regard to the Ecosystem Work Group and the Ecosystem Advisory Subpanel, I agree with what Miss Mattes mentioned about potentially revisiting the scope of those groups after we get through a lot of the special project work that's going on. And then also they mentioned that there's something that they mentioned in their report that it's important to be together. Maybe the September, I can't remember the exact dates, it's like September of odd, March of even, or whatever that is, but yeah my last bullet, providing Council staff the latitude to make adjustments as necessary, that I want that kind of thing to fall in there where the conversation can continue with them in the future about what looks best for that group once some of the responsibilities that we have on tap clear. And then the last thing, I planned ahead to make a motion under D.4 to adopt the COP language in Agenda Item C.4, Attachment 5, so I'll bring that up later on and talk about it in more detail there. But that's.....now I don't even remember what that language is. It is....yes it's the, thank you. I was like what is this again? Yes, it the motions versus guidance. Okay, I'll stop there and welcome any discussions and push back to make this something that we could potentially agree on.

Butch Smith [00:25:22] Thank you Aja. And so we'll open it up for some discussion on this guidance and efficiency. Yes, Heather.

Heather Hall [00:25:33] Thank you Vice-Chair. Thank you Aja. Appreciate you putting this together and getting the conversation started just for the moment. And my focus is on 2.C, Giving staff the latitude to make adjustments as necessary. And when I think about that I think about what we hear from our advisory bodies and management teams. They do a remarkable amount of work to help this Council do good work and so appreciate that we are accommodating their ability to function as teams to the best we can, and when budget allows maybe taking, this goes to the idea that you mentioned about the opportunity to relax kind of the tightness, you referred to it as change is hard. And yeah, it is, but I want to think about the change is hard in reference to the advisory bodies in particular and just be aware of sort of the pressure that we put on them in condensed meetings and timelines. And so hoping that flexibility when budgets allow to open the box a little bit for breathing room for them, you know, just thinking about some of the conversations we've had on workload and how folks are managing that heavy workload. So thank you.

Butch Smith [00:27:22] Thank you Heather. Jaime Diamond.

Jaime Diamond [00:00:00] Thank you Vice-Chair. Yeah, thank you Aja for putting this together. In thinking about some of the points you said about advisory body suggestions and scheduling and ABs being able to attend and contribute, I'm thinking also when they're remote and the added workload on them because it seems like we've had a number of a couple of items this time that the AB met in advance and then other things came out and then they didn't have a chance to respond or provide input on a report or a statement that came out since then. Also that when an advisory body is remote in advance and they won't be present during, they're meeting almost for two weeks at that point because they're meeting the week before remotely and then also needing to pay attention here because this is, like they're here to be part of this process here, so then they're also online for this and it kind of doubles the length of time that they are away from their regular life, regular jobs, things like that, or having to be partially absent from maybe not as fully. But, and so being cognizant of that, and I think I heard during some of the GAP discussion was some of that of like, hey, like this is actually really difficult having us be way ahead instead of maybe a couple days ahead and then overlapping. And I also flashback to when it was fully remote during COVID and how hard it was to do both at the same time. But when we're talking about, those were full workload meetings as opposed to these light meetings, so if it's a light remote meeting, for example, then the work that they're doing during the Council meeting, again, should be light so then they're doing it, but they're doing it overlapping. And then also, and as reports come in they're able to process that and go off of other reports and participate a little more fully. I'm thinking also of like the HMSAS, they met well in advance. There were things that got into the briefing book after that they weren't able to consider because they weren't meeting during at all. So just putting that out there. And then I remember asking, I think I was talking with Brad Pettinger about the EWG versus the EAS and the EWG is an ad hoc group and ad hoc groups are created for a specific purpose and scope but it was created a long time ago. There's just the date of when the group was started on the website, but not what that charge was or the purpose of the scope of the group, and I think Brad tried to explain it to me and I can't remember what it was, but I think revisiting those things for those different groups, and I'm not saying one thing should be done or another, but I genuinely am starting to think like, what? Yeah, there was clearly a purpose for it. Is that purpose from 2013 or whenever it was created still something we're working on today and how can we make that clear? Thanks.

Butch Smith [00:03:18] Thank you Jaime. Anyone else like to jump in? Lynn, I knew that Lynn. I'm sorry.

Lynn Mattes [00:03:25] Thank You Vice-Chair Smith. Thank you Miss Szumylo for doing, putting

this guidance out here. I'm generally supportive of all of it. I just have a little concern about the September being GAP/GMT light. Within ODFW we were calling it light-ish because of all the Cross FMP and the groundfish adjacent items. With the GAP and the GMT being remote in September we need to utilize time. We've got more workload than we can do but we'll need to be very strategic in what items we put in September, things that maybe don't require all the face-to-face back-and-forth coordination and communication. And yeah it would be great to give those folks a lighter workload as well as Council staff. Mr. Phillips and Miss Dorpinghaus put a huge amount of workload, as well others, and the Council staff on our spex process, so really appreciate the consideration there. One thing I don't see listed here, there was a reference in the SSC Report that when they are remote to try not to meet over weekends. I know that's not always possible. I know I don't have kids, I don't have a family, but even during COVID trying to participate remotely. When we're here we're isolated, we're in our bubble, but if you're at home there's life maintenance things that still have to happen, especially those with kids and daycare and laundry, et cetera, so if there's ways we can try to accommodate that. I know it's not always easy, but just want to add that. And then it just come to me, I've not seen the MPC discussed anywhere in any of these documents. I know they're kind of an ad hoc as needed group, but don't want to forget that they're out there. But do appreciate this and all the effort that has been made to try to improve our efficiencies, utilize our advisory bodies in a very strategic manner. So just a couple of thoughts and supporting this overall. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:05:35] Thank you Lynn. Others? Marci.

Marci Yaremko [00:05:40] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. I just want to say I support the guidance. I just want to follow-up a little bit on Heather Hall's comments and support for the flexibility that's outlined in 2.C. I think Council staff, I want acknowledge that they've done this very well over the years. We often see things come across between meetings, announcements of joint webinars for, you know, for all advisory body participants to come and listen. We might have a 2-hour special session and then the ABs will take the topic up in a meeting that they have already scheduled to discuss the content and provide a statement. Those....you may not always know when there's going to be a need for something like that, but I just want to commend you because I feel like you've done this and we need to make sure that we provide you with that flexibility, because it may mean that you need to schedule an additional remote meeting for an AB to provide comment on something after you present information in a format like that. So anyway, I just want to acknowledge I feel like it's working well in that sense and that without this latitude I can see that I don't think we get nearly the quality that we're getting in terms of the input. So just thank you.

Butch Smith [00:07:18] Director.

Merrick Burden [00:07:19] Yeah, thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman. And Miss Yaremko, your comments made me just reflect on what you would expect to see after this agenda item. And so what we would do is we are looking to really to pin down our hotel contracts. And so there's been, even though we've had guidance from you all that was quite good after the Committee-of-the-Whole, there's just been this constant tension about whether we have the balance of in-person versus remote right, and that's caused us to go back and forth with our hotel contracts and that costs us money. It frustrates the relationship that we have with the hotels that we meet at, and there aren't very many hotels that can host us and so that relationship is important. And so, assuming that you all are fine with this guidance, this would then tell us here's the schedule that we're going to build our contracts around, and I think that's an important thing to resolve. And then the flexibility that you spoke to Miss Yaremko, I don't see that practice changing. Like as we need to we'll schedule all advisory body meetings online and things of that nature. It's really the thing that we will be firm about is the nature of our hotel contracts and who is there and what the meeting block size is and things of that nature. And that is a major issue that I don't want to bring to the Council floor because I think it would bore you to tears, but we spend a lot of time working

through those contracts and so this will help us with that.

Butch Smith [00:08:53] Christa I apologize if I missed you. I don't always can see you, so as long as it's not a fork, knife, or a dumbbell, get my attention. Sorry. Go ahead.

Christa Svensson [00:09:01] No problem. So just I'm supportive of this. I think it is helpful to line out for the points that our Executive Director just laid out in terms of contracting. I think it also is helpful for us to just mentally pin down so that when we're planning for workload and other components, how that is going to happen. And I say that because I feel like it's very easy to have mission creep. There are a lot of topics that are important for a variety of different FMPs. All of us wish that the funding was there to meet in-person every meeting and it just isn't and that's why we had that Committee-of-the-Whole meeting, or the great ice ball I think as a lot us call it. The other piece that I just want to pick up briefly in terms of a potential recommendation or path forward, we heard about the EWG and ad hoc committees and I just want to remind everybody that, you know, at the beginning of our terms, well my term, maybe two years ago, we had a fairly substantive and robust conversation and we discontinued, I don't know, four or five committees at that point in time and the EWG made the cut. So it might be more appropriate, rather than to get in do we want to keep it now as an ad hoc, to take that up in 2026 when we're looking at the makeup of advisory panels and other advisory bodies just so that we've got kind of a placeholder to review and look at it and discuss the charge of it and any other ad hoc committees without spending a lot of time now trying to figure out what we want do with a group that has provided a lot of value over the years.

Butch Smith [00:10:59] Thank you Christa. Heather.

Heather Hall [00:11:01] Thank you Vice-Chair. I wanted to go back a bit to the conversation about Committee-of-the-Whole and when we use that, and it came up at first when Dr. Lent acknowledged she wasn't around when we did Committee-of-the-Whole, the ice ball meeting and thinking about when and why we do that. And I know there's a report on the outcomes of the Committee-of-the-Whole so there's reference there, so it's not like if you missed it you missed it. But thinking to that, it does seem like before we go to a Committee-of-the-Whole the ideal place for the Council to be prioritizing and having the discussion is all of us together. And I know the Committee-of-the-Whole doesn't allow for the entire Council members to be there, so just thinking about that, and I know that's maybe that's contrary to taking prioritization out of future workload planning, but it does seem like it's important for us all to contribute to the prioritization together. And I don't remember the details, but then it seems like if there's more work to do you meet as a Committee-of-the-Whole. But maybe that's the intention, but I think there's a really important prioritization conversation that should happen here.

Butch Smith [00:12:34] Thank you Heather. Director.

Merrick Burden [00:12:37] Yeah, thank you for those remarks Miss Hall. At the risk of getting us off topic here I will... I guess I'll respond to your comment. So I think the Committee-of-the-Whole is a structure that can do a lot of different things, and the important thing about it is that it provides a forum for this Council to have less structured conversations, right? And so that helps to grapple with problems and have a dialogue rather than like working through Robert's rules and making a motion. But we don't have to do it the same way that we did last time. And so, I think to your point, I've actually had similar thoughts, which is the next time we do this I think it's more of a prioritization and Council structure exercise rather than an emergency, let's resolve the budget exercise. And so what I would like to do is entertain more feedback from our advisory bodies and the whole Council about what they see coming and what we need to be ready to grapple with, and that can be material that would then potentially feed into a Committee-of-the-Whole. You'll recall last time it was really myself and our Deputy Director who did all of that work and brought it to you and it was a conversation that you had with the two of

us. And so I think the next time we were to have it, if you're sort of following my train of thought, it would fundamentally look different and we would have a broader discussion about our community and what the priorities need to be. So I think we're on the same wavelength.

Butch Smith [00:14:12] Plus we almost all died. About seven inches of ice. Corey.

Corey Ridings [00:14:23] Thanks Vice. Just a couple thoughts on the conversation. And first of all, I support this guidance. I think it hits the important bits so thank you Aja for offering this. I agree with the discussion that's being had about the latitude for staff. I think that's really critical. So we rely on our staff's good judgment in a lot of this and it's hard to sort of put that in a box or put clean lines around it, but much of how this Council functions is based off of the staff's judgment to help us move smoothly forward. So, and I think we need to continue to allow them that space. Thinking about the advisory bodies, I think we've done a good job getting to this place. I am reminded every time I step back into sort of our advisory body structures that we have a huge number of advisors. I think we bring in something on the order of 70 plus people to be advisors throughout the year across all of our advisory bodies and that is way more than any other Council. This was outlined I believe actually in one of the memos that we reviewed as a Committee-of-the-Whole. And then, so just a thought about that we are doing that, providing that space. Also that, at this point, they do great work and maybe we are putting too much work on them. We have heard again and again from multiple of our advisory bodies and technical teams about their capacity, about how much they are producing. How we have heard from many of our states about the lack of capacity and how hard their folks are working. We know that NMFS has gotten major cuts recently. We are starting to really start to feel those impacts of those cuts and the services they are able to provide. I've heard in this Council arena, as well as outside of it, how stretched thin and burned out many of those employees are due to things that are now landing on their plates because there's fewer people to do the work. And I also know because we get reports and we hear from our Director about just how hard our Council staff is working, it's well over 100% of the time if I recall the last bar graph we looked at on that. And so not going to be resolved today, but I do think that that's something we should address at some point, maybe the Committee-of-the-Whole is the place, but just noting that we may be just asking too much of these folks, and we have so many in the first place when it comes to advisory bodies I'm not really sure how to solve that. Also, the in-person can have a lot of benefits when we think about sort of the table that was provided to us. I feel like we've heard consistently about the desire to be in-person and I understand that because I too greatly prefer being in-person, it's a different meeting. That being said, because we have so many of these people coming in it's quite expensive. And being in-person also adds the additional benefit of not only being able to be part of your advisory body and doing your services that way, but it includes much larger access to Council members, building relationships, the community at-large, and other decision makers, like Mr. Rauch who was here earlier this week. Any AB members who are in attendance get the added bonus. They get the added relationship building, the influence and the power that comes with being able to do that in-person. So when we think about in-person I like to reflect on how we are being equitable and fair and how we decide who gets to be in-person and who's remote. Switching over a little bit to thinking about the ecosystem items. Thinking about what Miss Diamond brought up in terms of the EWG is only ad hoc, that has largely been due to the membership and trying to sort of optimize, for a better word, that membership, and as Miss Svens.....excuse me, Vice Svensson brought up, you know, we have actually addressed this several times and the last time we did it we decided to keep the EWG. And also just a reminder, I have to do this to myself once in a while going back, that we have a Fishery Ecosystem Plan. And while it is not regulatory, it is something that the Council spent a really large amount of time, really good effort to create a foundation for how the Council was going to approach issues that are not just within these FMP buckets. And so that FEP has requirements and that is largely what those EWG and EAS tasks have been tied to and why they help us to fulfill those to do the hard work of crossing those FMP boundaries. And as I heard this mentioned, I think Aja mentioned it, I think Miss Mattes may have mentioned it, but thinking about the request that was made by the EWG and the EIS to have

in-person. I think moving forward things change. Those groups are quite different and that they have sort of a non-annualized workload in the sense that they respond to things that come out of the FEP initiatives or the projects we've been doing as of recently, and those don't carry that same annualized or bi-annualized workload that comes with our other FMPs so they don't have those typical cycles. So thinking about how we keep them, it goes back to the flexibility. How do we keep things flexible for them to be able to make sure they can best meet those needs? And that may require thinking about their meeting structures on a two to five year basis. Thanks Aja for the motion, or excuse me, the guidance. It's guidance.

Butch Smith [00:20:22] So I am hearing and seeing and to add to Corey real quick, not only our great advisories, but the commitment they give to this Council. Here it is Sunday. I'm sure Dave could be salmon fishing in California if it's open. I don't know if it open or not and I don't want to get into it, but he could be fishing and here they are and others. So it's the great commitment of time too besides all they do. But I'm kind of sensing that we have consensus on this guidance and that's what we would need to move it forward. If I'm wrong I'm sorry, but I kind of hear around the table that we've got that and if we do we could move this forward and move on to the next subject if everybody has thoroughly vetted this and talked about it as much as they want. I don't want to cut off any discussion or dialogue. So I think I see, I think I hear and see head nods, just kidding. If I'm not, if I don't get it, I think so. I think, oh Dave, go ahead, I'm sorry Dave.

David Sones [00:21:32] Yeah, I just want to....thank you Mr. Vice-Chair, to support the guidance and appreciate what Aja's put together here for us. On the comment of the size of our workgroups and our advisory bodies, you know I think it's hard to compare us to any other Councils. We're huge. California could be four states population-wise and size-wise. We don't have a east coast New York to Florida Council. So there's a lot of people represented in those workgroups and we've tried to really structure them to get fair representation across that giant geographic area that we have. So I think we have done well to place the right people in those groups and I'd be concerned if we started trying to look at reducing the size of our workgroups, but I'm really supportive of the guidance that's here. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:22:37] Thanks Dave. So I did see consensus and....All right, nobody's throwing anything so I think we got it. So Miss Kelly, can you take us where you need to take us? Have we done our work, completed our work here?

Kelly Ames [00:23:00] Thank you Vice-Chair. Yes, thank you. Wanted to just thank the advisory bodies. I know these are very difficult discussions for them and everyone did just a great job working through those issues. We do have some great Council guidance here today that we'll move forward with. We are going to implement the schedule in Attachment 3 with the updates that you discussed having the light groundfish in September of even years. Putting the HMSAS and MT in-person in June of even years and remote of even years, and then continuing to have that flexibility to make adjustments as needed. We will continue to evaluate the meeting format for the EWG and EAS as the special projects wind down and as we think we're going to begin to pick up the FEP initiatives. And then just to note as well, we are anticipating bringing back COP 1 edits that were presented to you here in Attachment 5 under Agenda Item D.4 for your final adoption. So with that, thanks for the great discussion and the agenda item is complete.

Butch Smith [00:24:11] Thank you, and thank the Council. And Aja I think this went very....a lot smoother than I thought it could have gone so I appreciate it.

5. Special Project 1: Nationwide Review of If, Then Statements, and Council Meeting Requirements – Gilly Lyons

Butch Smith [00:00:00] That brings us right into Council discussion on this topic. Aja.

Aja Szumylo [00:00:07] Thank you Vice-Chair. I love the report, the If-Then Report overall, and this is exactly what I was envisioning when we were making motions about this quite a while ago. So I just wanted to say that I hope we can reach consensus that the report is complete. And I think for me the focus is instead on, you know, figuring out how to bring the thinking from that kind of report into developing actions in the future. So my idea wasn't that like every FMP would immediately come forward with all these ideas for how to use these things, but it would be for us as a community to notice when there are recurrent routine actions or situations where planning using this kind of if-then approach, or conditional approach would speed our response to things that happen. And I heard the concern at the end that planning for these things will take a lot of effort, but the thing that always sucks about planning for resilience is that it takes a lot of effort to do that planning so that when the thing comes up later you can act quickly. And so I think we have to get it into, like, rather than calling that a failing of an approach or a caveat, it's just, it's going to take some effort to plan ahead so that we're prepared for the future. I think that, you know that same concept comes up with emergency management planning. The way that you're prepared for emergencies is that you prepare in advance and you take the time to do it. So I see those....I see these options in that light that the effort is worth, or hopefully in the cases where it comes up in the future will be worthwhile rather than a deterrent. And then, yeah, regarding the Council meeting timeline requirements, I'm prepared to make a motion later under D.4. So I just wanted to flag for folks that that was my plan, to do a motion including both that and COP 1, which we discussed earlier under whatever other agenda item that was. I hear the EAS's comments regarding kind of defining how that decision would be made. I've seen it done in other Councils that sort of these shortened processes are referenced in amendments or in actions beforehand so that it does take kind of this frameworking shape that Miss Lyons mentioned earlier that there is some effort on the part of the Council to consider up front and make some indication of what kinds of actions would go a little faster. But I also think that, you know, it might be possible to either adjust the language or look to Council staff to develop a plan for how that evaluation would happen. And so that's it. Yeah, my main comment is that from my perspective these are complete and I'm excited to see how we can start working towards incorporating all these things into our actions in the future.

Butch Smith [00:03:24] Thank you Aja. Any other discussion? We note that one thing I always forget to do before I start asking questions is the task at hand is on the screen. Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:03:44] Thanks Mr. Vice. Thanks Aja for those notes. I agree. I think that the report regarding if-then is complete. Thanks to Council staff for doing such a great job. Gilly, Katie Westfall, thank you very much for your work on this. And as you noted, and I didn't know until you said this, that you had reached out and other Council regions had helped. So please extend the Council thanks to them too. And I'm guessing you've already done it, but definitely sharing the report with them is probably a wise thing just to spread the love and thank them for their help. Something that's come to mind for me with this is, you know an if-then is really an approach, it's not necessarily a one agenda item or something you do with it and then you're done. It's a way that you think about how you manage. And I think the typology that the report captured is quite helpful and I think can stimulate thinking and help folks move through challenging management problems, and so I hope that there is a way to encourage our advisory body and management teams to actually use that, and so I think it's on all of us now to use that framework moving forward. And so just in discussion here thinking about how we can do that, you know having it on the shelf for sure, but also maybe there's a webinar or another way to help folks get familiar with this, get a little more educated on it and help keep it fore of mind moving

forward. And then we can keep discussing but I'll just go, keep going, which is regarding the Council meeting requirements. Aja you just said that you've got a motion for this for tomorrow, I think, under workload planning, which makes sense. And you noted the only thing that had popped up for me, which was what the EAS brought up about the term 'controversial' and noting that that is a really wide term and the document didn't go too deep on it. So thinking a little bit more about that I think would be an appropriate next steps or a to-do. I would encourage Council staff to explore a little deeper.

Butch Smith [00:06:05] Thank you Corey. Anyone else? Lynn Mattes.

Lynn Mattes [00:06:11] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. I like the concept of us having another tool in our toolbox, another arrow in our quiver, whatever analogy we want to use, things that we can be more reactive in our fisheries management that doesn't have to come to maybe this process but can be a little bit more, I think the term was 'nimble' and 'flexible' we were using earlier. I've been one of the proponents of this type of thing because we've been using it in halibut a long time. And it's an iterative process, it's not a one and done. We learn every year, as you saw from some of the stuff with the Catch Sharing Plan yesterday, or the day before, earlier this week, we have things in the Catch Sharing Plan that we think is going to work. And then it comes down to implementation and poor Josh and his coworkers here from headquarters can't do it quite that way so we'll just have to know that it's got to be iterative and it's a living process moving forward. And sometimes we think we have all of our ducks in a row to take an action and then we find out, nope, we need to adjust this one little thing. I still think it puts us in a better place moving forward because things can happen outside of a Council meeting as we become more reactive to whatever is going on in the ocean and with our fisheries. So I am supportive of continuing this process. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:07:45] Thank you Lynn. Sharon.

Sharon Kiefer [00:07:51] I've certainly heard, seems like what I'm hearing concurrent that the contents of Agenda Item C.5, Attachment 1 is considered complete under Special Project 1, but I'm wondering do we need to be more definitive about that with a motion, or are the head nods enough? I just don't know how much relative to staff understanding. And I'm good with a head nod, but I know sometimes we want to take that extra step of clarity with a motion so I'm just asking.

Butch Smith [00:08:27] So Sharon what I'm going to do, I got a motion needed on my cheat sheet, but I'm going to ask the great Director Merrick here to maybe interject what he's thinking.

Merrick Burden [00:08:39] Yeah, thank you Mr. Chairman. I would say if there's any ambiguity or lack of clarity a motion is probably the best way forward.

Sharon Kiefer [00:08:49] I see a lot of head nods, which for me does not indicate ambiguity, and I'm fine with a head nod. I just want, you know once again, just checking-in because I know sometimes there has been a preference for a motion, and it's a pretty easy motion.

Butch Smith [00:09:17] So we could have a motion if we had one around here, or we could state the consensus of the Council like we did before to move it forward. So there's several avenues, but Aja I know you have a great idea, go ahead.

Aja Szumylo [00:09:34] No, I was going to say consensus for the report, if that....if people are cool, and I've seen head nods and Heather told me she was okay so it's great. And then I will, again, I have....I'm preparing a motion for under Agenda Item D.4 to deal with the COP 11 and COP 1 . So that will be handled in the motion later.

Butch Smith [00:09:58] Marci, go ahead.

Marci Yaremko [00:10:00] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. I think I have a question for Aja on that latter point with regard to Attachment 2 and the red line. And I heard Miss Ridings speak to the recommendations of the EAS with regard to beefing out some of the text in red line regarding definition of 'controversy' or further explanation about controversy. So I'm...this is a little bit different for us procedurally where we would be taking up substance than in the COP, or the process of amending COP. So I'd appreciate hearing what the plan is for modifying what's showing in red line right now in Attachment 2.

Butch Smith [00:10:55] Aja.

Aja Szumylo [00:10:55] I haven't developed a full plan for that yet. I might....so honestly I wasn't really planning to mess so much with the term 'controversial' necessarily. Again I think the way of seeing this happen in the past is that first if something is frameworked, if there's an FMP amendment that happens and there's some, so I've seen it and other Councils, if there's some.....within the FMP amendment they'll add an alternative that says, like, if something comes up related to this, since we've kind of covered this topic before, it can have a shortened process. So that's one process where it's like, we agree on it beforehand that it could be handled in a shortened process. Another possibility is that during ROA, like during the point when we're initiating the action and doing range of alternatives, this is just an example that I'm coming up with off the top of my head, but that could be a checkpoint since we all check-in right then for the Council staff to kind of go through a checklist right then and make some recommendations to us about like what that could look like and then bring that before the Council and then we could all agree on it then. Those are just ideas that I have. But what I'm going to suggest is like some formalization that has Council staff making, or Council, yeah, the group making a recommendation about the necessary level or number of meetings in recommendation to us as a Council before we make that decision. So yeah, I'm going to suggest the process, that somebody develop a process for it.

Butch Smith [00:12:37] Marci.

Marci Yaremko [00:12:37] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. Thank you Aja. So I guess where I'm still not quite connecting the dots. I see the proposed red line text in Attachment 2 that I understood we would adopt under Agenda Item D.4, but it sounds like you are contemplating some changes to that text. So I'm just wondering if you can clarify so that it doesn't come as a surprise when we get to Agenda Item D.4. Thank you.

Aja Szumylo [00:13:07] Thank you. Another thing that I heard was that this kind of thing was discussed in more explicit terms above in this COP, so maybe I'll try to pull the language down into this section, but I will show it to everyone before we vote on anything. It's not going to be like....yeah, I'm not trying to create something mysterious or that people can wiggle through I guess is what I'm saying. Everyone will have a.....I think it's okay within this process to look at COP language together and vote on it in that way.

Marci Yaremko [00:13:36] Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:13:43] Jeff, did you want to say something on this issue? Okay, just making sure you're still there Jeff. Josh.

Josh Lindsay [00:13:52] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. I was taking a slightly different direction in case there's further discussion on what we were just just talking about. Just from an administrative standpoint

would suggest before COP 11 was adopted. There's language on Page 2 with reference to consulting with National Marine Fisheries Service NEPA Coordinator and discussing that internally. We think that should just be with National Marine Fisheries Service, not National Marine Service NEPA Coordinator. So just a minor suggested edit there. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:14:22] Thank you. Any other questions or opinions or conversation? So we're at the point of time I guess of the head nod. And you got a good one Sharon. You got a good head nod. So Gilly, why don't you kind of sum it up what we're going to nod our head to. I think that's probably what would help.

Gilly Lyons [00:15:00] Thank you very much Mr. Vice-Chair. I'd be happy to give it a whirl. Thanks very much to everyone for the discussion just now. And while we did not have a motion come forward, I think there was a good discussion of Attachment 1, the If-Then Review. And I got the impression that everyone was comfortable considering it to be a complete action without any further revisions needed. So we will, as long as that sounds good to folks, we will go ahead and consider that piece of Special Project 1 complete. And then regarding Council meeting requirements and the proposed changes to COP 11, it sounds like there may be some slight adjustments brought forward under Agenda Item D.4 tomorrow, but at that point Aja will bring forward a motion for folks to consider adopting that language into COP 11. And I think that includes the discussion that we were just having around 'controversial' definitions, but also what Mr. Lindsay just referred to about removing the explicit reference to NMFS NEPA Coordinator and just having that language say NMFS more generally. And I think that's what I heard.

Butch Smith [00:16:19] Okay, so I'll look around the Council and make sure that we're all hearing the same thing and if we all agree with the head nods then we got consensus. So seeing nothing being thrown at me, so I think we have consensus on this issue. So I think we've completed this but I'll wait for your signal.

Gilly Lyons [00:16:47] Absolutely, thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. Yes, with that I believe you have completed your work on this agenda item. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:16:54] Gilly, thank you for your terrific job and thank the Council for their job.

D. Administrative Matters

1. Council Member Recusals – Merrick Burden

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] The Executive Director said we have no action on this item. Is there any further discussion regarding it? Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:00:11] Thanks Chair. And thanks very much Sheila and Frank, and anyone at NMFS who helped put this together. I really appreciate it. It seems...you know we haven't had this update in a long time. We're supposed to get it annually. That's not on you, just to note that I continue to think it's an important topic and really appreciate the refresher and bringing this thinking back to the forefront for everyone, Council members and the public. I think this continues to be an important transparency issue for the Council and the public, so I think it's worth the attention when we're able to give it. I would request, I don't have a formal motion here or anything, but just request maybe a report from GC that can look at the last 15 or maybe the 20 if it's really illustrative to look back at Mr. Myers' recusals for the Council to be able to understand how recusals have been operating within its own system. As you noted, as I noted, this is very different Council to Council. I did see something in one of the documents you provided when preparing, it was a link to sort of a national report I think that's required to Congress that is done, I think I'm guessing at the HQ level, you probably know more than I do about this, and it does sort of very high level summary of sort of how recusals are operating nationally, and I think it could be helpful if we got a very simplified version just to see how that's working here, what that looks like, if there's any topics, and then any notes from you all would be really appreciated. So if you could bring that back. I personally would love to see something like that.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:57] So before you go do that, it's a request of an individual Council member. Is that something the Council wants to see? Or there could be exchange between NMFS General Counsel and Miss Ridings on that. I'm not sure which agenda item we would put it on, or is there interest in seeing that in the future? So at this point I guess I can discuss with the Executive Director and our leadership team, but it seems like the follow-up might be Corey with you and General Counsel on that, that they might be providing that. But I'm getting the sense that for the Council, we're satisfied with the process and what's going on and the structure that's being created and that's how we would proceed here. And next year sometime we would get another update and should General Counsel desire to include more information in that it could be there but we wouldn't expect a report at this time. Lynn Mattes.

Lynn Mattes [00:03:21] Thank you Chair. You just hit on what I was thinking is maybe just one slide could be an update the next time we get this updated, that way it's out there for everybody to see. Appreciate if Miss Lynch is willing to talk with Miss Ridings, but for the transparency piece, including it in the next update would get it out there for everybody and not have to create a new agenda item.

Pete Hassemer [00:03:42] Yes, thank you. And my expectation is, since this is an annual requirement, that we would be hearing this again in with next year sometime. Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:03:58] Thanks, that's mostly satisfying to me. I will absolutely talk directly with GC and NMFS on this and follow-up and get more information and more insights on this. I think that including something like that in the annual report makes a ton of sense. My only concern is just we haven't gotten an annual report annually, and maybe that will happen moving forward, but I think it is a very good idea moving forward in terms of we do that, incorporate those two pieces together.

Pete Hassemer [00:04:31] All right, thank you. Other discussion on this? Not seeing any hands, Executive Director Burden, anything to add here?

Merrick Burden [00:04:43] Yes, thank you Mr. Chairman. There is no action under this agenda item. The purpose was to receive the report of General Counsel. I think that's been done. There's been some good Q&A as part of that presentation so I think your work here is done.

Pete Hassemer [00:04:59] All right, thank you.

2. Fiscal Matters – Patricia Hearing

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] There is no public comment, so that simply takes us to our Council discussion and action. That'll pop up on the screen. Just consider the report and recommendations of the Budget Committee. Anyone ready for discussion on that? Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:22] No Mr. Chairman, but when the time is appropriate I'm willing to make a motion.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:28] All right, I'll just look around, make sure. I see no hands except yours. Let's hear your motion.

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:39] And unfortunately I did not get this in front of tower of power. So gentlemen please prepare your typing fingers. I move the Council adopt the Budget Committee recommendations as presented in Supplemental Budget Committee Report 1 from Agenda Item D.2.a.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:15] Thank you. I was following along and checking with the report. What I see on the screen appears accurate and complete. Is that right?

Sharon Kiefer [00:01:23] Yes it is.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:24] Is there a second to the motion? Seconded by David Sones. Please speak to your motion as needed.

Sharon Kiefer [00:01:30] I think the Budget Report made an excellent case for those recommendations and comfortable approving those.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:39] All right, thank you. Any questions or discussion regarding the motion? Seeing none I'll call the question. All those in favor say "Aye".

Council [00:01:51] Aye.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:53] Opposed? Abstentions? The motion passes unanimously. Any other discussion to be held here regarding that? and not seeing any, Patricia.

Patricia Hearing [00:02:11] Your work here is done.

Pete Hassemer [00:02:12] All right, thank you very much.

3. Approve Council Meeting Record – Pete Hassemer

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] Approval of the Council Meeting Record. And there are no reports except for the Council Meeting Record which has been published in the briefing book. Any action or discussion to be had on that? Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:24] Mr. Chairman, if there is no further discussion, I have a motion that the tower of power does have. I move the Council approve the meeting record for the 288th June 2026 Council meeting presented in Agenda Item D.3, Attachment 1.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:48] Thank you. And that language is accurate and complete?

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:50] Yes sir.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:51] And is there a second to the motion? Seconded by Vice-Chair Smith. Please speak to your motion as needed.

Sharon Kiefer [00:01:00] We had opportunity for discussion, none came up, and so I believe we have presented an accurate record of the 288th session.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:11] Thank you. Questions or discussion on the motion? Seeing none I will call the question. All those in favor say "Aye".

Council [00:01:20] Aye.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:22] Opposed? Abstentions? Passes unanimously. Thank you Sharon. With that, I believe we have completed our agenda items for today.

4. Membership Appointments and Council Operating Procedures (COP) – Kelly Ames

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] So it takes us to Council discussion. Lynn Mattes.

Lynn Mattes [00:00:04] Thank you Chair Hassemer. We didn't have a report, but with the appointment of Mr. Heath to the CPSMT that did leave the vacancy on the GMT for ODFW. And as Vice-Chair Smith mentioned a couple of times the other day under salmon, we've had a vacancy on the STT for a bit. We are actively in the process of hiring both of those positions and we hope to have nominations for both those positions at the November meeting to ask to have staff appointed to the STT and the GMT. We had a very good candidate poll for both positions and are actively in the process, so hopefully we will be fully staffed again by November. Thanks.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:46] All right. Thank you for that update. So now, can you blow those up just a little bit? Thank you. So we've completed Task 1, the announcing the appointments that were made. And Kelly discussed any other, well we'll see if there's any other guidance you have regarding those positions. I think she mentioned specifically the Scientific and Statistical Committee positions. And then, so anything else on Task 2 there? Not seeing any hands. Revisions to COP 11. Aja Szumylo.

Aja Szumylo [00:01:45] I have a motion.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:46] Well, thank you. Let's see it.

Aja Szumylo [00:01:48] Okay. And so I combined a single motion for COP 1 and COP 11. I move that the Council adopt the adjustments to COP 1 detailed in Agenda Item C.4, Attachment 5. And the adjustments to COP 11 detailed in Agenda Item D.4.a, Supplemental Council member Report 1 with revisions to clarify timing and responsibility for evaluating when actions are eligible for adjusted Council meeting requirements.

Pete Hassemer [00:02:17] Thank you. That appears accurate and complete. Is that correct? Thank you. Is there a second to the motion? Seconded by Sharon Kiefer. Please speak to your motion.

Aja Szumylo [00:02:28] I think I covered it previously, but yeah, we had discussion under Agenda Item C.4 about Council efficiencies that included this discussion of how to approach both motions and Council guidance and so that language is now updated with this recommendation. And then I just went over the adjustments of COP 11. I don't have anything to add there.

Pete Hassemer [00:02:52] Thank you. Any questions regarding the motion or discussion on the motion? Not seeing any I will call the question. All those in favor?

Council [00:03:05] Aye.

Pete Hassemer [00:03:07] Opposed? Abstentions? The motion passes unanimously. Thank you Aja. And back to our task list. I believe that completes everything but I will check in with Miss Ames. Kelly.

Kelly Ames [00:03:28] Yes, thank you Chair Hassemer. You've completed your items under this agenda.

Pete Hassemer [00:03:35] All right, thank you. Unless there's anything else to be discussed or announced here we will close out that agenda item.

5. Future Council Meeting Agenda and Workload Planning – Merrick Burden

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] So that will take us to our tasks and Council discussion. So any discussion regarding what the Executive Director laid out and the reports you've heard? Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:00:19] Thanks Chair. Actually it's just a question, at the risk of sounding a little dumb here. I know that we're sort of entering a new world where we're trying to delineate between prioritization and scheduling, and so I think we're scheduling right now. But I'm thinking, one just generally, and two, thinking about the EWG Report and a couple requests. So I'm not really sure how to move forward. Does Council leadership have any suggestions on how they sort of want the discussion to go today or what sort of advice you're looking for under this agenda item?

Pete Hassemer [00:00:52] I'll turn first to the Executive Director. Merrick.

Merrick Burden [00:00:56] Thank you. I expect this question to come up a couple of times before we get comfortable with the new way of doing it, so I appreciate you asking the question. I think the way to start, if you're thinking about your mindset essentially, is like if we have our objectives that we're trying to achieve, does this schedule lend itself to them? And so I actually... I appreciated the question from Miss Yaremko earlier where she said, I see where we're trying to head with the Sac fall item and I have questions about whether the schedule gets us there. Like who does what in terms of helping us scope out the Sac fall initiative? And so that's caused me some thinking about what are we doing between November and September? So it's that kind of schedule, like the schedule....does that schedule and do those steps get us to where you want to go? In terms of prioritization, what I think is appropriate for that discussion is if there are new initiatives or tasks that you would like to pick up, let's make note of that and then we'll schedule an agenda item in the future where we can be prepared to bring you a sense of the resources we have available and the people we have available that could help you advance that issue. There are some recommendations in the EWG Report which sort of straddle those two things and which fall in the gray area, and those get into how we are managing some of our projects. So if we do want to change the way that we're managing some of our special projects, I need to be evaluating whether our budget can handle that. And right now adding steps to our projects, I don't think we can do that in almost any of our cases as we are essentially out of money on our IRA work. So I think that gray area, like the project management steps, is just a conversation that we have to have. Are they reasonable? Usually the requests are reasonable, but that doesn't mean that they can necessarily be done because of the resources that we have or don't have. Is that answering your question Miss Ridings?

Corey Ridings [00:03:16] It does. Maybe I can just dive in with some specifics and then we can go from there, does that sound right? Okay. So I think the two things that I had highlighted that the EWG mentioned were doing the workload planning for ecosystem items. And I know that we talked about this earlier in the meeting, and I apologize for my brain fog, but I'm not seeing it sort of in the current Year-At-a-Glance. So I'm wondering if you could refresh my memory and then speak a little bit to your plan for how that's going to happen, just in light of the EWG recommending an agenda item, it looks like in March, which is how things have gone traditionally.

Merrick Burden [00:03:57] Yeah, thank you. I think that is an excellent example. Right now our ecosystem work is really contained in the IRA projects. And so as we've discussed our capacity it seems clear to us that we should get through that work and then we'd begin to prioritize new ecosystem initiatives. And so this upcoming March we will still be up to our eyeballs in trying to get our IRA work done. I don't see the bandwidth to talk about new priorities. I think 2028 would be a very appropriate time to have that conversation.

Pete Hassemer [00:04:35] Thank you. Other discussion? Corey Niles.

Corey Niles [00:04:42] I don't want to make this a scattershot, but just two issues to raise. One, maybe just a request to you and Kelly, Merrick to talk to the EC in November. I think it's now that March is on, we're looking that they would have expressed interest in staying longer at the meetings because of the salmon regulatory process and because of the questions come up at the end of those meetings. And the way it's scheduled they've gone home when a lot of those questions..... So I just request maybe to, they didn't put a statement in this time, but I'm confirmed that the interest is still there and hopefully they can explain it more to you in November. Just second on the salmon troll. I saw the public comment and it's....yeah we....hopefully we have interest in talking about that. We've been looking for an economical way to allow adjustments to those trip limits for a long time and yes, I did the analysis many years ago because the GMT was too busy, but it's....we have canary and yelloweye rebuilt and we have been interested in finding the time to discuss it. How to adjust those allowances and just even to analyze them. And this is planning and workload, but I really think we need to align our analytical bar and our analytical workload with conservation risk and economic benefit, and so we've made that one way too difficult in the past in my opinion. And just, yeah, we have a lot to do but I think we can....we have interests at the right time and figuring out how and when the right place is for people to make those requests.

Pete Hassemer [00:06:32] Thank you Corey. Other discussion? Lynn Mattes.

Lynn Mattes [00:06:45] Thank you Chair. And I think like many of the rest of us around the table, the brains a little mushy and right now. I remember the game where you've got, your sliding little blocks around and trying to make a picture and then trying to figure out how we could adjust things to move that hour of CPS in November. That's kind of the hanging Chad. I haven't come up with an easy solution for that game, but I get their request. That way they have a whole day they can just focus on reports and stuff and not have to try to track and be on the floor if we can accommodate that. I believe most the requests of the GMT have already been accommodated between the first draft and this later draft. I did notice that the marine planning item is on the November agenda. Will there be....is there a plan to have a Marine Planning Committee sometime between now and November likely online? Thank you.

Merrick Burden [00:07:42] Yeah, thank you for that question. I think the usual course is to have a marine planning meeting in the fall and I'm.....it doesn't happen very often, so I'm a little fuzzy, like you said, but I'm looking at Miss Ames and she is nodding so I think that is the plan.

Pete Hassemer [00:07:58] Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:08:00] I think Lynn and I were on the same page. Seems like given the request from the coastal pelagic species group, trying to squeeze in the NMFS Report on the same day as the other coastal pelagic species items might make a lot of sense and that way it's all consolidated for them.

Pete Hassemer [00:08:27] Any other hands for discussion? Or while you're thinking I will ask the Executive Director to summarize what he's heard to this point? Merrick.

Merrick Burden [00:08:41] Thank you Mr. Chairman. And I guess before I do that I did indicate in my exchange with Miss Ridings that I had been giving some thought here about how the Sacramento fall item should proceed. And this is...we haven't done this before and so we're still figuring this out. And so as I look at Dr. Rumsey and the completion of that peer review process that we will go through, it's clear to me that we'll have something to do after November but it's not entirely clear to me what that would be. And then between that time and next September we would be figuring out how to go about scoping and how to suss out the FMP amendment process. So there are some steps in here that I expect to get filled out that may or may not show up on the Council's agenda. It might be a project team with Council staff and NMFS staff and maybe CDFW to figure out how that works. But we're still working

on it and we're still trying to see how all of this unfolds. And so I understand there's a little bit of lack of clarity there but we haven't forgotten, we're just still figuring out some of this newness. So I don't know if Dr. Rumsey, if any of that makes sense to you but that's what's on my mind when it comes to the Sac fall progress.

Scott Rumsey [00:10:03] Through the Chair, I agree. We have our final panel review team call, excuse me, scheduled for October 1st. In that call we will solidify, hopefully have consensus on the panel's findings and recommendations. So those aren't even finalized yet so I don't even know what to guess would be potential follow-on action. So I think what you laid out is as likely as anything.

Merrick Burden [00:10:38] Okay, terrific. Thank you. Let's see, moving through then some of the other comments. We did hear....we'll start early on, and what date was that? What meeting was that? We did hear the GMT's request to meet a little bit earlier in March. We're trying to accommodate that. The hotel contract is such that we're a little bit limited, but we will try to accommodate that. I did hear some conversation, there was the exchange with Miss Ridings and I, I hope that that explains why the ecosystem prioritization is not next spring. We are just still working on our IRA work. We certainly value their input and their engagement in helping this Council and so we will pick up prioritization in 28'. Otherwise, let's see, I haven't....it's been kind of quiet this afternoon Council so I haven't t taken a whole lot away from this discussion that's caused me to change what's in front of you now, but I'll look at Miss Ames and see if she has anything more?

Pete Hassemer [00:11:47] Kelly, it looks like nothing from you. Other Council members? I mean it's okay to be done with your work unless you want keep discussing. Not seeing any other hands here, Merrick have you got enough?

Merrick Burden [00:12:09] Yeah, thank you Mr. Chairman. I think that concludes your action under this agenda item.

Pete Hassemer [00:12:14] All right. That will close out this agenda item.

E. Habitat

1. Habitat Issues, including Special Project 1 If, Then Updates – Kerry Griffin

Christa Svensson [00:00:00] We don't appear to have any public comments on this agenda item, which would lead us into considering comments and recommendations developed by the Habitat Committee. And we've had some guidance and direction provided by our Executive Director also as well in terms of the letters that we started discussing and how to really further that and bring that up under future workload planning. So other comments, recommendations, et cetera, would be appropriate. And not seeing any hands. Heather Hall.

Heather Hall [00:00:45] Thank you Vice-Chair. And yeah, maybe I'll just follow-up on on my comment or question about the NSF comment opportunity on the OOI priorities and still really appreciate that. Thank you for the follow-up to have so we can discuss that under future meeting planning. I was just.....one thing thinking that Dr. Heppell let us know a lot of preload work has gone into that and if it's not a letter, but that information can be submitted in the form, great. I hope it happens one way or the other. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:01:30] Okay, thank you. Jaime Diamond.

Jaime Diamond [00:01:34] Thank you Vice-Chair. Just kind of taking a thread from yesterday's open public comment about cumulative impacts and how they stack up upon each other and in particular in a specific zone, the AS referred to as the tri-counties area off of central and southern California, the Kelp Aquaculture Farm approval that Mr. Sones asked about. It is very large. It is in a transit kind of zone for, and also is impacting commercial fisheries in the area. This has been a contentious issue for a while. There was a previous aquaculture project slated for this general area years ago pre-COVID and recreational and commercial fishermen came out against it strongly. And this one we were surprised that this made it all the way this far with the size that it is as well. So there's definitely some concern from commercial fishermen in our area as well as recreational just even bait, live bait. This is an area where live bait is often caught in flats in this area so it's half, it's there, it's gone through, but yes it is displacement. Potential for other opportunity as essentially a FAD, sure, maybe? But not....I don't think something that would make up for what is being lost potentially. But again, this is another area that is essentially being closed to a number of our fisheries in a small geographic zone. So again, cumulative impacts, death by 3,000 million paper cuts kind of thing. And then just noting this kind of dichotomy of the removal of harm, but then throwing a bunch of money for habitat restoration. I recall earlier this year hearing about big concern from like AIS, aquatic invasives on rivers in Washington, and then also from tribal representatives that were concerned about the warming of waters from data centers on rivers and how all of these things play together. And so having this in the report to kind of understand all these different competing things that are kind of working with or against each other is really helpful and useful, especially for those of us that aren't in that specific region, but it kind of keeps bringing it back to mind that this is something we need to be thinking of so.

Christa Svensson [00:04:28] Well, thank you. And there are a lot of moving pieces in this. I agree with others who've spoken around the table that having the pre-read on the front end was very helpful, and then having it reiterated and expanded upon for a second go around helped immensely. Any other comments? Executive Director.

Merrick Burden [00:04:56] Just in the interest of clarity. So I did suggest that I thought I was hearing interest on the part of this Council in drafting a letter or maybe more than one letter? It's not really clear to me, but we need to do some assessment of capacity, and I'm just looking at Mr. Griffin. If he could

paraphrase for this Council what exactly we would be coming back to affirm under workload planning.

Kerry Griffin [00:05:23] Thank you Director Burden. So what I'm hearing from the Council is interest in moving forward with both the letters suggested or recommended by the HC. One has a longer glide path with a due date of November 27th so we have a little more time. As Dr. Heppell noted, the HC could coordinate with the MPC on that. The National Science Foundation request for input is on a much shorter turnaround. We did discuss this quite a bit in the Habitat Committee. And as you recall from June, when we thought that the Endurance Array off the Pacific Northwest was going to be, and the entire OOI was going to be dismantled, the Council empowered Mr. Burden to draft a letter. So we started drafting a letter, then throughout the summer there were some new developments and so this draft letter, which it's not posted or shared or anything, it kept sort of changing as we found out, oh, now they're going to put them back in, but wait they're not going to put everything back in. And now the ARGO program will be not funded further, so there's a lot of moving targets. But the bottom line is we do have this draft letter that identifies the components of especially the Endurance Array of how important that is to our fisheries and our communities. I think it was Miss Hall who said that there are forms that are requested and you're limited to one page per question and there's about eight questions in there I think, or seven, something like that. So we would have to reformat it to be responsive to those questions, but we've been having a lot of conversations with HC members and outside experts on this and so I feel with some support from them we could pretty quickly turn around some no longer than one page responses to the questions that are appropriate. I think not all of them we would be directly responding to because we might not have interest in that. But anyway, to your question about capacity, again it would probably be, it would be a quick turnaround process, but I think we could formulate some feedback early next week if the Council, I don't know if you're providing guidance today or on Monday, but I think we could turn around something pretty quickly. If you wanted to do the QR process, it would be a quick send out to the Council members for approval probably by the end of next week, and the deadline's September 30th so I think we can do it. It's important, that's what I heard from Council members and everyone on the Habitat Committee you know as we lose some of these key components to provide scientific information, so it could be done.

Christa Svensson [00:08:28] Yes, Executive Director.

Merrick Burden [00:08:29] All right, thank you. Thank you Kerry. So what I take from that is if everyone agrees with that we do have 2 efforts. We'll just confer among ourselves to this reformatting and a sped up collaboration with the Habitat Committee is doable in time for meeting this deadline. And we'll report back to you under workload planning if that is indeed where the Council wants to go.

Christa Svensson [00:08:58] Okay, I'm looking around. Head nods. Okay, that appears to be where the Council is wanting to head so much appreciated in terms of lining that out. Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:09:15] Thank you Madam Vice-Chair. Relative to the head nods, I would like to....I heard mention of the QR process. In my mind, this particular response is a fairly technical response that has actually been in the works for some time. Wondering how the Council would feel. My preference was that we just leave it to the discretion of the Executive Director in terms of final approval and forego the extra time of a QR process. But just curious in terms of head nods of the Council relative to this specific response?

Christa Svensson [00:10:05] Corey Riding.

Corey Ridings [00:10:07] Thanks. Thanks Miss Kiefer. I think that's wise, especially given the short timeline. It sounds like we will pick this up again under workload planning, but I think your suggestion is a good one.

Christa Svensson [00:10:21] Thank you. Are there any others who would like to weigh-in on the topic?
Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:10:30] Thank you Madam Vice-Chair. The question actually just prompted me to think that maybe I should ask about the process for the response to the NOS request and the deadline of November 27th? As I understand, the MPC will talk about this on their October 2nd agenda as well. And then if I'm understanding what Director Burden mentioned earlier, we would decide in agenda planning whether we're going to task those two groups to prepare the response if I got that right. But I guess my question is on process, will there be a, given the November 27th deadline, will we be reviewing that draft letter, presuming that's where the direction goes, in the November meeting materials or would we be doing it by QR?

Kerry Griffin [00:11:32] Thank you Mr. Director, Marci. Yeah, I envision a draft letter in the advanced November briefing book materials, because by the time we finish the November meeting it'll be November 18th and then that deadline is, you know, just nine days later. So I would envision if tasked the MPC and the HC would work together to put together a draft in advance and in the November briefing book.

Marci Yaremko [00:12:07] Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:12:12] All right, any further discussion on the idea floated by Sharon Kiefer around the QR Letter? And I see some other head nods in favor so I believe we will move that direction. Anything else we need to discuss under this agenda item before I ask our staff officer if we have sufficient information and a plan for moving forward? Corey Riding.

Corey Ridings [00:12:46] Thanks Miss Vice. Actually, my question is a little bit broad but it does have to do with habitat and that's just thinking about the salmon and groundfish EFH reviews. And I'm wondering if we have any advice from our Habitat Council staff or leadership about if and when those are planned for?

Kerry Griffin [00:13:15] Yeah, we did discuss that. We've been discussing it. It's been on the Council's Year-At-a-Glance agenda, and it keeps getting pushed back based on significant loss of NMFS capacity and it's now on the September 27' Council agenda shaded. There's still a question about whether, you know NMFS would have the capacity. We work on these things together so I don't want to speak for NMFS but we all have full plates and so there are considerations about, you know, the ability to do that. There's been a fair bit of background work to prepare for this for both of the reviews, the salmon and the groundfish review, but as of right now it's shaded for September 27'.

Christa Svensson [00:14:14] I'm going to call on our Executive Director first, and then Corey Riding.

Merrick Burden [00:14:19] Yeah, thank you. And just to add to what Mr. Griffin said, and I'm just looking at Mr. Lockhart in case he wants to add anything, but these reviews do require significant engagement on the part of the National Marine Fisheries Service to help us carry them out. And it has been made clear to us that the administration priorities are elsewhere at the moment. And so I think that also feeds into the ability of NMFS to help provide the support that we need. So that's why it is shaded about a year from now because we're not actually clear when that capacity will be made available to help advance those items. I don't know, Frank, if you want to add to that.

Frank Lockhart [00:15:02] Thank you. I think you expressed it well, and I think at this point in time, you know, we know they have been postponed, but given the staff limitations it's.....and administration priorities, it's not a priority right now, but we can definitely let you know if the staff limitations or the

priorities change in the coming months. But postponing to September sounds like a good course to take as of now.

Christa Svensson [00:15:37] Okay, Corey Riding.

Corey Ridings [00:15:39] Thanks. Thanks, that answered a fair bit. Mr. Lockhart I hate to put you on the spot, but when we talk about staffing shortages and lack of capacity, can you share a little bit more about what that capacity or lack is? Is it specific technical capacity that's been lost or....I'm just curious if you could provide a little more on what we lost and why it's not there?

Christa Svensson [00:16:06] Mr. Lockhart.

Frank Lockhart [00:16:09] Not going to be able to go into a lot of detail here, but as you know the whole Region is, well, the Region and Science Centers have lost anywhere from 35 to 40 percent of the staff as of compared to a couple of years ago, and that has led to a lot reprioritization of the tasks that are before us. And so basically there have been shortages of staff in pretty much every component, both kind of the management side, the scientific side, and so I really can't go into a whole lot more detail than that, but the Region is still kind of reconsidering priorities and then in coming Council meetings I'm sure there will be other updates on how we're addressing the staff limitations.

Christa Svensson [00:17:14] Corey Riding.

Corey Ridings [00:17:16] It's just a discussional follow-up question just to say thank you Mr. Lockhart for sharing that. It's good to understand that, you know, as a lot of people around this table do not, have not worked for NMFS, sometimes it's hard to know what that can mean. You know we.....the budgets have been I think flat and there's still money coming in to NMFS so it would be interesting to know if there are technical capabilities that we can help fill, you know whether that's something the Council or Pacific States, the private sector, academia could do to get some of those reviews done or help. So not something we're going to solve today, but just noting with fuller budgets even with, pardon me, even if fewer staff, you know maybe there's a way we can still get some of these things done.

Christa Svensson [00:18:14] Okay, looking for any further comments? I'm going to make this a quick one and not seeing any I'm going to look to our staff officer and see if we are where we need to be on this topic.

Kerry Griffin [00:18:35] Thank you. I think that was a really good discussion. I appreciate the feedback on the 2-report system and I appreciate guidance and discussion on the 2 recommendations. Again, I think Director Burden suggested that we take both those up under future workload planning on Monday to confirm the direction, but we've laid out a path for both those letters. One is a very short turnaround time. And I heard the Council generally agreed that deferring to Director Burden to usher that letter through using the HC and subject matter experts as necessary is okay with you all. Thank you for that. And then we have the Marine Planning Committee meeting virtually on October 2nd and I'll make sure that the appropriate subject matter experts from the HC are there and we'll put our heads together and assuming that the Council does give this direction on the future workload planning we could put something in the November advanced briefing book. So I think that summarizes it and if there's no further discussion then that concludes your task for this agenda item.

Christa Svensson [00:20:01] All right, well I don't see any wildly waving hands so it does appear we have concluded this agenda item.

F. Pacific Halibut Management

1. 2027 Commercial and Recreational Catch Sharing Plan and Annual Regulations – Preliminary – Angela Forristall

Butch Smith [00:00:00] Okay, no public comments, so at the time we're in Council discussion and motions and all those good things. So I open the floor for discussion. All right, don't start the wave all at once here. Heather Hall.

Heather Hall [00:00:22] Thank you Vice-Chair. I'll get started. Just I'll speak to the WDFW Report and the recommended range of alternatives. Just appreciate the opportunity to put those out there for public review. I recognize that we may need to have some conversations with NMFS about the fathom restriction and how that looks, how that regulatory change looks, but appreciate the opportunity to do that between now and November, in addition to coming back to the Council with the analysis of what that looks like. I also wanted to support the comments that Miss Mattes made earlier about the interest in achieving the quota for the directed commercial fishery earlier in the season, avoiding the six openers if possible. But I also recognize that I think that's been the modeling approach for NMFS, recognizing for all of our halibut fisheries. Sometimes it's weather, this or that have those changes, but would offer our support at WDFW to look at the model and work on that too to just try to help and see if there's anything we could do. I think that's it for now. I do have a motion when the time is right.

Butch Smith [00:01:50] Oh all right, thank you. I got Marci.

Marci Yaremko [00:01:57] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. I just wanted to voice appreciation to the GAP for some details in the GAP Statement this time around that I don't think we usually see from there, from them. They took an opportunity to update us on their observations about the 2026 fishery performance, which I thought was helpful. And then also taking an opportunity provide a look back at some of the summary notes from the stock assessment that I think help us understand a bit about why the fishery performance maybe has been where it is this year. But also noting that we've been setting at the IPHC level, setting conservative harvest levels and that now the result has been to bring the allowable harvest levels in line with the surplus production of the 2012, 2016, and 2017 year classes on which the fishery is most dependent. So I just appreciate this extra recollection and look back at where we are with regard to our management and fishery performance over time, so thank you for that. And I also want to echo the comments of Lynn and Heather with regard to support for seeing what we might do to increase the limits in the first few open periods to maybe not spread it out so long over six. It's not as efficient as it might be, but I also understand that, I mean industry is recommending status quo on the timing of the season structure. So thank you.

Butch Smith [00:03:46] Thank you. Lynn, did you have....Lynn.

Lynn Mattes [00:03:49] Thank you Vice-Chair. Just reflecting on this 2026 season, just thank Miss Forristall for keeping us in line and reminding us of our check-in and spurring those. And then we had a lot of really good communication and coordination with our NMFS partners. We provide data, they double check with us regularly. I thought the communication this year was really good and spot on, so just wanted to thank all the NMFS folks from Josh on down. And then I did forget to mention, and we will be having a series of public meetings the week of October 5th to get input on, some more on this, four in-person and one online. So lots of opportunities for the public to weigh-in on whatever proposals we forward. So thank you.

Butch Smith [00:04:43] Thank you. Frank.

Frank Lockhart [00:04:47] Just maybe to respond a little bit to the comments on the directed fishery and the desire to increase notice, and then also talk about taking the allocation and two to three openings. I think Heather hit on it, you know we'll continue to have discussions between now and the November Council meeting and NMFS recognizes that, in particular the advanced notice is very important. And I think perhaps I'll just.....we're open to, we have some ideas and we'd be glad to discuss them with the states as well and then come back in November and we can perhaps talk about them then. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:05:35] Thank you Frank. Oh, Dave.

David Sones [00:05:39] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman. I had a question for Heather and, you know, just kind of watching the traffic go through Neah Bay this year there did seem to have some impact from the fuel prices. When you go and look at what those guys are paying at the fuel pumps it's, you know, three, four, five, six hundred dollars to put fuel in their boats. Do you guys have a way of telling what the effort is from year to year to see if those do have an effect on our ability to acquire our quotas?

Heather Hall [00:06:16] Yeah, thank you for the question. We do track effort in the fishery. I would just say anecdotally through our conversations with our stakeholders that they commented on the fuel prices too really impacting effort this year, especially I think earlier in the season. And I think that's in all areas so, yeah it was a huge investment to go halibut fishing for how far offshore some folks go in some areas, so yeah.

David Sones [00:06:54] All right, thank you.

Butch Smith [00:06:57] Lynn.

Lynn Mattes [00:06:58] Thank you Vice-Chair. I know Mr. Sones didn't ask me, but in talking to people off of Oregon I think at the end of the year we are going to have lower effort for halibut this year. We did have a couple of periods of several weeks of pretty snotty weather that limited participation, and then we did hear that the fuel was a part of an issue. We also had a pretty good coho season, salmon season off the majority of the Oregon coast, and if folks could go three or four miles and catch, load up on coho and lingcod, they didn't want to go 30 miles to get halibut. So a combination of, I think, at least off of Oregon, fuel prices and weather and other opportunities have, as well as the halibut catch, the bite and the size of the fish was smaller, all played a role in what we saw off of Oregon this year.

Butch Smith [00:07:50] Okay, I think Heather we might be ready for a motion since you volunteered for one.

Heather Hall [00:08:01] Great, thank you. I move the Council adopt for public review status quo directed commercial fishery season structure and the proposals for the recreational fisheries in the WDFW and ODFW Reports under this agenda item, which is Agenda Item F.1, WDFW Report 1, and Supplemental ODFW Report 1, September 2026.

Butch Smith [00:08:35] Okay, is the motion on the screen accurate and complete?

Heather Hall [00:08:40] Yes it is.

Butch Smith [00:08:41] All right. Do I have a second to the motion? I have Lynn Mattes second to the motion. Would you like to speak to your motion?

Heather Hall [00:08:51] Sure, just briefly to reiterate. This is a good range of alternatives for the public

review between now and November and reflects our stakeholder input and look forward to coming back in November.

Butch Smith [00:09:11] Okay, any other discussion on the motion? Seeing none I'm going to call for the question. All those in favor?

Council [00:09:21] Aye.

Butch Smith [00:09:22] Those opposed? Any abstentions? Motion carries unanimously. Thank you. So Angela, I think we've come to a point in time where I ask you if we completed our task as we need to and do the work, have done the work, excuse me.

Angela Forristall [00:09:46] Yeah, thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. I do just want to provide California the opportunity, if any indication on if the proposal you'd be putting out for public review would just be status quo?

Butch Smith [00:09:58] Yeah, good catch. I'm sorry Marci. I thought I asked you but I already forgot that I asked you.

Marci Yaremko [00:10:02] Yes, thank you.

Butch Smith [00:10:04] Everything's fine?

Marci Yaremko [00:10:04] Everything's fine. Status quo. Much appreciated.

Butch Smith [00:10:08] Thank you Marci. I apologize. Good catch Angela, that's why you are where you're at, to keep me in line.

Angela Forristall [00:10:19] Thank you. Then we do have options to put out for public review. And as you have heard, there will be some stakeholder meetings that take place before November when we come back for final action.

Butch Smith [00:10:31] All righty. So I think we've done our task here and so I think we're going to....I'm going to hand the gavel back to the head boss here, Pete.

G. Salmon Management

1. Methodology Review – Final Topic Selection – Angela Forristall

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] We are to our Council discussion here. And simply providing guidance to the SSC regarding topics and priorities 2026. And as we heard there are none. So I'll look for any hands to initiate discussion. Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:00:30] Thank you Mr. Chair. Thank you to the SSC and the STT for taking a look and evaluating whether we had methodology review topics that were ready. And both groups concluded that no, nothing is ready to be reviewed in a meeting in October of this year. So I appreciate that evaluation. I'd also note that the Situation Summary does a really good job of explaining that there is other work going on, but that the work may not fit within the confines of what we consider a methodology review. So I appreciate that both the SSC and the STT took an opportunity to let us know that there was other work going on, it just doesn't quite fit in this defined process that we have for reviewing methods. So, particularly in the STT Report, I want to flag the transition of the database platform for Klamath River fall Chinook and the cohort reconstruction from old programming system into more modern R programming language. That's something that's been ongoing in the background by CDFW and partners for some time now, so that's an exciting development. We've also, we're very well aware of the activities of the Sacramento Workgroup and the peer review that are focused on evaluation of our FMSY for Sacramento fall Chinook. So I think it's really important to make sure the world knows that while we may not be formally reviewing something under methods review, there is a lot of work going on in the background. So thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:02:23] Thank you for that Marci. Other discussion? John North.

John North [00:02:34] Thank you Mr. Chair. Yeah, consistent with my comments from April and with the recent SSC and STT Reports, I don't see any potential methodology review items moving forward in this cycle. And if I understood Dr. Schaffler correctly, that documentation of reference points was specific to Sacramento fall Chinook and could be incorporated in the peer review process, so if that's the case I support that too.

Pete Hassemer [00:03:09] Okay, I don't know that last point that we fully discussed that, that was a new one, but that was, I think, a request by the SSC. Trying to pull up their report here, unless somebody else has anything to add regarding that?

John North [00:03:31] Yeah, I was just speaking to the second half of their report there where they had thought it'd be good to move forward with review and documentation of the reference points. It was pertaining to Miss Yaremko's question.

Pete Hassemer [00:03:54] Yeah, so what I would do is look around the table to see if there's consensus among the Council that that's our expectation that would be included in what the SSC offered is the full SSC would review it in November. So any....is there agreement with that or support for the SSC doing that? Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:04:24] Thank you Mr. Chair. I took from Dr. Schaffler's response that they were already planning to do that under the agenda item that they will be taking up in November anyway with regard to the Workgroups Report. So I agree with Mr. North, which is why I asked the question, that the list of Chinook reference points that's identified in the table in the Workgroup Report has a number of salmon stocks that are not Sacramento fall Chinook, and so it seems to me the SSC is signaling that they want an opportunity to review those as a full SSC in November, but they appear to believe it's

straightforward. So I....maybe it would be useful to bring Dr. Schaffler back up and see if he can elaborate further on what exactly they're proposing to review in November and how it relates to the Sacramento Workgroup Report? Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:05:48] Thank you for that. I think that's a good clarification on what the breadth of that review would be. Dr. Schaffler, are you able to expand on that?

Jason Schaffler [00:06:00] Thank you for the question Vice-Chair Hassemer. Yes I am. So there are a number of.....so Miss Yaremko and Mr. North are absolutely correct, there are a numbers of stocks in that table in the Sacramento Workgroup Report that are not California related and we would, we simply want to review that list for completeness. We recognize that these are not part of the Council management process, but the SSC does comment on status determination criteria and forecasts in Pre-1. A number of these stocks do not have documentation, and so that's likely the gist of without, you know, prejudicing discussions that haven't occurred, that's likely the gist of what the SSC would comment on.

Pete Hassemer [00:07:15] Okay. Is that clear on your expectations? Susan Bishop.

Susan Bishop [00:07:23] Thank you Mr. Chair. Just to clarify, the SSC will be taking a look at those stocks, but at this point relative to this agenda item, there is nothing being proposed to be taken up under methodology review. Is that clear? Is that true Dr. Schaffler?

Jason Schaffler [00:07:38] Yes, thank you for the question Miss Bishop. That is accurate. There is not a proposal to review anything under that. It's just to review the list of what is and is not available.

Pete Hassemer [00:07:57] Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:07:59] Thank you Mr. Chair. I guess I'm still a little unclear on what agenda item is being discussed for November. It would not be in a methods review item. It would be something else and I'm unclear....you're recommending we take this, or the SSC take this review up, but again, I'm not certain if this is something that you're proposing for your November agenda and why that isn't something that's discussed under workload?

Pete Hassemer [00:08:46] Thank you.

Jason Schaffler [00:08:46] Thank you for that.....oh, sorry.

Pete Hassemer [00:08:49] Go ahead Dr. Schaffler.

Jason Schaffler [00:08:52] My apologies for butting in. Thank you for that clarification Miss Yaremko. Taking this up under workload planning could be an additional appropriate place for discussion.

Pete Hassemer [00:09:08] All right. Thank you. And I was just going to turn.....if I went through my files I might find it, but turn to our Staff Officer Angela Forristall just to remind us on the November Quick Review what salmon agenda items might be on the November one and we can think about that. This does sound like a workload planning thing also about what work is being done. Angela.

Angela Forristall [00:09:37] Yes, thank you Mr. Chair. So the most relevant agenda item to this topic is the Council will be receiving the final report of the Sacramento River fall Chinook Peer Review Panel. The documentation that the SSC Report is referencing is during that process, the Sacramento River Workgroup was preliminarily asked a number of questions from the panelists. They submitted

responses to those questions. This documentation related to the Chinook salmon reference points was included in that. So the link on the SSC's Statement directs you to those responses that were part of that Sacramento River fall Chinook Panel process, which will be on the Council's November agenda.

Pete Hassemer [00:10:34] Executive Director Burden.

Merrick Burden [00:10:38] Thank you Mr. Chairman. And I think just in the interest of trying to understand what this might do to the November agenda, I'm struggling a bit to understand what happens when the SSC reviews these references? Is there someone around the table that can explain that? Or perhaps it's a question for Dr. Schaffler.

Pete Hassemer [00:11:02] I am not seeing a hand around the table. So Dr. Schaffler, did you hear that question? Is it clear?

Jason Schaffler [00:11:13] Thank you Vice-Chair Hassemer. Yes, that is clear. The SSC would simply provide a recommendation that, or have discussion that is the material accurate and should there be additional questions posed on this material or should additional work be taken up to address the material in the future? But there's not going to be a review of that material. It's just the review would focus on the accuracy and completeness of the work presented in the Sacramento Workgroup Panel Reports.

Pete Hassemer [00:12:05] Susan Bishop.

Susan Bishop [00:12:07] Thank you Mr. Chair. Thank you Dr. Schaffler. I'm having a little trouble connecting the dots. My recollection is that the table is in material that the Sacramento Workgroup folks provided to the Peer Review Panel. My understanding, at least in attending a few of those discussions, was that the Peer Review Panel has not asked for follow-up for that material. Much of that material would involve staff that's not Council staff, so it would be agency or tribal staff, related to stocks that are sort of not related to the Sacramento Workgroup work. So I'm not clear who would actually do that work, given the staff resource limitations that have been highlighted in several of the documents, that as far as I know, and there's others that could speak to that, the Peer Review Panel had not requested further documentation and so how it relates to the decisions that the SSC has made that they need to review those reference materials.

Pete Hassemer [00:13:20] Thank you. Dr. Rumsey.

Scott Rumsey [00:13:23] Thank you Mr. Chair. On behalf of the Sacramento River fall Chinook Peer Review Panel, I thought it might help to at least clarify from my perspective what we intend to present to the SSC in November. We will have submitted our final report to the SSC and the Council by then. And the plan is for me and probably a member of another member of the Peer Review Panel to provide summary presentations to the SSC, the STT, the SAS, as well as the Council, overviewing the findings of the Peer Review Panel and any recommendations we might have for future work that the Council and SSC could take under consideration. So my expectation in November is that there will be discussion with the SSC about the Peer Review Panels findings and any recommendations, but that, you know, I'm not necessarily expecting the SSC to review any of the information that the Peer Review Panel relied upon or take on any assignments coming out of that. Is that helpful?

Pete Hassemer [00:15:03] Yes, thank you. Executive Director Burden.

Merrick Burden [00:15:09] Yes, thank you Mr. Chairman. I think I'm starting to fill in some gaps here in my mind, and there's a couple of snippets of information that are stuck in my head. So one is, Dr. Schaffler referenced how the SSC will frequently use literature or references to help identify status

determination criteria. I haven't read the work that Mr. Satterthwaite has done that's referenced as part of the SSC Report here, but if that is part of the thinking here that the SSC should review these references and their completeness and accuracy in anticipation of status determination criteria, that is a....that's part of the flow of work that I would expect to see happen as we work through the Sac fall issue. So the first step that we're in now is the Peer Review Panel that's going to presumably set escapement objectives. After that occurs we'll have a couple of additional steps that work through status determination criteria and the harvest policy. And so if I've got that right, this work that Dr. Satterthwaite has done could help inform that second, maybe even third step. So maybe that's a question back to Dr. Schaffler. Is that where this work comes in in your mind or is it something else?

Jason Schaffler [00:16:38] Thank you for the clarification Director Burden. Yes, that is one of the connections. That is the connection.

Pete Hassemer [00:16:52] Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:16:55] Thank you Mr. Chair. Dr. Schaffler, maybe you can elaborate on the very last sentence in your report. As I understand, the exchange that we've been having surrounds the completion of the Sacramento Workgroup Report and verifying the documentation and methodology for Chinook reference points that are provided as a table in that report, but then you reference in your last sentence that this information may provide valuable context regarding the amount and timeliness of data underlying the reference points that drive the annual salmon management process. So I'm sensing there's a nexus with the upcoming annual salmon management process and the review of these reference points for other FMP Chinook stocks. And so I want to understand exactly what this review is and what the implications are for other Chinook stocks? Thanks.

Jason Schaffler [00:18:08] Thank you for that question Miss Yaremko. So a number of these stocks do not have citations. Many of them are old and there are varying periods of data that are being used to update those reference points. One of the items that has been discussed in the Sacramento River Workgroup Panel Review relates directly to that, which is what type of data range should or could be used, and that is going to be....that is likely to be a point that the SSC will focus on during the review of that panel report. And that, the further nexus with commenting on the annual salmon management process relates to exactly what data we have available and how much of it should or could be used to inform reference points for other stocks, while also recognizing that many of those reference points do come outside the Council process that the SSC would not be reviewing and is not asking to be reviewed.

Pete Hassemer [00:19:53] Is that clear? And I'm getting the sense no. Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:20:00] Thank you Mr. Chair. I'm not sure if we're in Q&A or discussion. I appreciate the answers given but I guess if I can provide my response or my thinking. I'm growing uncomfortable, I think is where this discussion is leading me. It certainly is far beyond the scope of the discussion I think that we were scheduled to have for methods review. This gets into content of the peer review process and the Workgroup Report that's being prepared as part of that process and I don't think relates to methods review at all. If we're talking about the November agenda for the SSC, that's perhaps a different discussion, but there too I'm somewhat concerned because it sounds like... It's supposed to be straightforward, but I'm not hearing much that's straightforward in this discussion. So I guess I would just flag concern and maybe we need to think clearly about next steps in all of these processes and how they align and affect one another. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:21:16] Thank you Marci. And with some risk I'll try and clarify. On the methodology review topics, as you said, we've gone through that, and I'll look around, there is nothing for methodology review to go forward, the STT and SSC, that's done. We have on the November agenda

right now the Sacramento fall Chinook Peer Review work, Peer Review Group Completion Report. Dr. Rumsey gave us an overview of the expectations what the peer review group would provide. The SSC would be reviewing that. And as you pointed out, there is this additional piece, I think Mr. North stated with respect to the SSC Report, that list of other stocks that go beyond that the SSC would review those at their November meeting when they're doing the Peer Review Workgroup. And I may not have it right, but I've heard Dr. Schaffler say one aspect of the review is a review of the list for completeness. Is the material accurate? Is there a need for more material? But I'm not sure what that fits into for the Council process, how that would inform you, what your expectations are. So I think that's the piece. Whether or not it's done is the workload planning piece. What is it you are expecting to get from the SSC is what we should be clear on here. Does that help? Susan Bishop, or Executive Director Burden.

Merrick Burden [00:23:20] Excuse me. Yeah, Mr. Chairman, I think you're starting to get to where my head is going, which is tasking the SSC to review something then triggers something. And so I guess in plain language terms, there's nothing stopping the individuals of the SSC from reviewing the work of Dr. Satterthwaite today, right? It's the matter of tasking the SSC with something, and so that needs to fit into this Council's agenda. So the way I think about it is, perhaps this helps, perhaps you disagree, but the way I think about it is the Council has a flow that we're building for the Sac fall process. Right now we're in the peer review stage. And when we get to the status determination and harvest policy stage, it would be appropriate to ask the SSC to review the science that is the foundation for those SDCs and Harvest Control Rules and whether you want to change things and how you want to change things. If we were to consider other stocks I would say that would be a deliberate tasking at that point also. In November we're not there and so I'm not sure that unless you want to create a new agenda item, I'm not sure what tasking the SSC would accomplish, and indeed it might confuse some things. So certainly individuals are free to look at one another's work, but I think the matter of tasking the SSC to accomplish something needs to fit in this Council's agenda and sequence, and right now that's not clear to me. So, I don't know Miss Yaremko, I think maybe you were getting at some of those points also and maybe what I've articulated here is helpful.

Pete Hassemer [00:25:05] Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:25:05] Yes, thank you. And I guess to maybe put a finer point on it. I would not want the SSC to take from this discussion an endorsement that they fill their agenda in November with a review of reference points and documentation and methodology of other Chinook stocks because that is not what we're discussing here. This is about the Sacramento Workgroup Report, which you know, references other stocks, but I don't want to send them or give an appearance of sending them off to do an assignment on other Chinook stocks as they work to review that report. Maybe that makes it more clear, but that's what I sense might have been the recommendation out of the SSC that they want to take that on. I mean, they say they recommend reviewing and verifying the documentation and methodology for the other stocks because they're listed in the Workgroup Report, but I would be very reluctant to approve them doing that by way of us discussing this recommendation of theirs in this report here today.

Pete Hassemer [00:26:29] Vice-Chair Smith.

Butch Smith [00:26:33] Yeah, I'm just an innocent bystander here, but you know it seems like to me what I've heard, the SSC is up to their eyeballs in work of all kinds. We have a state and salmon industry waiting, you know, to see how this report ultimately comes out, or a report hopefully to get them fishing again, what that looks like. And then I, but I also see potentially a mission creep to the north. And I don't, unless we have a need for that I don't think we ought to be sending, you know, this group with the importance of work they have on mission creep to the north when we have co-managers, we have treaty implications with the Canadian Treaty, we have all kinds of things that you would have to address that would slow work down. I think the focus, unless there's a purpose and need and I don't see it, we

seem to be managing fine up north, there might be something in the future, but now I think the focus should be on the Sacramento and hopefully, eventually getting people's lives back in order where they can fish again, manage again, and all that stuff that they've been looking for and it just worries me. And I'm not trying to step on anything of California's toes, but process-wise seems like that's the focal point and should be the focal point until there's an issue up north that's come up, and I don't see that issue that's come up north. So from my perspective that's the kind of the way I see the way this should happen. You know, we've been told that, like I said the SSC is challenged in workload, and why you'd want to pile something on from the north when they're trying to get this out the door seems disingenuous and seems anti-productive to get whatever product comes out for the Sacramento system. So anyway, my two cents. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Pete Hassemer [00:29:11] Thank you, further.....David Sones.

David Sones [00:29:17] Yeah, thank you Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to support those arguments. I was a little concerned with that ourselves. We have our system well in place up in the north and we haven't identified any issues with our methodology at this point. So just keeping it down south is important for us. I just wanted to support Butch's comments there.

Pete Hassemer [00:29:43] All right, thank you. Not seeing any other hands with respect to the tasks on the screen, we've covered that. With regarding the SSC Statement about including an additional review in November, we've had a lot of discussion. Is there an understanding of what the substance is of that so when we get to workload planning and we....and our agenda process there, you can think about whether or not that would be included in the task? I think that's when we would take that up. But right now the SSC was suggesting that they would do that review, and I'm hearing a lot of questions about that right now, but we would defer that decision about tasking the SSC with that until workload planning. Is that correct? Executive Director.

Merrick Burden [00:30:57] Well, let's see. If I'm following your rationale Mr. Chairman I would say I think you've got it. So the methodology review, there's nothing to advance here is where we're landing. In terms of the SSC's request to review these references and corrections and things, if the Council did want to task the SSC with that we could discuss that under workload planning. I think where the Council, the discussion had landed is that the Council did not desire that, but if there is a desire to take that up again we can do so on day last.

Pete Hassemer [00:31:36] All right, thank you. I just want to make sure we're clear on what that review would be while we're on the salmon topic so. Is that a plan forward that if there's something on this the Council desires that under workload planning that would come up? Susan Bishop.

Susan Bishop [00:32:00] Thank you Mr. Chair. I think that's probably the appropriate place for it. But the part that I'm....the place that I am getting still hung up on is I'm not sure how it relates to what task. So, you know, we're still waiting for the Peer Review Panel's findings for the Sacramento Workgroup Review. The suggested work is not related to the agenda item today, so I think what I'm still struggling with is it may be something to consider once we get the workgroup's, the panel report panel....Peer Review Panel's Workgroup Report in November, but right now I'm having a very difficult time seeing exactly where it will land based on Dr. Schaffler's response. You know it doesn't seem to be really connected to the Sacramento Workgroup work. It's not clear how it might or might not be connected to the status determination review or which stocks, for example, we're asking for. I note Mr. Sone's comment about all the work associated with the management forums up north. You know the STT is down to four people I think at this point and there's, there would be a lot of work I think required among folks not necessarily even in this room to provide some of that information. So without having a really clear idea of what that agenda item would be and how these things relate I would just be a little nervous

about committing to that.

Pete Hassemer [00:33:27] Thank you. Executive Director Burden.

Merrick Burden [00:33:30] Thank you, and I'll just pick up a bit of where I believe Miss Bishop is going. If the Council is interested in this I think it is part of a different discussion, It's not its own item. And so what I can imagine is that after we get through this peer review process for the Sac fall stock, then I presume that we will then need to rebuild the harvest policy around Sac fall. And typically what we will do when we are embarking on a new initiative is we'll have staff flesh out here's how we think the work should proceed. This topic could be part of that document, right? So I could ask Angela to spend some time understanding what Dr. Satterthwaite has done as it relates to the Sac fall stock, what it is the SSC would review, how that might inform status determination criteria, and then the Council would be in a position to have the information to understand how to move forward with this information. We won't have that on day last at this meeting. So that would be my advice about how to think about this matter is that it's in the context of the broader sort of status determination and harvest policy discussion that we'll eventually have as part of the Sac fall run. And then if the Council ever wants to pick up things about other salmon stocks, it would be part of those other salmon stock discussions, but on its own, it's an awkward agenda item because there's nowhere to put it.

Pete Hassemer [00:35:07] Thank you. John North.

John North [00:35:13] Thank you Mr. Chair. I appreciate the discussion because I was having, struggling trying to connect the dots originally, and I think I'm on the same wavelength as Miss Bishop. I don't think this is the time to....I just, it just seemed weird. It was referencing a table with fifteen stocks along the coast related to a Sacramento fall Chinook agenda item so I was a little confused. So I think it's best to park this for now and then like Mr. Burden said, you know pick it up later as we start dealing with all the other pieces of the Sacramento management process. So thanks.

Pete Hassemer [00:36:00] Thank you. Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:36:03] Yeah, I definitely agree with the park for now. I mean this recommendation is about reviewing other Chinook reference points. It's not about Sacramento, and I realize they may want to do that as part of the review of this Workgroup Report, but I don't know that that's necessary. It sounds like from Dr. Rumsey that's not an expectation so I don't know why it's proposed here. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:36:36] All right, thank you. With that Angela I'm going to ask you, it's always risky if I summarize where we are, it would be pretty easy with regard to that, but what have we done here?

Angela Forristall [00:36:53] The Council, thank you Mr. Chair, the Council has confirmed that there are no topics for methodology review this October, so you won't be receiving any final report on that agenda item at your November meeting. The Council did have some extensive discussion related to the SSC's recommendation for potential further SSC tasking, but it sounds like there's, at least under this agenda item and at this time, nothing further related to that.

Pete Hassemer [00:37:24] All right, thank you. Any further discussion on this agenda item? Not seeing any then I believe our work is complete so we will close out this agenda item.

2. Klamath River Dam Removal and Basin Update – Angela Forristall

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] There is no public comment so takes us into our Council.... And again, this was just an update or was an update report. There's no Council action. So any further discussion on this agenda item? Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:00:21] Thank you Mr. Chair. I just want to say thank you to the Council for scheduling this agenda item. This is something that we've been tracking. It's of huge importance to our west coast salmon fishery in a very sensitive habitat area and it is just great news to see the progress is occurring ahead of schedule and going beyond what we might have expected. We're seeing our fisheries recover, as noted in the CDFW Report, and just lots of great work all around. And it's nice to also hear that the analysis that was done, all of the analyses about what the impacts would be short-term, that we stayed within those expected impacts and now we're on the road to recovery. So just great news and appreciate scheduling and we know we have work to do when it comes to our management of the Klamath runs, both our target stocks and listed stocks looking to the future, but we'll look forward to that down the road as we heard in the presentation. So thanks again.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:43] Thank you Marci. And for myself as a person who spent most of my career in the salmon world, is very interesting and very exciting news and appreciate the update we've had on that. It will be very interesting to follow so thanks for that. If there's nothing else, Angela let me check with you.

Angela Forristall [00:02:06] Yes, thank you. The Council's only task under this agenda item was to receive information and discuss, which you have done, so your work here is complete.

Pete Hassemer [00:02:16] All right, thank you very much. Close out that agenda item.

3. Risk Management Framework – Risk Tables and Other Approaches, Informational – Angela Forristall

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] No public comment, so that will take us to Council discussion on this and a reminder up there. Remember this is...the purpose of this is to have an opportunity to look at this information and discuss some of that and prepare ourselves for future agenda items and discussions with this when this comes up. We're not making any decisions today. So after hearing all that information, I think we're at Number 3, discussing the risk management approach as appropriate. And remember, this is just informational to set us up for further discussions when we get into some of our future agenda items on salmon management. So any further discussion here? Dani Evenson.

Dani Evenson [00:01:13] Thank you Mr. Chair. I was debating about whether to wade in on this, but I'll take a stab at framing up these issues since I've spent more than 30 years in salmon management. We all know salmon forecasts are notoriously difficult. Every salmon manager on the coast would like a high quality forecast. We're always striving to improve them. I think it's important to keep in mind here that there are no standards for forecasts. There are general approaches that we use, but there is no standard. It's stock-specific. It's done by different people. Because it's stock-specific and they're freshwater and occupy a huge amount of the marine environment, which varies based on ocean conditions. You have different data quality. It's really tricky, and it's also done by different people. So what does all that mean? It means at the end of the day forecast error changes year to year and people tend to self-correct it because it's done by humans. So if you find that you are over-forecasting a stock year in, year out, you're going to look through that data and see what methods can you use to improve that. So in terms of correcting for bias, that's really difficult and we don't know that that's actually going to improve things. And if we look at the Satterthwaite and Shelton paper, they kind of say that that's not where the bang for the buck is. We tend to see folks chasing their tail in the forecast, that is to say overcorrecting one year, undercorrecting the next year. We also see a lot of differences in how people accommodate for environmental uncertainty. This is an area where environmental, how to incorporate environmental variables has seen a lot of investment lately. There's a lot of folks, a lot of scientists looking at how best to incorporate that. The Pacific Salmon Commission has undertaken effort and a lot of folks just consider it uncertainty and build in some fudge factors, there's lots of different ways of doing that, but that becomes a really difficult thing to tackle. As far as forecast performance, we all want to improve things and where I see the stoplight tables and all that information coming into play and being the most valuable at this point in time is in the forecast themselves, because when you see something anomalous or gosh, you know, or I over-forecasted last year I'm going to look at this or I'm seeing a really high number, you look and you have access to those stoplight tables, that is a means to adjust it. Is it, you know, maybe yes. That gives you confidence that what you're seeing is actually there in terms of having that availability of data to plug in there. We all are always striving to improve forecasts. We're all undertaking efforts for that. In terms of the other approach that were highlighted by Satterthwaite and Shelton was to put in buffers. Essentially you're reducing harvest. The more you reduce harvest the more likely you are to meet your escapement goals with the notion of you're reducing your probability of overfishing, and that's a decision for the Council and we're not, you know, this is step one in a conversation. I briefly want to speak to, cause I'm hearing some confusion at the table, the SSC made a specific request, Miss Bishop referred to it earlier, and that is reporting on metrics of bias and uncertainty. That is not improving performance of the forecast itself. It is not to incorporate environmental variables. It is not to adjust harvest. The only reason to do that is to run a check on how we're doing. I personally am a firm believer in reporting those types of metrics where we can, especially in a standardized fashion to take a look and see, because at the end of the day with a preseason dominant system we are incredibly reliant on our forecasts. Did hear from the STT they need time. They want to look at these metrics, but it is something that is worth considering at a later date when they have the

capacity and can think about how, where, and when they would incorporate those metrics. And I'll leave that there.

Pete Hassemer [00:06:50] Thank you. Other comments? John North.

John North [00:06:55] Sure, thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. I got some rambling thoughts, hopefully not too bad. But in terms of risk tables, you know it still sounds to me listening to the reports that a fair amount of work would still be needed to figure out how they'd be utilized and whether they apply to forecasts or exploitation rates or escapement goals. And there was discussions of staffing shortages and lack of expertise on implementing risk tables for salmon. And given everything else we have going on in the salmon world, especially Klamath and Sac, I don't really see moving forward with salmon risk tables at this time. Regarding incorporating bias or buffer adjustments for uncertainty, I'd personally rather see future work go into trying to fix the forecast rather than implementing those adjustments. You know if a forecast isn't performing I think we should let the managers in charge of the forecast work on that and not mandate some amount of Kentucky windage to adjust for a rifle that isn't hitting the target. So I think....I appreciated the Satterthwaite and Shelton paper. I think it's intriguing and thoughtful, but I think the results may be a bit dated since the methodology is for Columbia River stocks listed in there or have changed recently. Six Chinook stocks changed in 2018 plus a couple Coho recently to that new ARIMA-based model averaging so I'm not sure the total results of the paper are still accurate given the Chinook stocks. Columbia stocks represent about a third of all the Chinook stocks in that paper. The reason Columbia River managers made those changes was based on a 2016 Pacific Salmon Commission sponsored Forecast Review Group and that's where they had a similar discussion to what we're having now and the managers took from that that they could do better so they went back to the drawing board and they came back with these new forecasts, and I think that's how it should work because those folks are the ones, they know those systems the best, so I'd like to see them have the ability to. Improve their forecasts. But given that, I'm not really opposed to developing a system to facilitate reporting or tracking of running forecast performance. I think that's what the SSC was looking for. I don't see any problem with that if it's used for informational purposes, primarily for managers to look at and compare their performance to other forecasts, I think that's maybe a good thing, but not something where a rigid process where a new forecast would be expected or required given some performance level, because forecasts are never perfect. They're almost always wrong in one direction or another and I think, you know, this could lead to some discussion on acceptable levels of accuracy or precision and that's debatable, depends on the system and the stock and also, you know, when should a methodology be changed. But as far as reporting I don't have any problem with that. Also, like somebody pointed out, some of these forecasts aren't really under the total purview of the Council so that needs to be considered. And for Sacramento specific, we've got so many things going on. We are making some progress so I just think we should let that aspect play out first. So that's my thoughts.

Pete Hassemer [00:11:04] Thank you John. Good thoughts there. And just a reminder, we're not making a decision on using them. We're just discussing potential uses and limitations on these forecasts for future decision-making. So Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:11:25] Thanks Chair. Actually this is for Mr. Vice Butch, a question that he brought up earlier, which is something really important, which is U.S. v. Washington. And I hadn't been thinking about this in light of that so I appreciated that he brought that up. So Butch I'm not going to put you on the spot too much, but just trying to get a little more from you on those concerns. And given that we've sort of been talking about three different things today, I'm curious if you can sort of say which you were talking about or which components you were worried about?

Butch Smith [00:12:05] Mr. Chair. I guess I can talk. Okay, I'm sorry.

Pete Hassemer [00:12:11] After this question we've got Kyle Adicks online with his hand up, so go ahead. You're up.

Butch Smith [00:12:19] Would you rather go Kyle?

Pete Hassemer [00:12:21] No.

Butch Smith [00:12:23] Okay, well....

Pete Hassemer [00:12:24] Corey had a question.....

Butch Smith [00:12:25] No, no, no. Well, there's that in Oregon too, you know the river, and those have been adjudicated to sit down under a forum of people to come up with consensus on forecast, to come to consensus on how they do business, and that's all been court ordered. And something coming from the outside in is I believe not practical unless all parties agreed. And so....and our system, you know, has been set up as co-manager. This is not, you know, this is not a co-managed process. You know if south of Falcon is.....or California this is what they want to do that's great. My place.....my warning placeholder was we have a completely different process with 24 recognized tribes, maybe I.....I hope I didn't miss one but I'm sure it's 24, which are independent, solvent nations that we have to deal with up in the states of Oregon and Washington, and so our process is a whole lot different and more refined. We've had to do this kind of thing for a long time. We've had to count fish, we've had quotas, we've had management areas for a very long time, and so that was my placeholder and why I am fearful of mission creep without the proper vetting and participation by a major co-manager party that's not here. And so.....and I'm quite frankly as a fisherman these new plans have never benefited us. We are the poster child for theories and new ideas that have gone awry. And so I just want to warn my friends to the south that we've been through this. We've bought the t-shirt, we've gone to the concert, and it doesn't always work out so well as what we intend as the theories and hypothesis might say they might. And I just, you know, we're doing a lot of things at the Sacramento all at one time. We're doing lot of moving pieces. I don't know how far off the prediction was this year, if it was at all, if it was spot on. I mean that's something to look at, you know, but it's been said that modeling is not a perfect science. But I know after a certain amount of years it usually comes in within pretty darn close to being perfect, or pretty close to perfect, at least up there, I can't speak for the Sacramento. But I know they have a lot of variables down here that are outside our purview, including no water. Fish need water. No matter how hard we want to manage them out in the ocean they do need water, fresh water, and that's a problem sometimes down in California. So anyway I'll let Kyle....Kyle's got his hand up. Thank you. I hope. Oh, nope, nope, nope, he can't quite.....He has to say that, I'm sorry.

Pete Hassemer [00:16:03] A Follow-up?

Corey Ridings [00:16:04] Just one question. You were a little bit general. I love a good t-shirt. I love wearing the t-shirt to the concert. Just can you be a little more specific about what you're talking about because I think that's helpful for folks that are listening when you're talking about....

Butch Smith [00:16:19] Let's talk about the OPI fixes The OPI fixes costed our fisheries a couple hundred thousand fish. You know probably around 600 by the time it's all done in three years to the opposite. Misprediction, under-predicted it and communities, tribal and non-tribal communities along the Oregon and Washington coast missed a great opportunity because that didn't go so well. And we have that t-shirt in our closet. That's just a few years ago. And so that's an example of how things can go really bad when we have great intentions. I'm not blaming anybody. Everybody didn't go in there to do that but the good intentions cost coastal communities and tribal communities, you know, substantial

fisheries. So anyway, but I'll let Kyle.....Thank you Corey. I hope that...

Corey Ridings [00:17:14] Thanks for sharing your t-shirts.

Pete Hassemer [00:17:17] Kyle Adicks.

Kyle Adicks [00:17:19] Thank you Chair Hassemer. Can you hear me okay?

Pete Hassemer [00:17:22] Yes we can.

Kyle Adicks [00:17:24] Since I am not there in-person I am actually wearing a t-shirt in my basement right now, but I'm not here to talk about t-shirts. I've had a few thoughts through the day that hopefully are helpful. Mr. Smith talked a little to this. Mr. North talked a little to this. Our north of Falcon forecasts are coming from our watershed level co-manager scientists. They're the experts in their own watersheds. They are incorporating environmental information, ecosystem information. They're looking at the ocean level and watershed level factors in developing these forecasts, and they're coordinating with forecasting experts across agencies, tribes, up and down the coast. So they are doing the best they can, getting us the best forecast we can develop. And Mr. Smith mentioned there's a lot of history that gets to that whole process and it's a lot of effort, so I don't want anyone to think that there's not a whole bunch of risk assessment that's going into all these forecasts already. My other thought is the Council's focused on ocean fisheries and the state and tribal fishery managers are looking at fisheries that are outside the Council arena and there's a ton of risk assessment that goes on on a daily basis making decisions on how to manage those fisheries preseason and inseason, and part of their risk assessment in setting the inside seasons feeds back into the Council process and how large people are willing to let the ocean fisheries be given various uncertainties. So I just want to point out there's a whole nother level of risk assessment that crosses outside the Council process into everything that the state and tribal scientists and fishery managers do on a yearly basis and on a daily basis as the fisheries unfold each year. So don't know if that's helpful, but those are the thoughts that came to me listening through the afternoon.

Pete Hassemer [00:19:21] Thank you Kyle. Other discussion regarding this? David Sones.

David Sones [00:19:27] Thank you Mr. Chairman. Just adding a little to what Butch and Kyle are saying. It is a very involved process and we do, I believe, I haven't done salmon now for quite a while, I've been in the groundfish business, but I know for Makah it was always important to understand how accurate those forecasts are, and we would have postseason evaluations to look at how well they performed so you can get in the river and see what escaped and see how accurate or inaccurate we were. The other piece of it is that the risk to both sides in the mixed stock fishery when picking a number with all those assessments, is that if the abundance comes in higher than what we forecast, there are in-river fisheries that can take advantage of that. They can do in-river evaluations and look at if it's returning at a higher level than we forecast and be able to take advantage of some of that too. So, you know, when we get the escapements set they're there for what the productivity levels are in those systems that the managers have established, and some of those have ranges also that there's just not a hard number that you have to hit. You have a range that you're trying to land within so that gives you some error room or forecasting room or fishery opportunities, or in opportunities depending on where we end up. But there is a good system of looking at how accurate we have forecasted and what returns in the next....that following fall. And with the statements on the ESA listed species, I don't think....that's not a management problem. These are spring Chinook that are still listed, and the way the environment is going those things are going to be in trouble. We just don't get the snowpacks that we need in order to supply them. They have to stay in the river all year round. They're not coming in the fall and going out in the spring like most of our fish are, they're more like Coho and steelhead. So I just don't know if

we're going to be able to ever rebuild those. And there's not a lot of fisheries on them, most any of them are in the rivers themselves where they do have fisheries. They're not as much caught in the mixed-stock fisheries. But I just worry about that. But it can't be perceived that all of our fish are ESA fish. We've gotten many of them off of the list, but I don't know that we ever will with some of these spring Chinook stocks. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:22:18] Thank you. Other discussion? Marci Yaremko.

Marci Yaremko [00:22:25] Yeah, thank you Mr. Chair. Just a bit on risk. You know the Council regularly addresses risk and uncertainty in assessment and management as the STT has noted for us, but just because we might do so in an ad hoc way doesn't make it bad. On the contrary, it's deliberative, it's case specific, and it's responsive to a current need. I'm not sure that a structured approach to risk management will be particularly helpful, and kind of as I view how this might work, it could lead to an automated approach to applying risk management rather than deliberative informed decision-making. Looking at Sacramento fall over the past several years, some of those mechanisms that we've used or have been told to use NMFS via the guidance letter include to target a higher escapement floor for Sacramento fall with the upper end of the goal range of between 122 to 180. We've gotten varying directions to target higher. We've also asked and recommended that we buffer the Harvest Control Rule and reduce the fishery exploitation rate. We've also, as a Council, recommended flat out to close the fishery in some years when the forecast is very low and the opportunities, even if the forecast is accurate, would be minimal and the decision was it wasn't worth the risk. So there are multiple ways that we've incorporated risk into our management framework without having a well-defined structure that's kind of prefabricated for us. I want to speak a bit to the Satterthwaite and Shelton paper. I want acknowledge and give some credit that the note was made that a major source of the error in recent years has been from the harvest model error and that implementation of inseason management, which is new in 2025, will perhaps address the harvest model error that has been one source of at the end of the day, error. I just want to, I think, elaborate that it does, I think, need a chance to work. We haven't done analysis yet to see how our forecast performance may or not change in light of the application of this management tool. As others have mentioned, the management landscape just all the way around for Sac fall is changing drastically. And while the analysis did demonstrate better forecasting result and management measures with application of bias and uncertainty buffers, it isn't known if those same benefits will hold in our future management structure. The time series that was used, that 2014 through 2021, that's not very many years. And I do want to acknowledge, I appreciate the recognition that other mixed stocks had essentially control of the landscape in the ocean in those years that really dictated whether or not we could access all of the available stock of Sac fall in our fisheries. So we have, you know, driving constraints on Sacramento winter Chinook. California Coastal has been a huge issue that we've wrestled with, and now we have a brand new framework that we are just learning how the fishery is responding to that framework. We also have Klamath fall, as folks have mentioned, in an overfished condition. We have, you know, a situation with dam removal. We've heard about, you know we will be after, you know, roughly 12 years or three generations might be a good time where we're going to want to re-look at the reference points for Klamath fall as well. So there's going to be a lot of moving parts and I think we're putting too much weight on this analysis just from 2014 to 2021 at this time, might not be the best use of our time. I think I'll stop there. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:27:26] Thank you. Other discussion on this topic? Executive Director Burden.

Merrick Burden [00:27:35] Well, thank you Mr. Chairman. I'm just kind of monitoring the conversation and I feel like maybe things are winding down a bit. I don't want to step in front of anyone if it's not. So maybe I did have some closing remarks, but maybe I'll....I see Miss Ridings has her hand up so I'll let her go before I make my remarks.

Corey Ridings [00:27:55] Thanks Director Burden. Thanks Chair. Yeah, this is a good conversation. It's been really helpful to understand all three of these concepts better and to get a sense of where people are thinking about them and how they're thinking about them and even just in general how we view salmon management, so that's been really informative for me. I think that the concept of all three of the things we've been talking about, I just want to be clear that, you know as we've discussed, this is a discussional item. Nothing's moving forward at this moment and it would never be an intention to bypass the usual salmon processes that include the north of Falcon process. So it would never be an assumption this would not be vetted by co-managers, states, tribes, all of that. I hope that that's something we continue to do. I will confess I'm still a little confused on why the resistance to thinking about the forecast performance metrics, given that they're not actually prescriptive and they seem to be a vetted method for improving the way that we do our forecasting, especially in light that we heard from Dr. Satterthwaite talk about the fact that our forecasts aren't going to get radically better. I heard some commentary, I think from John and Kyle sort of speak, probably others, speaking really about the high quality of people who do these forecasts and that they are improving, that they do take information in, that they're working to do it better every year and it's great to hear that. I would assume that was the case. I also think that if we have another method that can help us on a yearly basis adjust so that our forecasts are better, I'm not sure why that isn't, why that's in contrast to the other things that are going on with California salmon right now? Because I agree there's a lot going on. It's really great that we're making strides, that the dams have come out, that we have good things happening there, that have good things going around with the Sac fall. To me that's logically not tied to also using a method that the SSC just said was really helpful. I continue to think that sort of whether it's P-Star adjustments based on those, whether the creation of P-Star and salmon, I need to learn more about that, or risk tables. I do think there's value in having where we come up with buffers, how we account for scientific uncertainty, how we account for management uncertainty. Those have never been clear to me. And I...hearing people say different things about where those elements are and how they're expressed and who's doing the work, and I think clarity for myself as well as for the public would be useful. I've also heard a number of reports, I think the SAS, the EWG has said this in several reports across time about their fear of double counting. I think Mr. Johnson may have said compounding. And I think that's really important. We don't want to do that while we're accounting for environmental variability, while we are accounting for scientific uncertainty, and then while we want to think about our management response we don't want to conflate things across that. We want to find where they go and then account for them once. I think clarity and transparency actually helps. So I very much appreciate what Marci just said about sort of the flexibility and an ad hoc responsiveness to that. Maybe there's a marriage in the middle somewhere where we can think about increasing the transparency without giving up that flexibility to do so. Okay, I'm going to stop there. Thanks.

Pete Hassemer [00:32:08] Thank you. Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:32:12] Thank you Mr. Chairman. So my observation, and I'm not sure this really came across very well, but certainly relative to both the paper that was presented and then the SSC Statement in terms of, you know it's the metrics of bias and uncertainty. They say it's relatively easy to calculate. I think a lot of people then, that's just a metric of uncertainty. Because then they talked about, although the paper did demonstrate how you could utilize that relative to buffers, you don't have to, right? These are metrics of bias and uncertainty. Those are standalone. How the Council would decide to use them or not is a different situation. As a standalone they do provide some for the public and us kind of looking across kind of a sense of where are you at, but there's no mandate that we then take them into kind of that next level of utility relative to dealing with the buffer, whatever. So I guess I'm not scared of if the Council decides to move ahead with at least with the SSC reporting those metrics, and once again with the recognition that that's not a mandate to take them and use them in some sort of a management decision or action. So I just kind of wanted to put a little space in that conversation because it seems like a lot of folks were like immediately jumping to, oh if we have these then we're

going to use them for buffers, not necessarily. So I just kind of wanted to create a little space in that use.

Pete Hassemer [00:34:12] Susan Bishop.

Susan Bishop [00:34:14] Thank you Mr. Chair. I think that's where the tension lies. I think we all want better information, more information, but I'm hearing 2 very different things I mean just while we're talking about this in this room. And one is what Sharon is saying, which is, you know, more tools in our toolbox that's great. You know, at one point, or one time or another we've used all these tools, but it's not a requirement and it's not a you have to do this. But I am hearing from others, and including recommendations from advisory bodies, the opposite, which is structured means a rule and you need to implement it. And so I think, I know we're not making decisions tonight, but I think in terms of further Council discussion there needs to be a resolution in terms of what is it that we're deciding to do on that? So I'd just put a pin in that for now.

Pete Hassemer [00:35:06] Thank you. Looking around, I'm going to look back to my immediate right.

Merrick Burden [00:35:15] Yeah, thank you Mr. Chairman. And if the conversation is indeed winding down I thought maybe it'd be beneficial just to recap where this agenda item came from, why I took the liberty of putting this on your agenda. I think we started talking about this year or a year and a half ago. It seems like quite a while ago now. Revising our Sacramento fall Chinook management is a major issue. That is a major stock for this Council and I don't think that's lost on everybody, and there are some complex things that go into that, one of which we are well down the road of working through through the peer review process. And then shortly behind that, assuming that you embark on an FMP amendment, is the harvest policy. What I would hate to see this Council do is make decisions without knowing what you're doing, and this is complicated stuff, it has major implications. And so I think this discussion has been really good. What I wanted to do was drag these conversations about the Satterthwaite and Shelton paper and the risk tables, drag that into the light and have everyone get on the same page, and I think we're getting there. There's still disagreement and perhaps some questions, but I think we're a lot closer than we were a few months ago. I think that's a good thing. I also know that we're all human and as we sleep on this maybe things will gel some more and we'll have opportunities to talk about this over the coming year as we start to formulate thoughts about what a harvest policy will and should look like. So this is a good, I hope you agree, a good start to this conversation and grappling with some of these really hard topics. So that's the point of this agenda item. We don't do this sort of thing very often, but I felt like it was important to do it here. So for what it's worth I thought I would end us with those comments Mr. Chairman.

Pete Hassemer [00:37:14] All right, thank you. I'll look around. Are there any other hands before looking to Angela? I think we had an overview of what was discussed from the Executive Director. Is there more we should do?

Angela Forristall [00:37:33] No, Director Burden summarized where we're at and where we're headed very well so I think the agenda item here can be considered complete.

Pete Hassemer [00:37:41] All right, thank you. We'll close out this agenda item.

H. Groundfish Management

1. Protocol for Reviewing Ecosystem Component Species and Identifying Stocks in Need of Conservation and Management – Katrina Bernaus

Christa Svensson [00:00:00] And with that we will move into Council discussion and our tasks, which are to provide guidance and quite probably a motion on the review process for EC species. So I will open the floor for people's thoughts, comments, and discussion. Heather Hall.

Heather Hall [00:00:23] Thank you Vice-Chair Svensson. Well first, I just want to offer appreciation for this coming back to the Council. I know in our conversations about designating some species as EC species this was a really important part of that, that we have a plan for tracking those species, and so very happy to see this being formalized and for the thought that the GMT and the GAP put into it. Also want to just maybe provide a little bit of information based on the past conversation, because several of the EC species that were just designated were species caught in the Washington recreational fishery, and WDFW remains committed to the conservation of those species whether they're designated EC or not. We will continue to collect catch and effort data on those species. They will continue be reported in the RecFIN database. They will still be available to the GMT and our state managers for review. So just making it clear that that commitment remains. At WDFW we are not diverting our attention from those species regardless of how they're included as a EC species or not. So I think a little bit of that I can maybe talk to more as needed. Recognizing this is just the beginning of discussion, I will flag that I do have a motion when the time is right. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:02:09] Well very much appreciated, and thank you for getting us started. Jaime Diamond.

Jaime Diamond [00:02:16] Thank you Vice-Chair. And thank you Heather for your comments of the state's intent. I am a little bit uncomfortable with some of the comments that were just made that somehow nothing's going to be looked at for four years at a time. And what I'm reading from the reports is a formal report will happen every four years, but the GMT looks at these numbers all year long and if they're being put into a place like PacFIN where they're looking at this and they're checking-in. This is very routine and they will flag if there is a problem. I have every bit of faith in our teams that that will be tracked and monitored, and if there's a problem that they see they will bring it to our attention as they do with all the other species that when there's not a lot of catch and all of a sudden there's big influx, you know, maybe there's lightning tows or whatever happens, they let us know. And so I'm very uncomfortable with the conversation that is being, or maybe the insinuation that somehow we're just going to let things roll under the radar for four to five years essentially, and I just need to very clearly put that out there and kind of for me personally squelch it unless somebody else has a different opinion, but I'm very uncomfortable with that notion being put out there. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:03:37] Okay, thank you for putting further comments to the conversation this morning. I saw Lynn Mattes's hand next and then I saw Caroline McKnight, your hand just go up. So we'll call Lynn first and then Carolyn.

Lynn Mattes [00:03:54] Thank you Madam Vice-Chair. I really do appreciate the the work and the thought that the Council staff, the GAP, and the GMT have put into this. I do think it's a good way forward. We've got a way to check on things, and as Miss Diamond said, I think it'll be part of the routine work. I know the GEM product comes out and that's the first thing I look at in the September briefing book is how did we do? To me that's one of our report cards. I don't think this was on the SSC's agenda to look at this, but I have heard in some discussions with a couple of the SSC members, not the

entire SSC, just a couple people who serve on it, that we're talking a lot about how we incorporate mortality catch fishery information. At some point we may want to have some discussion about how do we incorporate new science? Is there a new PSA? Is there new research? Anything like that. I don't have a suggestion right now. I don't know that we need to address it right now, but just something we should keep in mind about how we incorporate new research into these species going forward. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:05:03] Thank you. All right, Carolyn McKnight.

Caroline McKnight [00:05:08] Thank you. Yeah, I just want to express my gratitude for the GMT and GAP Report as well. I think they did a very good job of being similar but different at the same time and touched on, I think, where we need to land. I want to focus for a minute on the staff presentation where it said be efficient. And this Council has made a deliberative decision to acknowledge that this list of species are not in need of active management and are being removed for, you know, a very rigorously examined reason. And so that being said, does in my mind that bifurcates how much time we spend maybe this table and in scheduling and prioritization, but does not alleviate a state responsibility to be monitoring our catch streams. And so I guess to provide some level of comfort, you know, this doesn't change how we're collecting data. This doesn't change how we are interpreting data. On the state side this does not change how we're engaging with the data, none of that changes. What it changes, in my mind, here at this table is we're not necessarily having to bring every piece of information that we have about these to the table to discussion to discuss, you know, over and over again. It's....we've made a deliberate decision to set it on a different shelf, a shelf we can still reach, a shelf we can still see, and we're going to now make it more formal and transparent that we're going to look at them. And so I think that given the metrics that the GMT has put forward, there's a good starting place to develop, let the GMT develop a report, and then we can discuss whether that's enough or not enough, all with the goal of being efficient and this not taking up a tremendous amount of our work time. I would also, I think, add that while it's part of state's job, this is now a really good recommendation to put this on the PacFIN site. It's been an amazing tool we've developed. There was a time where we had a brutal set of spreadsheets going around with our ACLs and OFLs that had version control, and I can see Miss Mattes gagging right now... (laughter)....because it was really difficult to manage and we've migrated that to not only a living dynamic portal, but it's publicly available. We further extended that kind of reporting out to our scorecard, and now we're doing the same with something that we were simultaneously seeing doesn't need active management. So to me these are all improvements that guarantee that we are watching. What I interpret from the GMT Report is that we're trying again to minimize our time with this, so a formal reporting is on maybe at every two or four year cycle potentially between the two reports we've just heard, but that it's always in front of us and it's always available and no one, including the state of California, is suggesting we're going to just not pay attention. So that's what I'm seeing. Again, I appreciate the GMT and GAPs input here. I think there's a really good place to get started. My last comment is regarding the reference out to the Mid-Atlantic reports, and I spent a few minutes looking at them and I'll note that when they started this process in 2018 it was a one or two pager. The 2026 landings report is now something like 33 pages. Now, I have no doubt that the evolution of that report and the needs have been something that are discussed, you know, more or less, and that is a natural progression and I would compare that to where we're at right now. Maybe we're starting at the beginning, we start slow and we build from there, and that is all along the way with the goal of ensuring that if we see something change we have opportunities to address it. And then I think my last, I guess comment or coming back to Miss Ridings question about like, how long like, from the time we see something that we could do something? And I think that if I understood the GMT Report, it's laid out a timeline that maybe falls in line with stock assessment prioritization or harvest specifications. But I might repose that question back over to NMFS in that, if we come to a March meeting and we see something that the GMT brings and flags, the question is, you know, what would be a reasonable response time outside of a stock assessment to put something back through a 10-factor and then back

into an FMP for active management? I think that's ultimately what Miss Ridings was trying to get at. So I think a little bit more discussion about that, what that could look like or if you want to think about that more and bring it to us later, that might be helpful. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:10:46] Yeah, thank you. I can't see your name tag. My apologies. Is it Karen? Okay, thank you. Karen.

Karen Palmagiano [00:10:57] Thank you for the question. I think we would have to bring it back. There's a lot of things that you would have to think about in that situation for me to be able to just say, oh, if that happened we would do X, Y, and Z is pretty difficult at this point. So we could bring the question back with possibly like a hypothetical, but that would be probably the best that we could do right now.

Christa Svensson [00:11:24] Scott.

Scott Rumsey [00:11:26] Thank you Madam Vice-Chair. I really appreciate the discussion and I just want to underscore the theme that I'm hearing which is the criticality of the data, the monitoring, the databases, and just how important it will be to maintain those data streams, whether it's observer coverage, our EM coverage, our catch monitors, the fish ticks, and Miss Diamond mentioned several times the PacFIN database, our RecFIN databases. Those have been suffering from flat funding for a very long time, so for us to prudently monitor these EC species we obviously need to have the good data and we need to sustain the systems that serve that data. So I know it's something you all are fully aware of, but I just wanted to underscore how important that is to this approach. We can't just take for granted that the data and the systems will continue to be there.

Christa Svensson [00:12:47] Thank you for that reminder, as timely as it is. Okay, do we have further questions? And I see Corey Riding with your hand up.

Corey Ridings [00:13:02] Thanks Miss Vice. I was just going to provide a few reflections here. Miss Mattes brought up the really good point when she talked to SSC members about the change that we're seeing in our ecosystem and the need to incorporate new science. So that, to me, seems like something that the SSC can cover down the road when they're reviewing this or something the GMT could think more about as part of this process, but I think it's good to highlight. It's easy to think about things like, it's not easy to think about them, but things like climate change seem obvious because it is in our face. But other things, economics, culture change, those matter too in how our fisheries operate and so thinking about that as well. I wanted to just thank both Heather and Caroline for noting the state's commitments to keeping this data going. Dr. Rumsey just spoke to this. I also think that's very critical, and sorry Miss Mattes did too. I just appreciate that and I think that is going to be the foundation for this, so thank you for noting that. And that's just going to get even harder for everybody with budget cuts and staffing, et cetera. I also wanted to note and thank the GMT for, I think they're the ones that came up with the idea for the PacFIN Report, I'm not sure whoever came up with that. Kudos. That seems it's just absolutely brilliant and a way to take advantage of something we already have as well as keep something public. My understanding from reading the materials is that it wouldn't be sort of like updated in real time but would live there. I think secondarily to that is just what this larger conversation which is about is how do we then bring that into the Council and then into management. I still have ongoing concerns just about making sure that we get to conservation and management as soon as possible, especially when thinking about species that we may be overfishing on. As people around this Council know very well, it hurts when you have to reverse overfishing. It hurts when have to rebuild a stock. Ultimately that pain is most felt by our fishermen and our fishing industry, but it also creates work, allows the Council to have to stop the work on other things, and having witnessed that and knowing that, avoiding that is incredibly important. I think Caroline said it better than me when I tried

to ask the question awkwardly twice. I'm thinking from an analytical perspective like what are the bookends here? What are we actually looking at if we're picking a timeframe? What does that actually mean? And it sounds like we're not exactly sure. Mr. Enticknap took a stab at 5 years. Katrina and Dr. Langseth said something I think more around maybe 2 to 4. Anyway, I appreciate Caroline for stating that better and Miss Palmagiano for offering to take a look at that. I think that would be helpful to just get our brains around, hey, what are we actually looking at and how can we be most effective and efficient at bringing that information back? Yeah, I definitely don't want to create more work. The database is great. I think overall what the GMT laid out and the staff laid out is really high quality and a good path forward. I remain really worried about the ability to bring species back in. The Council history with this, which we looked at in 2025, I believe I stand to be corrected, but I think we as a Council have either never brought a species back into management or done it for one species, and that doesn't mean we can't in the future. Just noting that pathway is not one that has been well trodden before. So it's something that bears serious consideration.

Christa Svensson [00:17:17] All right, thank you. Heather Hall I saw your hand raised so I will call on you next and see where we're at.

Heather Hall [00:17:25] Thank you. I did have a couple other comments I wanted to add here too. First of all, Miss McKnight's mention of the spreadsheet that the old GMT used to use brought back memories, and so I just wanted to offer appreciation to the Science Center, the Northwest Fisheries Science Center, and our partners for developing the GEM product. That's really amazing. I also want to offer here here to Dr. Rumsey for the calling out the need to move beyond flat funding for PacFIN and RecFIN. That's a bandwagon that WDFW has been firmly planted on for a long time and will continue to be. And this is an excellent example of why it's foundational that those programs are foundational to the states and to the Council's ability to manage these fisheries, so thank you for that comment. And we could move to the motion unless anybody else has anything?

Christa Svensson [00:18:29] Well, I don't see any wild hands saying pick me. So if you wouldn't mind introducing your motion, perhaps that will get us with any further discussion needed to help us wrap up this agenda item.

Heather Hall [00:18:45] Okay, will do. I move the Council direct the GMT to work with the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission to develop an Ecosystem Component Species Mortality Report on PacFIN. The report would serve as a regular update on the status of EC species mortality that is available on the public platform. Schedule an inaugural report to the Council for March 2028, but don't set a reoccurring agenda item at this time. This does not preclude the GMT from providing more frequent updates to the Council as needed. The metrics for the inaugural report should be limited to total mortality, total landings, and ex-vessel revenue adjusted for inflation reported for each sector, as well as summed across all sectors. Total mortality and total landing should also be provided as a percentage change from the previous year and as a proportion relative to the average value in years before and after the species was declared an EC species as recommended by the GMT. For species formally requiring conservation and management, mortality should be provided as a percent of the most recent ACL. Given that the report will be a new product, the GMT has flexibility to update the report as needed between now and March 2028. In updating COP 9, refer to Attachment 1, Section 3 to incorporate EC Species Mortality Review into the regular review process of the GMT to capture their role of tracking catch and regularly reporting issues to the Council. To facilitate timely input to the Council, each biennium the GMT should review and discuss the EC Species Mortality Report well in advance of the March meeting to allow sufficient time to request an agenda item to be scheduled if there is something to flag for the Council.

Christa Svensson [00:20:57] All right, thank you. Is the motion as presented how you intended?

Heather Hall [00:21:04] Yes it is.

Christa Svensson [00:21:05] All right. Is there a second on the motion? Lynn Mattes. Okay, would you like to speak to your motion?

Heather Hall [00:21:15] Yes, thank you. Really appreciate the discussion leading up to the motion. I think this sets us up for an initial process and it addresses the Council's interest in a check-in on these EC species mortality. It gets things started, and I see it as flexible to evolution as the process goes forward. Again, I also wanted to note that the expectation here is that information can and should come to the Council more frequently as needed. I think Dr. Langseth was modest in his description of how the GMT tracks catch and data and communicates with the GAP pretty regularly. They do a phenomenal job of that in their role in the GMT, and so my expectation is that that will continue. This is a formal process but their informal process remains, and I think that to me is reassuring just to say that out loud. That's it. I'd be happy to take any questions.

Christa Svensson [00:22:42] Okay, so we will move into questions for the maker of the motion and then after that we'll move into discussion on the motion, but giving everyone a chance to ask any questions about the content or the intent of the motion. Dr. Rebecca Lent.

Rebecca Lent [00:22:58] Thank you Vice-Chair. Just a couple questions. The word 'formally' is in there. I don't know if that's 'former' like it used to be, or a 'formal' definition. Can we scroll up to that? I was a little confused. Last line of that. Scroll back up, please. Keep going. Must be the third paragraph. Up, Down. Somebody help me here. I saw it. Can we do a word search? F-O-R-M.

Jaime Diamond [00:23:52] Keep scrolling down.

Rebecca Lent [00:24:02] So it is species that used to require conservation and management. We're not talking about species that now need conservation management. That's clear. Thank you. May I ask a second question?

Christa Svensson [00:24:21] Yes.

Rebecca Lent [00:24:22] I just, and not to change this, but it is possible that ex-vessel revenues could go up and up and up and up and you're actually catching less fish. I assume that in looking at ex-vessel revenues the analysts will also look at landings because it's only price times volume, just to make sure we're not chasing after something that's purely an economic issue and not over-exploiting the fishery. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:24:54] Okay, thank you. I'm going to call on Pete Hassemer.

Pete Hassemer [00:25:00] Thank you Madam Vice-Chair. Just a question for clarification. I appreciate the motion Miss Hall. It tasks specifically the GMT with creating the report as they laid out, but in the GMT Report they talked about the role of other Council advisory bodies, the GAP, and the SSC. Does what you have here capture their thoughts about interaction in some way and not being prescriptive, but interacting as necessary with the GAP and the SSC also in generating their reports?

Heather Hall [00:25:45] Thank you for the question. Yeah, absolute flexibility to have those conversations with them.

Christa Svensson [00:25:54] Okay, are there any further questions? Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:26:00] Thank you Madam Vice-Chair. So Heather, this seems very directed at like getting us to that inaugural report. The protocol presented by staff kind of took a longer view in terms of either and whether it was every biennium or as the GMT actually recommended, a double biennium consideration for reporting. So is that just not addressed at this point in time essentially to thinking, let's get that inaugural report and then we can have a conversation about what does an ongoing agendized action look like in terms of scope and timing? Is that kind of where you're going with this particular motion?

Heather Hall [00:26:47] Yes, thank you for the question. Exactly. That's exactly right, and I really appreciated the GAPs input on this in particular in saying when there's an issue it should come to the Council. I imagine when we get to March 2028 and see the report there'll be thoughts about that. But I did like the concept of it not being prescriptive, especially right now.

Sharon Kiefer [00:27:16] Thank you for the clarity.

Christa Svensson [00:27:19] Thank you. Are there further questions for the maker of the motion? And not seeing any, I will ask if there's any further discussion on the motion? Lynn Mattes.

Lynn Mattes [00:27:36] Thank you Madam Vice-Chair. Appreciate Miss Hall drafting this motion and trying to capture it. While she was doing that I was just reminded that we, big skate, we have mated an EC species and within a year we found out that it was being targeted and we pulled it right back out. So we've got at least one but it ended up happening fairly quickly. Just also wanted to add that when in discussions about what to include in this report, there was also discussion about an effort factor, a CPUE or effort factor, but going across multiple sectors and trying to find one standardized unit was going to be extremely difficult. But I suspect or I hope that if the GMT sees catch in one sector or another, they'll maybe dig into it to see is it, you know, one boat hit 20 or 20 boats hit one to get 20 of whatever unit we're using. But I think this is a good start for us to keep an eye on these species to not let them go unmonitored without being too onerous on the team, the GMT, Council staff, and our Council floor time. So being very supportive of this.

Christa Svensson [00:28:55] Thank you. Further discussion? Pete Hassemer.

Pete Hassemer [00:29:01] Thank you, I just....I'll take a moment here to speak in support of the motion. I think it's well crafted with what respect to what the Council needs to do here with these ecosystem component species. The Council needs to be alerted when conditions change in some way. And as I think in public comment Mr. Enticknap pointed out, it's important to build this monitoring and review process and this presents a good start at that. My question to the GMT and to Miss Hall for clarification are in regards to the information that we're getting. Is it sufficient? And initially the staff proposal was there would be a GMT Report, a GAP Report, an SSC Report. Guess the way I look at this, and and I support the metrics that are in there right now, maybe it's a simplistic approach, but I see the GMT is the one who is telling us what's happening and the metrics about catch and some of the ex-vessel revenue, it is important. But the other parts of that, I think the GAP, if something is happening, the GAP is the one who can tell us why it's happening and alert to some of those things. And I think the SSC role here could be to alert us if there is an issue that's arising with respect to impacts to the particular species. So I think it's important to have all three of those that said not be prescriptive and force it, but in this inaugural report make sure they talk to one another. You know a very simple example, and I didn't try to do any doom scrolling or create these bad scenarios, but for a species if catch goes from 0.6 to 1.6 metric tons in a year or at some time, that's a 167% increase, but is it meaningful? Why did it happen? The other thing is lightning strikes that may occur out there so we can highlight those so we're not creating situations chasing down a problem when it doesn't exist so we get....when this comes to the Council we have a clear understanding why. The other part is that, a lot of the terminology that's been

going on, I always say words are important when something is flagged as a problem then we need to do this. What I anticipate from this report is the GMT Report or this report alerting the Council that here's something you should look at. The Council is the one who determines then do we need go through all of these other processes? Or, I think as Miss Mattes said, sometimes we could just pull it out. What's the appropriate response to the Council to what's happening there if it's something that requires our attention? This is inaugural so we're going to have to learn from that. As people pointed out, the advantage we have is with this PacFIN and our reporting methods we have continuous monitoring. And so the meeting schedule, we don't have to schedule separate GMT or various meetings to address this, it comes to our attention. So the bottom line is, this I think is the right approach at this time for the Council to take with this to make sure we're doing our best to monitor and track what's happening with the EC species as we move forward. So thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:33:32] All right, thank you. Further discussion? Corey Riding.

Corey Ridings [00:33:38] Thanks Miss Vice. I actually have a, it's a discussion slash question, but just thinking about the motion before us, and maybe this is for Heather. But just going back to the GMT Report and their anticipation that the first iteration will include a more detailed exploration of thresholds that the Council can then think and consider and move through the advisory bodies. I think your motion mentioned metrics. So was your intention to also include sort of these other items, including the thresholds that were mentioned in the GMT Report?

Heather Hall [00:34:15] Thank you. Yeah, I think that would be excellent to come back in March 2028 with some ideas about that, but not setting them. Yeah, thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:34:27] All right. Further discussion? Okay, not seeing any hands I will call for the question. All those in favor say "Aye".

Council [00:34:39] Aye.

Christa Svensson [00:34:40] Any opposed? Any abstentions? Then the motion carries. With that, I will just briefly look around in case somebody has an additional motion or comments. And in not seeing any, I will turn to our staff officer and see if we are where we need to be to close this item?

Katrina Bernaus [00:35:08] Thank you Miss Vice-Chair. The Council has adopted a comprehensive motion that both establishes a process for the Council to continue to look back at EC species, as well as provided guidance that the GMT and GAP can use or included in your adopted motion, not just written guidance that we can utilize to develop that inaugural report and bring that back to you in March of 2028. So thank you. I think you have completed your action here.

Christa Svensson [00:35:39] Thank you. And thanks to everyone for the robust discussion and thoughtful questions. With that I will hand control of the gavel over to our Chair, Pete Hassemer.

Pete Hassemer [00:35:51] All right, thank you for the good work on that Madam Vice-Chair.

2. Moving Trawl Gear Exempted Fishing Permit into Regulations; Updating Declaration Requirements; Removing Duplicative Recreational Regulations – Todd Phillips

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] That completes our reports, public comment, takes us to Council action. And it is on the screen, adopting any final preferred alternatives for each action and then adopting, as necessary, any FMP amendment language. Who needs, wants to start discussion on this item? Lynn Mattes.

Lynn Mattes [00:00:31] Thank you Chair. Appreciate all the work that's gone into this, Council staff, GMT, NMFS staff, et cetera. And who knew that the trawl EFP piece would be the easy part of this agenda item. I Appreciate that we've gotten to a place where we can move this forward. As somebody who my first project was an EFP my first week at ODFW And I celebrated with a bottle of sparkling apple cider 10 years later when we got the rule in place, so I sympathize there. I appreciate that we're getting this going. I think it's, through questions and reports already, I think it's clear that the rec waste piece may not be ready to go forward, but I hope we can continue to move the other pieces, the Trawl Gear EFP forward. I think we do need to decouple these at this time. That was the goal all along, is that we were adding this rider to the EFP but only if it wouldn't slow it down and I think we're making progress. Really appreciate the continued dialogue with our enforcement bodies and our federal colleagues. I just don't think we're quite there yet. Who would have thought what should be a simple thing is not because there's nuance and how each state deals with things is slightly different. So I appreciate the work. I think we need to have a little divorce here on these agenda items, which hopefully will be in the motion coming shortly. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:02:05] Thank you Lynn. Other discussion? Caroline McKnight.

Caroline McKnight [00:02:11] Thank you. Yeah, I will echo what Miss Mattes said. And I do just want to take a moment to acknowledge Lori, who's in the theater today, and Susan and all the participants of this EFP. A 10-year EFP is I don't think when any of this started out thinking that's what it would take but it did. And so I just think this is a moment of celebration that we've got over the hurdle. And just a reminder that Lori's still not done. There's still more work to be done in the south. We continue to appreciate her management of that portion of the EFP. But yeah, just very supportive of moving into final action for Action Item 1 and 2. On the Action Item 3 on the waste, I will say that I think that a pause at this moment is the most prudent way forward. I was a little surprised to see in the staff report there was mention of San Diego area processors interested in this, which is quite frankly the first that I'd heard of it. And it concerns me that perhaps there is some misinterpretation or there's some scope creep that is potentially happening that was not intended or didn't necessarily fit the original request as we have put it forward. So I think pausing and making sure that we're all clear on what the needs are and addressing individual state rules is important at this point. So thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:03:33] Thank you. Other discussion? Heather Hall.

Heather Hall [00:03:41] I do have a motion that's ready if there's no further discussion.

Pete Hassemer [00:03:46] I haven't seen any hands so let's go ahead with your motion.

Heather Hall [00:03:49] Okay. I move the Council adopt the recommendations of the GMT as presented in H.2.a, Supplemental GMT Report 1, September 2026.

Pete Hassemer [00:04:08] Thank you. What's on the screen looks accurate and complete. Is that correct?

Heather Hall [00:04:11] Yes, it does.

Pete Hassemer [00:04:11] Thank you. Is there a second to the motion? Seconded by Lynn Mattes. Please speak to your motion.

Heather Hall [00:04:17] Yes, this motion adopts the PPA as FPA for Action 1 and 2 but not Action 3. So this adopts the Options 1 and 2 under Action Item 1 and Action 2, the at-sea declarations, but again, does not move forward Action 3, the recreational fish waste sale.

Pete Hassemer [00:04:45] Thank you. Any questions for clarification on the motion? Seeing no questions, any discussion on the motion? No discussion then I will call the question. All those in favor say "Aye".

Council [00:05:02] Aye.

Pete Hassemer [00:05:05] Opposed? Abstentions? The motion passes unanimously. Thank you Heather. And there's another piece to this. Or I'm sorry, oh, was the FMP language included in there?

Heather Hall [00:05:28] Yeah, Yes, excuse me. I probably should have added that to this. Recommends the adoption of the proposed FMP amendment language implementing Actions 1 and 2, but removes the FMP amendment specific to the recreational fish waste issue. Yeah, thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:05:47] All right, thank you. So with that, Todd, what else?

Todd Phillips [00:05:53] Thank you Mr. Chair. Yes, so as you've just noted here you have adopted final FPA for Actions 1, Options 1 and Option 2. You have adopted Alternative 1 for Action Number 2. And have essentially paused work on Action Number 3 until a later date. With this particular, your motion, you did adopt FMP changes except to the changes that would be under 6.6.2, which refers to the recreational fishery in the FMP. So I would say you have completed your agenda item.

Pete Hassemer [00:06:32] All right, look around and see if there's any other discussion necessary here on this? Heather Hall.

Heather Hall [00:06:40] Thank you Chair. And maybe another thing that just to add for the benefit of the Council that it evolved in some of our conversations on the side about this and discussion. Everybody knows the intent is to continue working on this. There's commitment from NMFS and the other states to do that and we really appreciate it. As we were talking our expectation would be that we could bring something back in March, perhaps then that could fold into rulemaking if there's a clear path forward at that time. So just wanted to flag that that's how we're thinking about the path forward. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:07:19] All right. Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:07:21] Thank you Mr. Chairman. And Todd, just for clarity, you know in the FMP amendment you provided not only the text for the revisions to reflect Action 1 and 2, but then you had what I would consider updates. I'm assuming you don't need a motion to deal with that kind of stuff? Just helping me understand the process.

Todd Phillips [00:07:40] Through the Chair, yes Miss Kiefer. So under the motion that was made, it would adopt those updates as they were mentioned in the GMT Report Number 1.

Sharon Kiefer [00:07:53] Just to clarify, that GMT Report said specifically to reflect Actions 1 and 3, and so I read that as to not having covered the Chapter 3 updates. But they're very technical, just technical updates in Chapter 3, so I'm just assuming that's the kind of thing we just do.

Todd Phillips [00:08:14] To a certain extent, oh excuse me, through the Chair. To a certainly extent, yes Miss Kiefer we do do that. If a motion would make the Council feel more comfortable with those updates then perhaps it should be considered.

Sharon Kiefer [00:08:32] I guess to me they just look like technical stuff and I'm just checking on how we do things.

Pete Hassemer [00:08:40] And if necessary we could check with the maker of the motion here, but I believe that intent was captured. Is that correct?

Heather Hall [00:08:49] Yes, it is. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:08:51] Great, thank you. So if there's nothing else, excellent work on Action Items 1 and 2, represents a long time series of work. And something will continue on Action Item 3. With that, we'll close out this agenda item.

3. Inseason Management – Todd Phillips

Pete Hassemer [00:00:00] That completes all our reports, public comment, and takes us to Council action. Consider the catch projections, adopt any inseason adjustments as appropriate, and the corrections to the 2027-28 harvest specifications. Who would like to start the discussion here? Lynn Mattes.

Lynn Mattes [00:00:27] Thank you Chair. I was waiting to see if anybody else had anything. I suspect it's lunch hour and folks want to get on with it. I do have a motion when it's time and I think that will get us moving.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:41] Let's go ahead and hear your motion.

Lynn Mattes [00:00:44] Tower when....if you could bring up the motion. Thank you. I move the Council adopt the corrected 2027-28 harvest specifications for the Oregon/Washington stock of vermilion rockfish and the corresponding Shelf Rockfish Complex north of 40°10' harvest specification values as detailed in Table 1 of Agenda Item H.3, Attachment 1, September 2026.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:13] Thank you. What's on the screen looks accurate and complete? Is that correct?

Lynn Mattes [00:01:18] Yes sir, it does.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:19] Is there a second to the motion? Seconded by Heather Hall. Please speak to your motion.

Lynn Mattes [00:01:24] Thank you Chair Hassemer. Neither the GMT nor the GAP had any recommendations for inseason changes. This seemed to be the only action that needed a motion. It was recommended or supported, endorsed by the SSC and recommended by the GMT, so it seems the right way to move forward. While it may seem very minor, it's important that we are keeping good track of our numbers. Thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:01:50] Thank you. Any questions regarding the motion? Discussion on the motion? Seeing none I'll call the question. All those in favor say "Aye".

Council [00:02:03] Aye.

Pete Hassemer [00:02:05] Opposed? Abstentions? The motion passes unanimously. Thank you Lynn. Other items to take up before I check with Mr. Phillips? Not seeing any hands, Todd, how are we doing?

Todd Phillips [00:02:25] Yes, thank you Mr. Chair. Yes, the Council has adopted the technical correction for 2027-28 for the Oregon stock, Oregon/Washington stock of vermilion rockfish, which was endorsed by the SSC. And as Miss Mattes noted, the GMT also, what's the word I'm looking for, moved that one forward as for your consideration as well. So I would say you have addressed all the tasks and have addressed the action under this particular item and are complete.

Pete Hassemer [00:02:57] All right, thank you very much. With that then let's adjourn for lunch, close this out.

I. Highly Migratory Species Management

1. Special Project 1: If, Then Management Measures – Gilly Lyons, Kerry Griffin

Christa Svensson [00:00:00] I don't see anyone for public comment, which would move us into Council discussion and potential action should we have action to take. Kerry did I see your hand come up?

Kerry Griffin [00:00:17] Yes you did. Thank you Vice-Chair. Just a couple of things I wanted to mention before the Council launches into discussion. First of all, I wanted to clarify, if I didn't make it clear before, that in that Attachment 1 we have a purpose and need and it was in one of my slides. Just to be clear, that purpose and need doesn't necessarily mean we're launching into our own NEPA process here. That is a....you should consider that as a internal sort of Council purpose and need. Maybe more of our like, what is our goal object and objective out of this? What do we want out of this? So I just wanted to clarify we're not you know trying to launch a new NEPA process here, and really the same thing goes with the range of alternatives. Again, like that's the Council's options that we're considering right now doesn't necessarily mean we're going down a NEPA path. Also, Jessi was able to very quickly grab some information in response to, I think, Corey's question on the sort of other gear types that are....that land Pacific bluefin and....oh shoot there it is. Most of the other gear types are hook-and-line. Oh shoot, where did it go? The vast majority is hook-and-line. I do know that much. I lost your message here Jessi. I don't know which string it's in. And while she's walking up here I'll also note...no, come on up....that there is some bycatch. And recall a couple of years ago in September and November the Council was asking about the incidental landings in the California small-mesh drift gillnet fishery because there were some, you know, there are some bluefin landings there and there was discussion of should we increase the limit because it's at 10 fish right now, and the conclusion was not to take action. It didn't seem like....well the Council decided not to do it but....because there weren't.....didn't seem to be a whole lot of incidental landings there, but that is one of the sources of incidental for bluefin.

Jessi Waller [00:02:44] Vice-Chair, yes thank you. Based on my quick query it looks like, and did some cross-confirming with the PEIS which is linked to in your materials which does have a breakdown of 2019 to 2023 activity that you can see by purse seine, hook-and-line, and other gear types. But looking at a more recent 5-year period from 2021 to 2026 to date, it's somewhere between 92 to 179 hook-and-line vessels caught bluefin. So in terms of the number, which aligns with the ranges seen in the PEIS from 2019 to 2023, and that's Section 3.3, yeah. There's a few.... there's like three different tables to look at in the PEIS.

Kerry Griffin [00:03:40] Thank you Jessi. And then just one more clarification I wanted to make. Somewhere in the discussion I thought I heard, maybe it was Miss Kiefer say that NMFS has already implemented the 27-28 harvest specifications. I'm not sure if I heard that right, but just to be clear, they haven't yet. We're in the middle of the 25-26 cycle and then we'll get closer to the New Year's when they would due to 27-28. So I probably misheard you, but I just wanted to clarify that it hasn't happened yet. Yeah, so thank you. I just wanted to voice those before the Council goes into discussion.

Christa Svensson [00:04:21] Thank you. I see a hand up, so before we get there we'll take the question from Rebecca Lent.

Rebecca Lent [00:04:28] Thank you Madam Vice-Chair, and thank you so much Kerry and your whole team over there for helping us out. I am probably rusty on my NEPA skills, but I've heard several times the current programmatic environmental assessment is broad enough in its range of alternatives to include a change in the trip limits within the range of options that we're looking at now. We still have

to do an EA. Maybe a supplemental EA or something like that. Would we still need as much work or less work. What does that actually mean? Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:05:09] Josh Lindsay.

Josh Lindsay [00:05:12] Thank you Miss Vice-Chair. Thank you for the question Miss Lent. Yeah, our understanding at the moment is the focus of the EA is that overall limit that you were asking about with your previous question. So, how then we manage the landings of that underneath that's not really the focus of the environmental assessment, therefore that's why we view the existing sort of proposals as falling within the scope of the existing EA. Obviously we need to continue to evaluate that if and how this conversation continues and we could make a different decision at that point in time, but at the moment we feel comfortable that what has been discussed would fall under that existing NEPA analysis. It appears I was not clear.

Christa Svensson [00:05:56] Do you have a follow-on question there?

Rebecca Lent [00:06:05] Can I just confirm then we do have to do a new EA if we change the trip limits from what they are now?

Josh Lindsay [00:06:15] Through the Vice-Chair, no, barring any new information that would change that.

Christa Svensson [00:06:29] Okay, any further clarifying questions to our Council tasks and any of the information that's been brought forward by Council staff? And not seeing any, we will move into general discussion and any motions or other items that we need to come to agreement on or a vote on. Jaime Diamond.

Jaime Diamond [00:07:00] Thank you. I will just kind of circle back and, you know what we just heard from the advisory bodies, this need to further dive deeper into this where they can be together and have better communication amongst themselves and across the AB's and really take some time on this. I appreciate their feedback. It was kind of also them stating, you know, they didn't have the opportunity to talk out to discuss say the CDFW Report letter that was in there because they met so far in advance. And so just appreciate what was done in recognition that this was kind of.....it seems like things felt a little off on this one for some reason. I will say I do have a motion when it's time, but not to stop any discussion. So thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:08:01] Okay. No, I appreciate that. Thank you. I will look around and see if there are hands. I see Pete Hassemer and then Rebecca Lent.

Pete Hassemer [00:08:12] Thank you very much. This was blurry and maybe got blurrier. I hope my thoughts are consistent with Miss Diamond there. I heard the advisory.....the management team and the advisory subpanel talk about needing some more time to look at this. Our task was adopt a purpose and need. I see the California Department of Fish and Wildlife letter. I heard what Mr. Griffin said about, well you know, it's more internal. As I look at the purpose and need, what we're trying to do is have a mechanism to increase trip limits should we need that at some time. We've got plenty of things to reduce them and I'm confident, you now, those things can happen. So the question, the management team didn't have sufficient time to look at Option 2, sort of what green light options there were, and they expressed they could come back in November to do that. I think the advisory subpanel needed to do that too. So I guess it's, we need to just take our time and get prepared to do what we need to do later, at some later time. Thanks.

Christa Svensson [00:09:44] Okay, thank you. Rebecca Lent and then Briana Braby.

Rebecca Lent [00:09:50] Thank you Vice-Chair. I just want to note, first of all, that the table that you had in your PowerPoint Kerry showed an incredible variation year to year all over the place in terms of trip limit attainment as well as overall quota attainment. This is a fishery with a lot of variability. Could be the resource, could be the market, could be a lot of things, so we really need flexibility in managing it as we go. I also noted that in the overview, the national overview of if-then measures, there are three cases where there are if-then measures that allow adjustments both up and down, two of them in the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and one of them, interestingly enough, is the HMS bluefin tuna, Atlantic HMS bluefin tuna fishery, the general category, which has a limit of one or two fish. They can go up or down depending on how close they're getting to the quota from ICAT in that sense. So there's a little inspiration there, but the message that we're getting from our advisory bodies is they would like to continue discussing this and have an opportunity in-person, which they didn't have in September. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:11:05] Thank you. Briana Braby.

Briana Brady [00:11:09] Thanks Miss Vice-Chair. And thank you so much for the remarks from Miss Diamond and Mr. Hassemer. I would just say that fish and wildlife thinks that the work here under this specific agenda item is actually complete. And even if the ABs noted that November would be ideal, I also heard the advisory subpanel say that this could just simply be a useful tool for the future. And because the Council could decide to take up trip limits again once the quota for the U.S. actually increases, so currently larger trip limits could potentially push us over the quota, which would have international implications. The current trip limit allows more opportunity for trips. It seems the market is actually the constraining factor, not the trip limit and the quota at this time. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:12:10] Thank you. Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:12:15] Thanks Miss Vice. This has been a lot in this agenda item so just thanks especially to staff for helping us get our heads around it. I am I think of the mind of the CDFW Report here. I do share concerns about being conservative on harvest. Hearing that there is this concern, we heard Marcus talk about it, And I've heard a lot from others too about being.....showing the international scheme, the international decisions being made that we can and want to harvest our bluefin. I think we are on the road to doing that. I think we've done it before as in 2017 when we over-harvested, and with the numbers in the CDF and W Report we're on our way there this year. I share concerns if we're getting really close and we're going to be running closer to that line about making sure there's fish for the hook-and-line vessels, it sounds like the number of fish is an order of magnitude less than the purse seine, but I....you know it's a different fishery, there's different value for those fish. That fishery supports different people and I want to make sure that we are not accidentally curbing that and keeping it fair between those fisheries. I think the decision that was made in 2024, I don't see any evidence of that limiting harvest. I think Briana just talked about that a little. I think that the design scheme we created then was thoughtful. I've been flashbacking to that for the last week preparing for this and thinking about, you know, that took into account a lot of what the HMSAS had to say, what public comment had to about that. Fundamentally this feels like we're spending and potentially going to spend more quite a bit of time and energy on something that really isn't a problem right now. And the fact that we do this every two years, I think, gives us an opportunity to revisit this in the future, which we did hear from our ABs and I've heard echoed around the floor that our advisory bodies really need to spend some more time on this. I think complex and nuanced was in one of the reports and that's not something that's easy, so I think it's important that everyone has a chance to weigh-in and think about this. And I also heard about the importance of data. The current 2024 schemes only been in place for less than two years, so getting more information about that and being able to readdress that down the road in 2 or 4

years from now seems to make more sense to me. I will echo what Pete said. I agree with him on that. And the option B, or what's now in my head as triggered down the middle, I think that does deserve consideration. I think is a good idea. I don't think we need to do that right now or in November. I think that can wait at least two more years.

Christa Svensson [00:15:28] Okay, thank you. Are there other comments? Thoughts? Not seeing any, I know Jaime you said you had a motion so I will see if you still have a motion? And if you do then we can maybe use that to discuss the direction that we're going and hopefully either get to consensus or get a vote in a direction.

Jaime Diamond [00:15:57] Wonderful. Yes, please. Thank you gentlemen. Okay, I move that Council staff work with NMFS and states to further develop the trip limit options in Agenda Item H.1, Attachment 1 for Council consideration at the November meeting taking into account AB reports and state reports from the September meeting.

Christa Svensson [00:16:23] Thank you. Is the language in your motion as seen accurate and correct?

Jaime Diamond [00:16:31] So I will say it is, but I just want to pause real quick because I put in the part with NMFS and states to be more inclusive and not to seem as I was excluding participation by states in that and I'm not trying to force or tell states to do something. So I just want to just do a quick check if that is appropriate or not? I don't want it to be seen as forcing an agency to do, like I'm not commanding it, I just don't want it to also exclude if that's part of the normal process there.

Christa Svensson [00:17:17] Well, I don't know in terms of I don't know how much research you've done with the states or not. I do know that we have the ability to take amendments should states feel that that is not appropriate. And I think in terms of you're speaking to the flexibility of it's not a must, that does provide the flexibility should they not wish to make an amendment and also not wish to be a part of this process.

Jaime Diamond [00:17:54] Okay, then yes it is accurate and complete.

Christa Svensson [00:17:56] Okay. Is there a second for the motion? Rebecca Lent. I'm going to ask if there are any questions for the maker of the motion or, well before we do that, maybe if you would like to speak to your motion then we can take any questions.

Jaime Diamond [00:18:18] Yes, okay. I think we got this ball rolling in April to move it forward, but April meetings don't have HMS explicitly on the agenda. The AS wasn't present to discuss it with each other and the MT and then it got put here which I think while being put into HMS I think was appropriate, it kind of took folks off their heels a little....put them on their heels a little bit not expecting it, which is where I think a lot of kind of the consternation that I've heard came from. So I want to listen to our ABs and the state report. And I'm thinking of all these things and I think if we put it back to November we can get somewhere. Also, moving this to November and asking the Executive Director to allocate staff to put a bit more work into it based on that feedback should help inform and direct any work we do in November. We also heard the HMSMT say they really didn't have time to look into green light much deeper. And so we know red light exists. We are.....we do a lot of red light but green light and kind of explicitly putting that out there I believe is important. But also I feel like it's listening to the, or having read the CDFW Report and listening to Miss Brady's comments, we can go through this in November and we can have it as a tool in the toolbox, not necessarily....if it's not the right time it doesn't have to get turned on right then. We could take this tool then and utilize it in the next go-round, but I think it's important that we look to a time when we will need that type of flexibility instead of waiting til we are at that point and we're constrained and then we don't have the time to do it. So

being proactive just like what Spex Flex, that kind of same mentality of we may not need it right now but we need this tool in the future I think is important. And then I also think this will give....I heard some questions about providing more information on non-purse seine vessels, the type of gear, vessels and their catch, that's something that could come out in November. And I'll stop right there and allow some discussion, but those are just a few of my kind of quick things I'm throwing out there. Thanks.

Christa Svensson [00:20:59] Okay, thank you. Are there questions for the maker of the motion? Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:21:05] Thank you. And you did provide some clarity to one of my questions in that you are.....there is a bifurcation between developing the tool and taking action, so you already explained that. My other question was my interpretation is the phrase, "taking into account AB reports" is not exclusive to what we heard today. So there's still that....it still provides for a potential expectation of additional AB reports that we may be receiving in November, giving that we heard from both of the bodies a strong desire to do a little more noodling on this and provide more information, presumably via their AB reports, at the November Council meeting. So I guess.....so I'm reading that as there is that opportunity. Your reference to AB reports is not exclusive to the reports we got today.

Jaime Diamond [00:22:11] Unfortunately, that is what I wrote from the September meeting. But I think that's to get us to November, and then once we are in November then we can take into account whatever comes out of November. But we can't really.....yeah.

Sharon Kiefer [00:22:33] Yeah, I guess I'm just trying to synchronize the fact that I think the AB felt that they had, would be coming forward with information very critical to further develop the options, and so I'm kind of wondering how cart horse type thing but....

Jaime Diamond [00:23:01] Through the Vice-Chair,.

Christa Svensson [00:23:04] Jaime.

Jaime Diamond [00:23:04] Vice-Co-Chair. So I believe typically when we have an agenda item for something in a future meeting, we get to that meeting, staff, and NMFS, and maybe states if they so choose, have worked on some things in the background, it goes to the ABs, they then provide their input, more work gets done, I'm thinking groundfish, right? And then it gets refined and then they provide their preferred, whether it's an alternative or whatever their suggestions are, for us to then work from. So that's kind of the typical flow is that that would come in in November and then the MT and AB would work out anything they see between now and November work that is done.

Christa Svensson [00:24:07] Okay.

Kelly Ames [00:24:13] Thank you Vice-Chair Svensson. Maybe I'll ask it more directly as a question to Miss Diamond. As I understand the intent of your motion, it would be that these groups and the consideration of what has been presented to us at the September meeting would be used to prepare the briefing book materials. And then those groups and the public would comment on those briefing book materials, potentially further shaping the alternatives or the options. Is that the intent here?

Jaime Diamond [00:24:47] Thank you for finding my words for me. Yes Miss Ames. That is the intent.

Christa Svensson [00:24:56] Thank you. Justin Ainsworth.

Justin Ainsworth [00:25:01] Thank you Vice-Chair. I guess my question is just an observation on the

motion itself on the agenda item letter numbering of each one. I believe that should be I.1?

Jaime Diamond [00:25:15] Oh, yep, I.1, not H.1. I need to.....can I make the amendment?

Christa Svensson [00:25:26] You cannot make the amendment, but somebody would be not remiss, unless it's a technical in which case we're all saying technical. We will ask our....

Jaime Diamond [00:25:39] Thank you.....

Christa Svensson [00:25:39] Powers that be to make that correct. Thank you for the catch. Briana Braby.

Briana Brady [00:25:49] Thank you Miss Vice-Chair. Miss Diamond, can you please help me understand why the Council staff is being asked to do this? It's my understanding that the HMSMT typically does this type of work.

Jaime Diamond [00:26:06] So I suppose that I put Council staff. They...my understanding is I.....my understanding is it goes to staff, staff works with the appropriate ABs is what, is how that would go. So if I need to explicitly say staff work with, I mean I think, well, I apologize, my thought was the ABs would be working on this as.....I mean, yeah, I guess the normal course of things is the staff then works with the ABs to do whatever needs to be done. So I'm not trying to be too prescriptive. I'm trying to be a little more broad in what I'm doing, what I'm suggesting.

Christa Svensson [00:27:01] Thank you. I will look to our Council staff. Kerry.

Kerry Griffin [00:27:04] Thank you. I'll see if I can add a little clarity here and then maybe Miss Ames would like to follow-up. The process that you've described and then Kelly also described is something that we do pretty regularly. Typically, yeah, the management teams often do this sort of analysis. In this case, If we wanted to have them work on it in an open session and an open AB meeting, we don't have time to arrange that just due to Federal Register Notices and things like that. A lot of the time, especially when the Council works with NMFS and other partners, especially with NMFS, you know we have this regional operating agreement that basically says one or the other will take the lead. You know we'll sort of figure out who would be best and who, you know who has the capacity and expertise as needed. And so I see this as sort of a, you know, in general as staff took the lead in putting together that attachment that's in the briefing book and reached out to help for help as needed and expertise and I think the process that could happen.....I think the process you described could happen while leading up to November where I could take the lead and work with our staff and reach out to NMFS staff and states as needed to, you know, help put together the next version of this attachment for the advanced briefing book, and then as you said then when the advisory bodies arrive in, you know, for the November meeting they're meeting for three days and so hopefully that would provide some opportunity for them to maybe, you know, do some even deeper dive, deep evaluation, analysis of, you know, the options that are before them and then write a report, supplemental report for the Council to consider. So this is something we do fairly regularly. Ideally, especially if this were a bigger thing like a FMP amendment or a Harvest Control Rule, you want the management team in the mix from the beginning for sure, that's ideal. But I think the way that you've described it with staff producing something in advance and then the management team and the other advisory bodies taking it up in November could work. And Kelly will correct me if I said the wrong thing there, but that's how I'm seeing it could work.

Jaime Diamond [00:29:36] Thank you. And also recognizing that it's state representatives and NMFS representatives on the MT that was part of that Council staff work with NMFS and states is kind of

worked into that. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:29:58] Okay, any further questions for the maker of the motion? Rebecca Lent.

Rebecca Lent [00:00:00] Thank you. Are we on questions about the...okay, then I'll wait.

Christa Svensson [00:00:06] Okay, any other questions? Pete Hassemer.

Pete Hassemer [00:00:12] Excuse me, just to be clear, further develop the trip limit options in Agenda Item 1. There are really 4 status quo....I guess I'm trying to focus on what further development is needed, because not necessarily on 1. The Pedal to the Floor was the one that was analyzed in the existing PEA. What's new is the Run Down the Middle, which we're using now already, but adding in Green Lights. And it's really, is it focused on adding in some green light options and not so much re-analyzing all the others or?

Jaime Diamond [00:01:10] Correct. Thank you. So the thing that is the new piece of this is Green Light and that concept in here, and that is what the HMSMT mentioned that they did not have enough time to really review and to dig into. And those are the very things that I believe that HMSAS is saying they want more time as well to look into. So to have them fleshed out a little more and then work with them in November to then come up with options for the Council to either say yes, say no, say yes but shelf, do something with then. I'm just trying to help create this tool for use, for potential use if that's where we end up at down the line. This is not in any way to try and say we are doing this and this is what it is. This is just let's take, let's look at this.

Pete Hassemer [00:02:09] Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:02:13] Thank you. Further questions? Okay not seeing any, now we are at discussion. And Rebecca, since you had your hand up initially I will start with you just to hopefully get things and keep things moving.

Rebecca Lent [00:02:28] Thank you. Thank you Vice-Chair, and thank you for the proposal. I will support this motion for all of the reasons I've already discussed about giving this fishery an opportunity to ensure we safely, with precaution, approach the full quota or as close as we can get. There's so much variability in this fishery. We may get some additional quota down the line because this stock is doing well. In addition to good shape of the stock, we've also got even better management because there's been an agreement reached on bluefin tuna that's pan-Pacific, it's quite strong. I also believe that our advisory bodies have said, we want to keep talking about this. They said that in April. They said that in June. And they said it again in September. Why would we close the door on the opportunity to at least explore it? They also, or the advisory subcommittee mentioned....the advisory subpanel, they also mentioned that they hadn't had a chance to fully read or react to the document from CDFW. That document has a lot of really good information. It has a lots of good analyses, consideration, data up to August 30th, 2026. I'm not sure we have that in the public domain yet. It's great. The only problem is it's only been developed in an office in CDFW. It was only shared with the Council the night before. It would be great to have a fulsome discussion with all of our stakeholders of that very rich information and analysis in that document. So I hope that that opportunity will still be possible when the advisory bodies meet in November. Thank you Chair, Vice-Chair.

Christa Svensson [00:04:28] Thank you. Briana Braby.

Briana Brady [00:04:33] Thanks Miss Vice-Chair. I just wanted to say that I understand why this motion is out there but that I cannot support it at this time, given the many workload concerns we have

and the reasons I stated earlier.

Christa Svensson [00:04:49] Thank you for sharing. Are there others who want to weigh-in? Pete Hassemer.

Pete Hassemer [00:05:03] Thank you Madam Vice-Chair. I'll speak in favor of the motion because as I think of this and I heard some of the discussion, we have mechanisms in place to set trip limits already. I mean that's been discussed. It's in the document. I think we're operating under that Run Down the Middle and it was shown there what happens and I wouldn't expect us right now to change or develop something different. I think what we're looking at and thinking about this, that's stemming from the special projects we had and looking at if-then statements more broadly, is should we get to a condition late in the year for whatever circumstances, there's a lot of quota remaining that has been uncaught or unlanded, is there an opportunity to incentivize or target or somehow take more of that out of the water than being restricted by the existing trip limits with zero opportunity to increase them, which we have now? And so that was my question about which options are we looking at? We have a good set in place. I am hesitant to ask about what types of hard stops, if that would be part of the analysis, because should we be running into a situation where we're getting close to the quota, I believe there are things in place to close the fishery, and we would not do that. And so we're not looking at....you know, we avoided the pedal to the metal at the start of the season. We took the Middle of the Road, but what I don't....so I have a good assumption maybe how we would start the next biannual season under what type of regime and trip limits. What I don't know is whether we'll be under El Nino, La Nina. I tried to do the research on what the no child condition is and I can't pronounce that. I don't know how many vessels will participate. I don't know how catch will accrue. I think we need to have the opportunity in our toolbox that we get to a point in the season where there is opportunity. And I heard the AS say there are people who could utilize that and catch more fish, so we ought to have that tool in the toolbox. And I want to explore that and look at some further development of that option, what it might look like and be ready to use it. So I'm speaking in favor of this. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:08:15] Thank you for sharing. Corey Riding.

Corey Ridings [00:08:20] Thanks Miss Vice. Thanks Jaime for this motion. I will not be voting for it. I spoke to the reason, most of the reasons why before. I actually don't agree with what the maker of the motion, Miss Lent, or Mr. Hassemer just said. I just think it's the wrong time. We just put into place initial trip limits that are the highest they've ever been and we have almost no data about that. As Mr. Hassemer just pointed out that we're dealing with a time of change. We have climate change. We have an El Nino that's coming down. Kudos to the GAP Report earlier for how well they described the changes that they've been seeing on the water as part of groundfish inseason. That was really interesting and really drove home for me that there's a lot unexpected happening out in the ocean right now. The ability to catch more fish actually exists now so people are going out, they're catching fish, and there's actually no limits in place until we are getting to a point where there might be a conservation concern. And we also have other fisheries that depend on this resource. There's also consequences for going over, which is not something we've seen in recent years, but happened in 2017, which is not that long ago, especially for a fishery that has a lot of variability, which I think we saw in what Mr. Griffin shared with us. So, we just put in a new system. I really don't think it's worth the Council time and energy, the state, federal time it would take to do the work and go through this again to look at a potentially better but slightly modified option that we're working with right now, especially when we have the ability to do it again in a relatively short amount of time and on a biannual basis. So, thanks again to the maker of the motion. I think this has been a good discussion.

Christa Svensson [00:10:44] Thank you for sharing. Anybody else? Yes, Josh Lindsay.

Josh Lindsay [00:10:52] Thank you Miss Vice-Chair. Recognizing the motion doesn't obligate a specific action in the future I do intend to support the motion, I guess with a couple of cautions that I will mention. That is not....the support of the motion is not a support that I think the agency yet believes that higher trip limits are necessary. It also comes with a note that this fall period is a period of high, heavy workload for our HMS staff, although we will attempt to assist to the degree we can with future analysis to, you know, support a November discussion on this. I think there is still confusion from our end of what that analysis may look like and, you know, sort of what benefit any future analysis will bring to this discussion given some of the limited information that we have as well as some of the talking points others have provided of, you know, maybe we're not actually reaching trip limits at the moment and some of the market conditions. However, as I stated before, I'll support I guess a cautious support of continued conversation on this topic. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:12:06] Thank you, and thank you for sharing. Justin Ainsworth.

Justin Ainsworth [00:12:12] Thank you Vice-Chair. Yeah, I understand the interest of, you know, being able to put in some Green Light into our toolbox, but I also, you now, and hearing the concerns for workload from both CDF and W and from NMFS, and I feel like, you know, supporting this motion, which I will, you know doesn't obligate to use, you know to borrow Josh's term there, us to approve this all, you know, in November. But it gives us the opportunity to have some analysis. It gives us more opportunity for our advisory bodies to weigh-in. I feel that would allow for a more informed decision on moving forward. So I will be supporting the motion.

Christa Svensson [00:12:59] Thank you for sharing. Jeff Lackey.

Jeff Lackey [00:13:03] I'll be supporting the motion. And generally I'm in favor of opportunity. And this next statement may be my shortcoming, but come November I'd like to have a little better sense quantitatively and qualitatively what problem we're trying to solve. Thanks.

Christa Svensson [00:13:21] Thank you. Pete Hassemer.

Pete Hassemer [00:13:26] Thank you Madam Vice-Chair. One thing I forgot to ask the maker of the motion, and maybe this is for Kerry, there are 3 options and this speaks to trip limit options, but there's a suboption in there, Durable Trip Limit Design, which I haven't heard much about. Personally, I don't know how it's included in there. I'm not sure we need to do that. And with the workload and that, eliminating it, whether we just take it up through an amendment or when this.....if this doesn't pass, then we don't have to worry about it, but if it does, through guidance or something, kind of narrow that through the questioning, we heard that it was really Option 2 and Green Light, so I'm not sure what to do. I could offer an amendment, go through that process to just remove the suboption if that's most clear.

Kerry Griffin [00:14:35] Thank you. I'm glad you brought that up because I've been waiting to hear some discussion. I don't think I've heard any discussion about that suboption, the Durable Trip Limits. I mean, you have a motion on the floor, so I suppose someone could amend it or you could make a second motion or you....the Council could give, you know, sort of head nod guidance to deprioritize that if that's how you felt. So I won't delve into the best mechanism, but I think from my perspective it would be helpful to have an indication of whether you would like to see that come back or just table it?

Christa Svensson [00:15:11] Yeah, thank you.

Pete Hassemer [00:15:12] Thank you Madam Vice-Chair. If I may offer an amendment. Just make it clear?

Christa Svensson [00:15:18] Please.

Pete Hassemer [00:15:20] I amend....move to amend the motion by, and actually we can do this with some strike-through and underline. After trip limit options except, or let's see, trip limit options. Now delete that. Now I'll just try to find the right place to put it. Trip limit options in Agenda Item 1, except the Suboption: Durable Trip Limit Design. And that looks correct.

Christa Svensson [00:16:32] Okay, we have an amendment. Is there a second? Rebecca Lent. Okay, it's been moved and seconded. Do you want to speak to your amendment?

Pete Hassemer [00:16:55] Thank you. Just briefly maybe. You know I recognize the workload that this creates. I haven't heard a lot of support, and as I looked at the Durable Trip Limits, didn't get a lot traction. I think we can just eliminate that at this point. Thank you.

Christa Svensson [00:17:16] Thank you. Is there any further question or discussion on this amendment? Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:17:26] Thanks Miss Vice. Thanks Mr. Hassemer, or excuse me, Chair Hassemer. My question is I am worried I'm not paying quite close enough attention, but I'm hearing dialogue that says our advisory bodies, our management teams are telling us that this needs attention, that this issue needs more thought, that they want options, that it's complex, and yet you seem to be removing actually one of the options that was on the table. My instinct would be to say, if we're going to have them take a look at this then at least have them access to the full menu. So I'm just wondering if you could share maybe a little bit more? I think you spoke to it briefly. I'm just struggling a little with the reason for taking something out of what's going to be potentially richer conversation later.

Pete Hassemer [00:18:20] Thank you for the question. I think that one, as I went in, just added complexity to what we're actually trying to do is create an opportunity. I know this gets into triggers when you would do things, but I think as Option 2 is expressed in Green Light, there are potentially concepts there that could be incorporated into the Green Light. And my assumption is that's what we're getting at here by further developing trip limit options is, what can you do in those instances where an opportunity might exist to increase the trip limit, what opportunities are there? And I would like the focus to be there. And the suboption there I feel we don't need it at this point.

Christa Svensson [00:19:32] Okay, further questions or discussion on the amendment? Briana Braby.

Briana Brady [00:19:40] Thank you Miss Vice-Chair. Thank you Miss Ridings and Chair Hassemer for that discussion. I just feel like we've crossed over to the point where we've discussed HMS beyond where we should have given that we don't have any of our advisory bodies here. So I'll be voting no on the amendment.

Christa Svensson [00:19:58] Thank you. Any further question, discussion? Okay, then I will call for the question. All those in favor say "Aye".

Council [00:20:12] Aye.

Christa Svensson [00:20:13] All those opposed?

Briana Brady [00:20:15] No.

Corey Ridings [00:20:15] No.

Christa Svensson [00:20:16] Okay, I know we have Briana Brady and Corey Riding, were there any other no's? Okay, then the motion carries or the amendment carries. And we have abstentions? You abstain. Thank you. Thank you, sorry. Any abstentions? No. All right, well the motion carries, or the amendment carries. That brings us back to the original motion. Is there any further discussion? And Corey Niles I see your hand up.

Corey Niles [00:20:54] Yeah, thanks. Thanks Miss Vice-Chair. Yeah, a little tough here. I hear what CDFW is saying, and we're typically deferential to them on these matters. On that last one I think I just voted yes because I think we're talking about two weeks of time between now and the advance briefing book or something, maybe a bit longer. So it's not much work that can be done and that will, you know Pete's motion there means it's even going to be less focused. So I guess, yeah, if this were about applying the trip limit I think Briana is right on where it would be way too, we've gone too far. But since this is basically just asking for some more time for the management team and the advisory subpanel to look at the analysis, I guess I would be voting in support of this. And I think Karter said that they had thought a lot about trip limits as soon as 2024 and, but yeah this.....so it's much different than we're actually going to.....And hearing Josh say that there's some details we work out, and like Jeff, who's really used to thinking about trip limits, thinking about quantitating.....coming up with what's the problem quantitatively more. So I kind of see that a....maybe not, it's not a overblown workload ask for this next meeting. And yeah, I just, I know this, I think Director Burden called these special projects bumpy the other day and this feels bumpy and we could be doing this same thing during the normal, the normal way we've done it in the past with the International HMS. So yeah, appreciate the work that was put into this and the special project and I'll support giving the management team and advisors to spend a little more time. But yeah, expecting to be persuaded by CDFW's perspectives in the end.

Christa Svensson [00:23:02] Thank you. Any further discussion on the main motion? Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:23:09] I'll be supporting the motion. I am not uncomfortable by excluding work right now on the Durable Trip Limit Design in recognition that that still remains an open conversation for the future. If indeed we decide that we need that type, you know, these other things, maybe we still need to bring that back in the mix at a later date. This does simplify the workload for the immediate future, which I support, and I will be voting for the motion.

Christa Svensson [00:23:42] Thank you. Any further discussion? All right, then I will call the question. All those in favor say "Aye".

Council [00:23:53] Aye.

Christa Svensson [00:23:54] All those opposed?

Corey Ridings [00:23:55] No.

Briana Brady [00:23:56] No.

Christa Svensson [00:23:57] Any abstentions? And I believe we had Briana Brady and Corey Ridings as no. Were there any other no votes? Okay, then the motion carries. I will look to our staff officer and make sure we have what we need to close this agenda item unless there's any other guidance that is needed. And not seeing any waving hands, Kerry if you would please let us know where we're at that would be helpful.

Kerry Griffin [00:24:39] Yes, thank you Vice-Chair, and thank you Council members. I know that wasn't....it was bumpy, as you said, but I appreciate the thoughtful discussion. We have a pretty clear

motion and discussion about how we'll move forward, and we'll revisit this in November and have the teams and the Council dive in with a little more analysis. We'll see what sort of trip limit analysis or data we might be able to provide in advance as much as we can working with partners. I will note that the action was to adopt a purpose and need in a range of alternatives. You didn't specifically do that. It doesn't mean you have to, but I just want to sort of make sure that, you know, that the Councils....someone didn't forget that they wanted to do that. We can certainly bring forward what's in the attachment now and assume that we're operating under the same one. So again, I just wanted to flag that. As you all know, when we notice an action that says to adopt or take some action, it doesn't obligate the Council to. It just notices the public that that is an action that the Council could take. But aside from that, I think you completed your business for this agenda item.

Christa Svensson [00:26:12] Okay, thank you. I will take one last look around in case somebody does want to take on purpose and needs. Pete Hassemer.

Pete Hassemer [00:26:22] Well, I guess this is a need. I just, in closing wanted to say, if there were a 500-pound Pacific bluefin landed in a U.S. fishery on the West Coast or via West Coast fishermen, then maybe the GAP could share more information or pictures on that?

Christa Svensson [00:26:44] Well, I hope it's the HMSAS and not the GAP that is sharing pictures but...

Pete Hassemer [00:26:50] HMSAS. I'm sorry.

Christa Svensson [00:26:53] Okay, further items before we close this agenda? Not seeing any, thank you for all of the work on this.

J. Coastal Pelagic Species Management

1. Fishery Management Plan Amendment: Sardine Stock Revision – Katrina Bernaus

Butch Smith [00:00:00] So now we come to Council discussion, which should go relatively fast I think, huh? So let's all don't start the Michigan wave. Where are we? Who would like to go first? All right, Jaime Diamond.

Jaime Diamond [00:00:17] Thank you. I'll just get it going. I've heard multiple times, you know, from different people and different perspectives this idea of needing to have like everything figured out going out for forever in time. And then also like this idea of we need to know what things are so then we can figure out what to do in the future. And I think this agenda item over this last week, everything around it has like kind of gotten conflated and inflated, and not that discussion isn't important and different viewpoints, but I kind of have started to look at it like it has turned into an elephant and how do you eat an elephant one bite at a time? And I think we need to keep it for today, you know, what this is about right now and then how we can move forward in the future. And in November is another part if this were to go forward today. But I think it's easy for us to get lost in all of the different, what if this, and what if that after this and after that, but we don't know what that is yet. And I think that.....some of the comments I've heard made it seem like it was very easy for us to get a stock assessment that goes through a STAR Panel and SSC approval and then not do anything with it. And I think there's other FMPs that would be interested to know how that's somehow a possibility because we've had a number of stock assessments that have been very difficult that came back and we must act on them, so I'm struggling with that. To me there's a disconnect there on getting an assessment back and not doing anything with it. That hasn't been my experience, although my experience is limited, kind of has been for the last few years to groundfish, but I'm just....I'm struggling with that concept that we would get an assessment back and then not do anything with it after it's BSIA and gone through all the things. So those are just my thoughts to this point. And I might chime in on something else in a little bit. Thanks.

Butch Smith [00:02:30] Thank you Jaime. Anyone else? Oh, who is it? I'm not seeing the hand. Oh, we have a public, oh. What do you think? Go ahead? So I didn't get the memo in time when Merrick McCrae wanted to public comment and I think it's fair with this decision to get all the public their chance and so I will use a little discretion of the gavel and let Merrick go ahead and get his public testimony in if that's okay with the rest of the Council? Okay Merrick, Merit, I'm sorry.

Merit McCrea [00:03:27] Good afternoon Vice-Chair Butch and Council members. I'm Merit McCrae for the Sport Fishing Association of California Thank you for this opportunity to provide this public comment. It's a simple and short one. We just want to thank the CPSAS and public commenters, CCA, California ASA, and the California Wetfish Producers Association, for the consideration of the importance of sardines as live bait within the reports and comments. Live bait is critical to the Sac fleet and recreational anglers in general. A few sardines in the live bait mix make a huge difference. And thank you very much.

Butch Smith [00:04:07] Thank you Merit. Any questions of Merit? Okay, thank you. Back to Council discussion. Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:04:26] Thanks Mr. Vice. Actually, this is just a clarifying question for NMFS. This was brought up a couple times on the floor so I wanted to make sure that I closed the loop on that and had for the record. NMFS just regarding the question about the point-of-concern framework and that ability for us to use that moving forward. Just curious, in the past do you know of any times that that

has been used?

Josh Lindsay [00:04:55] Thank you for the question. Through the Vice-Chair, I know it's been discussed. I don't know if it has technically been affected, if you will. I think in part the Council and agency doesn't need to invoke point-of-concern to take action. So we've taken a lot of actions over the years based on new and emerging science, but we just haven't declared a point-of-concern. So that does exist. It's a framework within the FMP to how you discuss new and emerging issues. I think we actually stole it from the groundfish FMP so it's not unique to the CPS FMP. So yeah, I think we're on Amendment 13 to the plan over the last 20 years so we've taken a lot actions on this plan often as a result of new and emerging science. So whether or not we call it a point-of-concern issue or just the need to take action, this Council's had that ability.

Butch Smith [00:05:52] Corey Niles.

Corey Niles [00:05:55] Thanks Mr. Vice. Just to follow-up on that for the awesome remark that Josh finally admitted, there's a similarity between CPS and groundfish for once. But is the idea that the point-of-concern could go through the rulemaking process faster than like you're saying that we've done? We've done similar things in a different way but would the point-of-concern let us do.....let you all make it happen faster? I think you get what I'm asking all.

Josh Lindsay [00:06:26] Thank you for the question. Through the Vice-Chair, I don't think necessarily. The way the point-of-concern, the socio-economic framework and some of the things in the FMP, to be honest I think a lot of it is based on the time and place when we were implementing that FMP and it's stolen. I think the original 1980 where we envisioned the Council process be much more rigid than I think it is now and only taking things up on very specific time frames and sort of the original discussion even with a Magnuson that we only do FMP amendments. Clearly we do a lot more than FMP amendments so our process is a lot more fluid. So as a way to identify, hey, typically we only talk CPS, whatever, one month or one Council meeting or something to like raise something, hey, we need to add something to the agenda. We got to talk about something, and it was a concept like that. Now whether or not we need that to do that, I think this process is fluid enough that's currently happening. But that's my understanding of the intent of that originally.

Butch Smith [00:07:34] Okay, any other discussion? Oh, Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:07:54] Thanks Mr. Vice. I was just going to just share a thought reflection I've been thinking about this. And I feel like this really did a lot of what has come forward has been about the flow of information and the flow of decision-making. Thinking about how we do this in other FMPs is interesting and how sort of the norms across FMP's exist. And then the challenges that we're facing right now really seem to be from, I don't want to say a perfect storm, but we're sort of in a weird spot of having a time where unfortunately we don't have a directed fishery and we also are in a rebuilding plan for the northern subpop. And we also want to do better. I think I heard that from our public comments, all of them, and a lot of the written public comments that came in. And so I'm responding that way and saying I really believe that's what we're trying to do here. We're trying do better. It's difficult to nest those things when we have that low stock, that lack of fishery and a lot of uncertainty around it. So for me it's really coming back to the flow and thinking okay, we're relying almost on faith that the agency is going to do the stock assessment, that we will get a robust management strategy evaluation or something similar that will really help us recalibrate where we are around this new stock definition. And with that comes the concerns. I think that we hear about like harvesting in Mexico, what does that mean for us and how are we engaging with that? So I just wanted to kind of reflect at a large 30,000 foot level that I think a lot of what was laid out here will improve how we manage. I think it will set us up better in the long term. I still have a lot of heartburn about the flow of this and being very

concerned about, especially before we get to a stock assessment, that we don't know for sure will be done. I have a lot of confidence in the Science Center it will be, but we have no guarantees. Part of the reason I asked Mr. Phillips of what he meant by a commitment was I was hoping he was having a really good idea. How can we get that commitment? And Larry, not to say that you don't have good ideas, but you didn't have the silver bullet for us in this moment. So I just wanted to voice my frustration with this. I'm not.....I'm hearing NMFS say that to move forward and get the stock assessment, which I think is the most important thing, and then making good, smart, science-based management on that is the most important thing, that this is going to require some faith that the agency is going to come through for the Council and for its public on this. So I think I'll leave it at that. I just wanted to air those reflections. Yeah, thanks.

Butch Smith [00:11:33] So I have a thought or an observation. And all disclosure, I'm really switzer when it comes to sardines. I've not bought a sardine or used a sardine in any operation that I've had in my life, but I know they're important fisheries. And I know when the fisheries happened off the Washington coast it was big to the coastal communities. But, you know sometimes when I look back at the 90's and 2000's when we got into the groundfish emergencies, we were doing things on the fly. We were trying to come up with the best available science under crisis situations, and we're not in this situation. We're not.....the fishermen side, you know, readily admit there's not a fisheries that's going to happen directed anytime soon. And sometimes I think when we've got time to think about these things when we're not in a crisis situation the better the outcomes. It's just an observation what I observed from the groundfish back in the 90's to what we're doing here and trying to do things really on the fly. You know and having a hundred purse seiners come in here screaming for more fish and having the other side screaming that you're catching too many fish, that's not a pleasant time to be trying to do something. But now I think we have a time in history where we can, you know, we've found out some new science and we can apply it and it doesn't....I don't see anybody drooling over the fact that new science will allow us to fish tomorrow, it's just using what we have figured out over the last so many years. So that's not an endorsement for anything. That's just an observation of what we went through under groundfish. And you know I'd like to think it's always a better time when you're not trying to do things under a crisis situation. So that's just a comment and I'll take further questions. Aja.

Aja Szumylo [00:13:40] Thank you Vice-Chair. I have a motion when you are ready. Whenever people are ready. Maybe Josh.

Butch Smith [00:13:46] Josh, I'm sorry Josh if I missed you. Josh.

Josh Lindsay [00:13:49] No, that's okay. And I don't want to take away from somebody ready to make a motion. I just wanted to maybe slightly respond to something Miss Ridings said. I think as folks around this table are aware in the letter that came from the agency regarding seafood EO priorities, one of the items that we asked this Council to, you know, maintain momentum on and prioritize is this sardine action. I think inherent in that is also this action being a priority for the agency. So I know Annie's scientists are working hard probably right now in their offices on the stock assessment. So, yes, it is a tricky beast to look at. There's a lot of questions with it, but I'd say the agency is committed to developing a new stock assessment on this revised stock under the timeline that that Dr. Yao has presented. Thanks.

Butch Smith [00:14:39] Thanks Josh. Any other comments before I go to Aja officially? Aja officially.

Aja Szumylo [00:14:50] Thank you. Okay, get ready. With the goal of maintaining the current harvest approach and adapting it to the new science on stock structure, and expecting a benchmark assessment and workload planning discussions in 2028, I move that the Council adopt the range of alternatives for Actions 2 and 3 of the Pacific sardine FMP amendment reflected in Agenda Item J.1, Attachment 3

with the following additions. Modify Action 2, Alternative 1, based on the recommendations in Agenda Item J.1.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1. And so the modifications would be adding specificity to the static approach to MSST, including a range between 65,000 metric tons and a higher value of 150,000 metric tons. And then the formulaic approach to MSST that's reflected in the SSC's recommendation. And then analyzing a higher and lower cutoff value, so 314,400 metric tons and a lower value of 50,000 metric tons as cut-off as part of Action 3. And these were both recommended in Agenda Item J.1.a, Supplemental CPSAS Report 1. And then adopt the following as the PPA: For Action 2, so this is the status determination criteria and reference points and control rules. This is alternative 1, and this is in the document, sorry this is....I'm realizing that looks bad. This is Alternative 1 and it's Section 2.3.1 in the Staff Report, and it's Option 2. The formulaic overfished status determination criteria where MSST is set to a value between B of 10% and B of 30% or reasonable proxy based on BSIA as described in Agenda Item J.1.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1. So just matching the SSC's recommendation for the PPA for the overfished status determination criteria. And then for overfishing, this is Alternative 2.... so this is Section 2.3.2 in the Staff Report. Just mirroring those overfished status determination criteria. And if you scroll down this table describes them. So OFL would be equal to biomass times EMSY times distribution. The ABC would be biomass times a buffer times EMSY times distribution. And then distribution, as we discussed earlier, would be set equal to one since we are managing one U.S. stock. And then Action 3: The PPA would be, this is for the Harvest Control Rules for Pacific sardine, so Alternative 1, which is the stock specific Harvest Control Rules with values described in Agenda Item J.1.a, Supplemental CPSMT Report 1. And then some additional requests to signal our intention regarding future workload to capture some of the things that we talked about today. So requests that NOAA fisheries increase its efforts with other federal agencies, tribal partners, and state governments where applicable to improve scientific capacity for Pacific sardine in Mexico. And then conduct additional analyses like a Management Strategy Evaluation or a similar process as indicated by the results of the assessment. That's it.

Butch Smith [00:18:50] Okay, that was a short motion....(laughter). Does the language on the screen accurately, accurate and complete?

Aja Szumylo [00:19:00] I hope so.

Butch Smith [00:19:03] Oh boy. Okay. Do we have a second to the motion on the floor? Pete Hassemer seconds the motion. All right, would you like to speak to your motion?

Aja Szumylo [00:19:16] Yes, thank you.

Butch Smith [00:19:19] Oops, wait, wait, wait.

Briana Brady [00:19:23] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. I just wanted to clarify, if I want to amend the motion does that come before or after discussion?

Butch Smith [00:19:32] After.

Briana Brady [00:19:37] Okay.

Butch Smith [00:19:38] Speak to your motion?

Aja Szumylo [00:19:38] Yes. First, thanks everyone. There was a lot of conversation this week about....I was not even expecting the amount of conversation that I would be involved in this week regarding this action, but thank you all for the very thoughtful conversations about this. And I recognize what a challenging issue this is for folks. And just, yeah, it's representative of the importance of this

issue. So I know that some things are hard, but great talking to all of you. So as Katrina outlined in her Staff Report, the Council voted to revise our stock definition for sardine in response to new scientific information, and this is reflected in Action 1 in the Staff Report, so we already made that decision. And so leaving the outdated definition in place would mean leaving a substantial portion of the sardines off the West Coast unaccounted for in our applicable management and failure to move forward is failing to use the Best Scientific Information Available, which would be contrary to National Standard 1. We know that NOAA Fisheries is ready to assist in developing an assessment, a benchmark assessment based on the new stock definition and to work rapidly to revise the management. And I'll note again that this is underscored by the recent announcement from the NOAA Fisheries Administrator Eugenio in July, which identified revision of the sardine stock definition as one of its top regional priorities in support of the Executive Order on Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness. I reiterate the discussion of the timing considerations in the CPSMT Report and the discussion from Dr. Yao this morning, so delaying this amendment will have workload consequences for the path that we've chosen. And as Dr. Yao said, a benchmark assessment for a U.S. coastwide stock assessment requires a lot of resources, and if the Science Center has to continue providing other estimations for the northern subpopulation, that will delay delivery or impact the quality of the benchmark assessment that we'll need to manage the stock in the configuration that we've decided to manage it in. And it will also delay further evaluations and scientific coordination that we decided are important. Harvest specifications for Pacific sardines is on the Council's agenda for April 2027, so at that time the SSC will evaluate an appropriate OFL and suggest reductions to the ABC based....to encompass scientific uncertainty. And then after that the CPSMT can recommend all the limits that are down from the ACL based on the Harvest Control Rule framework. That's in the final action for this agenda item. In its report, the CPSMT also addressed the concerns that defining a new stock will nullify the existing Pacific sardine rebuilding plan. Given the new stock definition, the rebuilding plan is no longer applicable to the management of the coastwide U.S. Pacific sardine stock. And we don't have a status determination yet for that stock. And if the coastwide stock assessment shows that the age one plus biomass is below the minimum stock size threshold that we set in this action, NOAA Fisheries will make a determination that the stock is overfished at that time and the Council will develop a new rebuilding plan based on the Best Scientific Information Available and in accordance with National Standard 1. I'll note again, the Council retains the ability to add more conservative management measures to match the existing rebuilding plan if the information that comes from the northern subpopulation update assessment and the age one plus southern subpopulation biomass estimate that the Science Center provides for us for April 2027 suggests that the stock is indeed in the trouble that we think it's in. So we have time to maintain the conservative approach that we've already maintained for the stock. And this is a conservative path forward and allows us at the same time to preserve a viable monitor of live bait fishery within science-based conservation limits. And so I recommend largely in the first big bullet in that long motion, the range that's included in the Staff Report with some minor modifications that I did note in the motion. And so I'll talk you through my PPA, but then also kind of reference back to the range. For the overfished status determination criteria, I recommended the SSC's adjusted Option 2, but also really look forward to discussing the static options that I presented here as well. The ranges, those ranges should give us an idea of what different approaches could look like for overfished status determination criteria for the stock. And the SSC's CPS Subcommittee recommended a static MSST value of 6,500 metric tons, so that's the low end that I presented in the static option. And then I selected 150,000 as the high-end option, because that's 150% of the average northern subpopulation spawning stock biomass in U.S. waters over the last 10 years, but it also matches cutoff so it's handy for memory. And then the overfishing status determination criteria, I recommended that be consistent with the SSC Report and that the PPA would maintain the existing approach, but set distribution equal to one based on our stock revision. The SSC Report also discusses some approaches to EMSY that came out of the July 2026 workshop, so I hope to see that as it continues to develop. The SSC recommends maintaining the current approach for setting the ABC, which is what we use for a lot of our fisheries. So multiplying the OFL by an uncertainty buffer determined by P Star and a sigma with a time varying component for

natural mortality, so everyone should be familiar with that. And then for Harvest Control Rules we'd keep sardine on the more intensive management track of the two tracks that we have in the FMP. And then I reiterate the CPSMT's discussion of the derivation of the Harvest Control Rule parameters, including the maintaining the existing 150,000 metric ton cutoff. And then I'll reiterate again, once we set management measures in April of 2027 based on the results of the assessment that the Science Center puts out, we have the opportunity again to set precautionary catch limits for the stock if we decide that that's necessary based on the information that we get in those estimates. And all done. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:26:15] Okay, any questions of the motion maker? Not discussions, but questions on the motion? Okay seeing none.....oh, you wait till I look away don't you on purpose Josh. Josh, go ahead. I'm sorry.

Josh Lindsay [00:26:40] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. Sorry, now that you're not sitting by me I gotta mess with you somehow, right? Thank you for the motion Aja. I guess I had one specific question. There's a reference to Staff Report. Is that Attachment 3?

Aja Szumylo [00:26:54] Yeah, it's attachment....yeah, I think that's Attachment 3. Hold on one second. Yeah, it's J.1, Attachment 3.

Josh Lindsay [00:27:02] Thank you. And then the other question, and I apologize you might have touched on this and I was just behind, this last bullet could you speak to a little bit more of your intent there in terms of timing, intended results?

Aja Szumylo [00:27:21] I think, you know, grafting off of the conversation that we had around the table earlier, I think there's a lot of public interest in having some kind of evaluation that looks like a Management Strategy Evaluation happen as soon as possible. I cannot commit the Science Centers resources or speak any further than that, but I think the intention is like something that looks like that as, yeah, as quickly as can be mustered with the resources that we have available.

Josh Lindsay [00:27:53] All right, thank you.

Butch Smith [00:27:58] Jaime Diamond.

Jaime Diamond [00:27:59] Thank you. And just to clarify a little further, when you say the results of the assessment, you mean the benchmark assessment, not the update in 27'?. Okay. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:28:17] Okay, Briana Braby.

Briana Brady [00:28:23] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. It's unclear to me in the motion where it specifies PPA. Go ahead.

Aja Szumylo [00:28:35] If you scroll back up, so it's the second big bullet. It's...yeah the bulleting is off, but so adopt the following as PPA. And then there's Action 1, which refers to the status determination criteria. And then there's action....or sorry, Action 2, which refers to the status determination criteria. And then Action 3, which refers to Harvest Control Rules.

Briana Brady [00:28:57] Okay, thank you. Well I'd like to amend the motion to exclude the PPA please. And to clarify, that's to exclude the selection of a PPA. So just the words PPA.

Butch Smith [00:29:35] Okay, does that....the wording on the screen accurate and complete?

Briana Brady [00:29:45] Yes, thank you.

Butch Smith [00:29:47] Okay, do I have a second? Corey Ridings seconded it. Would you like to speak to your motion?

Briana Brady [00:29:56] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. It's mostly that the PPA is unnecessary. And it's unnecessary in a regulatory standpoint. And also it can be seemed as pre-decisional so I will not be able to support the whole motion if we go forward with a PPA. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:30:24] All right. Questions of the amendment maker I guess is.....Corey Niles.

Corey Niles [00:00:00] Okay, thanks Mr. Vice-Chair. And Briana maybe if you can get help with this question, but I think, because I wouldn't be able to answer it but, so the...what would the...using the example of where it says MSST is set to a value between B10% and B30%, I think I'm hearing you say you don't necessarily, you don't object to including that in the analysis range of alternatives. You just don't....you prefer not to have it be labeled as a PPA, so how does....what would the effect, your intended effect of the motion, your amendment be on being able to look at that at that one particular example and the rest of it in there?

Briana Brady [00:00:51] Thanks. Without seeing the whole motion, my intent is to just be able to look at the full range and that we aren't designating a PPA or we have a preference right now. It's just that we're moving forward as is for everything else that's in there.

Butch Smith [00:01:13] Jaime.

Jaime Diamond [00:01:15] Thank you. So when you say moving everything forward, so you're including the No Action Alternative as well as the ones identified in Aja's motion? So just bringing back the option of the No-Action Alternative into the range?

Briana Brady [00:01:34] Thank you. There's always a No Action Alternative, as I understand it. It's just specifying that we don't have a preference for anything that's in the motion right now, or the full range of alternatives.

Jaime Diamond [00:01:48] Okay.

Butch Smith [00:01:48] Aja.

Aja Szumylo [00:01:52] Thanks, I just....and I...yeah, I just wanted to clarify my understanding of selecting a PPA is to indicate to the public the direction that we're going and to help funnel the way that they comment about the action that we're considering. And so I won't support the motion, but it's more so that we give the public a direction. Yeah I selected the PPA, so it's to give the the public direction to help funnel their comments on our action.

Sharon Kiefer [00:02:36] I have a question on the motion. So Briana, if a PPA is not included at this point in time, what would be your understanding at what point, or if the Council does need to ultimately define a PPA?

Briana Brady [00:03:02] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. Thank you Miss Kiefer for the question. My understanding of Council process is that November will be the time that we select a Final Preferred Alternative so that us not selecting a PPA at this time, and if the ROA goes forward as is it does not change November. It's just whether or not, as Aja said, we're getting indication or tipping our hat to

something right now rather than waiting.

Butch Smith [00:03:36] So Aja I think I missed you when you had your hand up. Did you have your hand up? Okay. All right, so now we can move into regular Council discussion of the motion. Any discussion? Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:03:56] Yeah, this isn't so much discussion. I'm wondering if we can scroll back up. Is that okay tower of power? Just get a better look there. Thanks, there's the top...amend. Okay, can you scroll down a little bit? Okay, stop. Thanks. Okay, I think I do have a question. I'm not sure if it's for the maker of the motion or someone else, but looking at how this is written I think this might become conflicting as an....and so I'm wondering maybe if it's okay Mr. Vice-Chair if we could have Briana just say one more time her intent and make sure as a Council that this amendment achieves that intent. Is that acceptable?

Butch Smith [00:05:35] So what you're saying is rather than having....make sure we have an amendment instead of a conflicting motion, is that what you were saying? Motion. Is that what you're trying to clarify here?

Corey Ridings [00:05:46] Let's let the brainier Corey to my left take it up.

Corey Niles [00:05:50] My brain isn't working, but I think I'm having the same question if I don't think, well the question whether the strikeout is what Briana is asking for, because then it just reads adopt the following, but so I think she was, not to speak for Briana, I think she was saying strike that whole part that identifies the preliminary and just leave that first part that says, that created the range of alternatives. So yeah, I had the same question as Corey.

Butch Smith [00:06:16] So not to put you on the spot Briana, but I'm putting you on this spot what was...I didn't hear strikeout when you made your motion, but go ahead and intent.

Briana Brady [00:06:29] I'd love to agree with Cory Niles, please. Thank you. Just kidding. I'm suggesting we not select a PPA. That's my intent. So yes, I agree with Corey Niles.

Butch Smith [00:06:43] Yes, Aja.

Aja Szumylo [00:06:45] Thank you. And then I think in that case it's appropriate to strike the entire, like that whole section past the table, like if you scroll down, like all that.....even more. And then leave in a request, or is that like that request when Briana....? I guess that's a question to you. Do you want to keep those last two tasks on?

Briana Brady [00:07:14] We can leave those.

Aja Szumylo [00:07:15] Okay.

Butch Smith [00:07:34] Oh, go ahead.

Merrick Burden [00:07:36] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman. Since there seems to be some confusion on the floor here about the effect of the amendment, which I think is getting cleaned up, I do want to make sure our staff officer knows what's happening. And sometimes a staff officer is good at mirroring back to you what it is you're talking about and what the effect of this amendment would be. So Katrina, I'm sorry to put you on the spot, but I think....could you, from your vantage point, tell you what this would do as we move forward between now and November and potentially beyond?

Katrina Bernaus [00:08:08] Thank you Director Burden. It's my understanding that this amendment would maintain the Council adopting the range of alternatives, including the SSC's recommendation of a formulaic MSST, setting a value between B10% and B30% or reasonable proxy based on BSIA. I will note that that phrase is not as explicit in the first mention of the SSC Report if the Council wishes to be more explicit. So I just want to confirm that that is the intent to maintain that specific formula as it's being struck. I believe the rest of what is being struck is covered in the references from the above portion to adopt the ROA. But just want to confirm that change, otherwise it looks like the range of alternatives still covers inclusion of what was also potentially a PPA.

Butch Smith [00:09:23] Does that clarify to everyone? Okay, any further discussion on the amendment? I am....oh, Corey Niles.

Corey Niles [00:09:37] Yeah, thanks Mr. Vice-Chair, and thanks Briana. Maybe a tough one, do we need a PPA or not? A question unfortunately I had to think about too many times. But I think I understand what CDFW is saying, and also hearing Aja's argument about the benefit of the, of indicating to the public where the Council may be leaning, but I think at this point, yeah I would support CDFW in their desire to maybe they're not ready to do a PAA and I think that does not really, does not....the cost of that isn't too great so I will be supporting the amendment.

Butch Smith [00:10:21] Pete Hassemer, Chairman Pete Hassemer. I'm sorry.

Pete Hassemer [00:10:24] Thank You Mr. Vice-Chair. This is a question I believe for either NMFS or General Counsel so I don't assume what might happen. Is there a procedural misstep or can we go straight to selection of a final alternative in November with the analysis that's being done?

Josh Lindsay [00:10:55] Thank you for the question. From the agencies perspective, the Council could go straight to final in November if that's their desire, recognizing the discussion that just happened on regarding it.

Butch Smith [00:11:12] Sharon.

Sharon Kiefer [00:11:15] I think I heard this, but just one more time just for clarity. The amendment does not, relative to the range of alternatives between the staff and advisory bodies that have been presented and framed, none of those are rejected, we're just not identifying any as a PPA, correct?

Briana Brady [00:11:44] Mr. Vice-Chair. Thank you. Correct.

Butch Smith [00:11:45] Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:11:45] Thanks Mr. Vice. Yeah, thank you CDF and W for this. I will be supporting it. It does leave intact all the options available. It doesn't materially change the range that is before the Council. And I appreciate the intent that Miss Szumylo spoke to about....excuse me, Miss Szumylo (different pronunciation), spoke to about why we do PPAs, which is that we do want to signal we can and it is, I think, a good practice to signal to the public when there is a preference that the Council is leaning for as it solicitates more feedback, more focused feedback. In this case I think there's still a relatively not huge, actually I feel like that's the wrong number or the wrong kind of description, but there are some pieces on the table that I think do need more time to think about, do need some analysis, and I think it's helpful to not necessarily signal that the Council's heading a direction at this time given the circumstances. So thanks Miss Brady. I will be voting for the amendment.

Butch Smith [00:13:09] Jaime Diamond.

Jaime Diamond [00:13:10] Thank you. And this may be a question for staff, but keeping, not narrowing down this, the scope of things with a PPA, do we have enough time to do any....like is that a workload consideration of like, not that it's not worthy or not to signal that, but like is there enough time between now, realistically between now and the November meeting to do all of it as opposed to needing to pare down?

Katrina Bernaus [00:13:45] Thank you for the question. The Council staff has been planning to bring back a comparison of alternatives to further inform the Council for final action in November for quite some time now and I don't think that changes based off of your selection or lack of selection of a PPA. The framing just might be slightly different as you will not have a PPA yet if you did not adopt one today, but the overall workload would look fairly similar.

Butch Smith [00:14:26] Okay, anymore.....oh, Pete. Chairman.

Pete Hassemer [00:14:30] Thank you. I understand the extent of the analysis. Either way the range will be analyzed. But I'm not going to support the amendment at this time. I think based on what I've heard and the SSC discussions and Dr. Yao's presentation, I think It's important to signal where the Council might go, and I think what was presented originally as a PPA is the right direction to go. So thank you.

Butch Smith [00:15:12] Thank you Mr. Chairman. Sharon.

Sharon Kiefer [00:15:15] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. And I guess this might be directed at the Executive Director or staff. How often has the Council moved forward with a process like this where we just put out, you know obviously there's the No Action Alternative and other alternatives, so just a range of alternatives without identifying a PPA?

Merrick Burden [00:15:42] Yeah, thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman. I can't answer that question. Unfortunately Miss Kiefer I don't have a tally in front of me, but it is occasional that we will move right to final and not have a PPA. The purpose of a PPA is really a signal to the public and that it says this is where we're headed and it helps the public, and for that matter, our advisors focus their attention on where you seem to be heading, but there's no obligation to do it. And we've jumped through that hoop before.

Sharon Kiefer [00:16:09] Mr. Vice-Chair, may I ask a follow-up question?

Butch Smith [00:16:12] Yes.

Sharon Kiefer [00:16:12] And my understanding is when we do identify a PPA, when it comes time for an FPA, we are not bound by the fact that we had signaled a PPA. We still maintain full flexibility that between PPA and final FPA if there's something new that emerges or something we had not thought of, we don't have to stick with the PPA?

Merrick Burden [00:16:45] Yeah, thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman. I can answer that one too. I feel like I'm answering on behalf of General Counsel, but I feel confident in saying you are not bound to your PPA. And there are times I can think of where we have deviated from the PPA in the past.

Butch Smith [00:17:00] Jeff.

Jeff Lackey [00:17:02] Two points come to mind. The first is I agree with Sharon on that point, you don't have to pick the PPA. The second point is there seems to be a strong MSA reason in support of

the PPA.

Butch Smith [00:17:13] Okay, any other discussion? So I say we vote on the amendment. All those in favor signify by saying "Aye".

Council [00:17:29] Aye.

Butch Smith [00:17:31] Those opposed?

Council [00:17:33] No.

Butch Smith [00:17:36] Those abstain? One abstention. I got the abstention, that's Josh. But I think we might have to do a roll call.

Merrick Burden [00:17:52] Okay, just one moment here Mr. Vice-Chairman. Okay, I'm working from voting sheet number 1. The reference of the motion title here, I'm calling it J.1 amendment offered by Brady. Let's see, starting from the top. Dr. Lent is no longer here, so Corey Ridings.

Corey Ridings [00:18:32] Yes.

Merrick Burden [00:18:34] Christa Svensson.

Christa Svensson [00:18:35] No.

Merrick Burden [00:18:37] David Sones.

David Sones [00:18:39] No.

Merrick Burden [00:18:41] Corey Niles.

Corey Niles [00:18:42] Yes.

Merrick Burden [00:18:44] Sharon Kiefer.

Sharon Kiefer [00:18:46] No.

Merrick Burden [00:18:48] Josh Lindsay.

Josh Lindsay [00:18:50] Abstain.

Merrick Burden [00:18:52] Justin Ainsworth.

Justin Ainsworth [00:18:54] Yes.

Merrick Burden [00:18:55] Aja Szumylo.

Aja Szumylo [00:18:57] No.

Merrick Burden [00:18:59] Butch, we'll come back to you last. Jeff Lackey.

Jeff Lackey [00:19:03] No.

Merrick Burden [00:19:06] Briana Brady.

Briana Brady [00:19:08] Yes.

Merrick Burden [00:19:10] Jaime Diamond.

Jaime Diamond [00:19:11] No.

Merrick Burden [00:19:12] Pete Hassemer.

Pete Hassemer [00:19:14] No.

Merrick Burden [00:19:26] Let's see, the tally I have at the moment Mr. Vice-Chairman is four yes, seven no, one abstention, so the amendment fails.

Butch Smith [00:19:36] All righty, thank you. And now we can move back to the main motion I believe is the way we should be going here. So discussion? I don't know if we got completed discussion, but just in case we haven't, discussion on the main motion? Seeing.....sorry Corey, go ahead.

Corey Niles [00:20:02] Thanks Mr. Vice-Chair. I don't want to be talking too much. But yeah, just thanks to Aja and everyone who worked on this. I'll lead off by saying, you know in our 7 a.m. meeting this morning just kind of one thing we all concluded is that CPS is really hard for people to follow who have not followed it very closely. And we're talking Phil Anderson being part of that discussion and how many years did he spend up here at this table? So it seems pretty confusing about what all these issues may be, but I think the bigger picture we see is that really what we're trying to do is maintain our same harvest approach we've had, this Council's long had, and applying it to the new science. And then there are going to be a series of things that probably follow after we get to the benchmark assessment, hopefully by in 2028, thanks to the Science Centers. But yes, supportive of the motion and at that earliest, or I was a little bit surprised myself on how far the SSC was able to go, but I think they've got a solid plan here and the motion follows that plan. And I'll add the Science Centers and Council staff and everyone for coming up with a plan. So like Aja spoke to, it's a very science-based plan and it's going to take some time. And I do like, I'm thinking about Geoff's suggestion that we need an incentive to come back, and I was thinking, yeah, how would we do that? But I think this Council will, and I think Oceana and others will keep coming back and keep asking and encouraging us to follow this plan. But I think everyone is pretty much on the same plan here of doing this right. And lastly, I think I do have some concerns, but not enough to vote no or amend it, but on evaluating cutoff now. I don't really think the team probably just did that for this in the report is was what they're going to say, and I understand, yeah Oceana's.....what Geoff and Ben expressed as a concern about never doing it again but now we're going to do it, and then are people going to be hesitant to do it after the benchmark and MSE are available just because we just did it? And I hope not, because that is the....everyone, the scientists are telling us the right way to do it is after we have a Management Strategy Evaluation, and not opposed enough, again, to doing the analysis now, but I don't know if that's the best use of time, but I think, yeah, thanks. Aja said she didn't expect to be talking this much to this many people, so I really appreciate her leadership and everyone else's involvement. Again, in support of the motion.

Butch Smith [00:22:53] Briana.

Briana Brady [00:22:53] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. I just need to express that California has concerns about where we are in the process so we do not want to continue, I'm sorry, though we do want the process to continue, indicating to the public that we are leaning towards a decision at this point in this

specific process seems inappropriate. We do not have enough information to make that sort of selection. So while there may be reasons to support a PPA in some cases, there is also ample case law indicating that selecting a PPA can be considered pre-decisional. So I'm unable to support the motion with the PPA included at this time and will be voting no at this time. So my hope is that we have enough information in front of us in November to make a decision. Thanks.

Butch Smith [00:23:55] Thank you. Any other? Oh, Corey Ridings. Sorry.

Corey Ridings [00:24:01] Thanks Mr. Vice. I'll start off by just thanking Aja for pulling this motion together and putting this out and giving us something to talk about. I will be voting for this motion. It is with a tremendous amount of heartburn and concern. I share the concerns just shared by Miss Brady. I, as obvious by the way that I voted, I think that a PPA is a little....I think we're not there yet in a place to be able to fully justify a PPA. Regardless of the PPA situation, the timing issue and the flow issue, I spoke to this earlier, It is still really bothering me. I'm still confused about why delaying management action until after the new stock assessment and Management Strategy Evaluation isn't possible. This feels very much cart before the horse and I think it puts us in a really weird space until we have presumably the new stock assessment. I'm concerned that basing any reference points for what is now going to be a single coastwide stock on parameters that were developed for the northern stock is arbitrary, given the different scales of population sizes and different underlying assumptions. The Science Center, I really appreciate them being here today explaining a pathway forward, and I still have confusion. Even looking to 2028, we've managed in the past without a benchmark for the northern subpop. So keeping management, encourage management the way it is until we have a new stock assessment still seems feasible as we have done this before. So yes, I will support this motion. I just wanted to share the serious level of heartburn that I'm having. Yeah, I'll leave it at that. Thanks.

Butch Smith [00:26:11] Thank you Corey. Anyone else? Seeing no other hands....oh, Justin.

Justin Ainsworth [00:26:22] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. And yeah, has been listening intently and I too didn't feel like we have enough for a PPA, but ultimately I do feel like the process whereby there's been discussed that in April we'll be working some on harvest specifications, we'll have information provided by our advisory bodies, by the public, and by the analysis done. In this motion I feel that we'll be making the right decisions come next year and then ultimately with the benchmark assessment in 2028, so will be supporting the motion.

Butch Smith [00:27:12] Thank you. Anyone else? Alrighty. To recap, I have a motion on the floor by Aja and seconded by Pete Hasserman and I'm going to call for the question. All those in favor signify by saying "Aye".

Council [00:27:29] Aye.

Butch Smith [00:27:30] Those opposed?

Briana Brady [00:27:34] No.

Butch Smith [00:27:34] Abstentions? The motion carries with Briana Brady a no vote. So any other discussion on this right now? I think we got her. So Katerina, or Karina, sorry, whatever Olympics that was, ice skating, I get those names.....I'm sorry. Anyway, East German I remember. So have we completed our.....this task my friend.

Katrina Bernaus [00:28:06] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chair. Appreciate we've spent a lot of time on this task this morning and thank you for all the thoughtful discussions and those who are able to provide

input and answer questions. The Council has adopted a range of alternatives and a Preliminary Preferred Alternative for the full FMP amendment needed to revise the Pacific sardine stock. So the range of alternatives you have adopted for Actions 2 and 3, addressing the status determination criteria and the Harvest Control Rules for the revised stock, may be added to the existing range of alternatives for the stock definition itself. And you have also identified a Preliminary Preferred Alternative for those sections of the action. So you have completed your work for today.

Butch Smith [00:29:02] Okay

2. Stock Assessment Terms of Reference – Katrina Bernaus

Butch Smith [00:00:00] And now we're in the Council discussion. So I'll open the floor to discuss. All right. So do we have a motion? I understand we need a motion. Somebody have the motion? Sharon.

Sharon Kiefer [00:00:27] Nobody else has a motion. I'm willing to take a crack at it on the fly. Gentlemen start your typing fingers. and I'll appreciate any help. I move....give them a chance here. There we go. I move the Council adopt Draft Terms of Reference for the CPS stock assessment review process as presented in J.2, Attachment 2 with staff to complete minor edits to include the SSC edits recommended in J.2.a, Supplemental SSC Report 1. My motion does not include additional action on J.2, Attachment 3 because there have been no revisions.

Butch Smith [00:02:30] All right Sharon, is the language on the screen accurate and complete?

Sharon Kiefer [00:02:40] We need to put CPS in front of the first stock, "Draft Terms of Reference for the CPS". And then just remove....yeah. I guess that'll work. And then after "staff to complete minor edits" add "and", "and to include".

Butch Smith [00:03:25] Is it accurate? All right. So do we have a second to the motion? Corey Niles seconded the motion. Please speak to your motion. What?

Sharon Kiefer [00:03:46] We have a very robust draft that staff walked us through. We heard from our advisory bodies that were supportive of adoption with some minor edits. And so we had the additional document, the accepted practices guidelines for coastal pelagic species stock assessments, which my understanding still stands and no need to re-adopt that because there no new revisions. So I believe we are ready to proceed.

Butch Smith [00:04:28] Merrick did you have a....

Merrick Burden [00:04:31] Yeah, thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman. Just a question for the maker of the motion. This could be read in a couple of ways. I just want to make sure that I understand what you're saying. So it adopts the Draft Terms of Reference so they are now final? Or do you intend to adopt them as draft and then we would come back and finalize again at a later date?

Sharon Kiefer [00:04:49] Because we didn't have much in the way of public comment I thought maybe we would just adopt this draft and then when we take up everything else in November it's out there. People might go in and take a look and give us some further feedback. So my expectation would be we finalize in November, unless there's any actions proceeding, and this is a process question I guess from me, whether there's anything that would be....would staff be precluded from anything if this remains as draft and final in November, or is staff facilitated more by if we just adopt as final now? I don't know. I'm not cognizant enough of the process to know that.

Merrick Burden [00:05:47] Thank you Mr. Vice-Chairman. I think either direction is fine. This is really your preference and your comfort, but I will also look at Miss Bernaus to see if she has more to add to this current discussion.

Katrina Bernaus [00:05:58] Thank you Director Burden. And thank you Miss Kiefer for the motion in question. The scheduled final action in November was in anticipation of potential for significant changes to be brought back in November. However, our advisory bodies have not provided any significant changes as suggestions, and in this motion I am not seeing any further guidance or significant

changes proposed. Therefore, the draft that would be brought back to the Council would be the exact same and there would be no new information other than those minor edits from the SSC that you have before you, so you would have the same information in front of you in November.

Sharon Kiefer [00:06:46] Mr. Chairman, I'd be happy for somebody to give me a friendly amendment if the Council desires to go ahead and make this final.

Butch Smith [00:06:59] Okay.

Sharon Kiefer [00:07:04] Or Mr. Niles can withdraw his second and we'll fix it.

Butch Smith [00:07:09] Yeah, I don't think there's, I mean there is....in this process I don't there's anything like a friendly amendment. I guess it has to be an amendment if so chosen. Is there, do we need one? It's your preference. Corey.

Corey Niles [00:07:29] So I may be a little bit slow on this. So Merrick's.....the question is whether to just finalize it now. Was that where people.....I guess I'd be a little.....the expectation was that there would be another chance to.....I mean, where people didn't get a lot of comments now because they could get more comments in November? I don't know. So I was just assuming we were following the scheduled process.

Butch Smith [00:08:05] Wait one second. I just want to throw this out. Here's a trick that can be done. The two can withdraw a motion and we can start over again if we want to do that? That's a option to an amendment. Or we can just go with the amendment if somebody offers one.

Briana Brady [00:08:25] Thanks. I'd be in support of finalizing the Draft Terms of Reference now and not bringing this back for Council efficiencies.

Butch Smith [00:08:42] Corey.

Corey Niles [00:08:43] You just gave us the option that I now forgot that I would be happy to do what needs to do to withdraw and start over if that's easiest.

Sharon Kiefer [00:08:54] Whatever's the most efficient at this point, I'm good.

Butch Smith [00:08:57] Uh-oh, I think I'm in trouble here. Go ahead.

Christa Svensson [00:09:01] Well, if you'd like me to weigh-in. Just your options currently are we can either have an amendment or it may be simpler if the maker of the motion knows what they would, or what she would like to have for a revised motion to have the second withdraw their second in which case we can go back to the drawing board.

Corey Niles [00:09:31] Then Mr. Vice. Thank you Miss, there's too many Vice-Chairs. Vice-Chair and Vice-Chair. But the.....I would withdraw my second then.

Butch Smith [00:09:42] Okay.

Sharon Kiefer [00:09:46] Tower of power after the word "adopt" as final. No, as final, adopt as final, the....get rid of draft, "The Terms of Reference for the CPS stock assessment". Actually, we only need Terms of Reference once. It's in there twice. Yeah, so yeah that's fine. As presented in J.2, Attachment 2 with staff to complete minor edits and to include the SSC edits recommended in J.2.a, Supplemental

SSC Report 1. And my motion does not include the additional action on J.2, Attachment 3 because there have been no revisions. That is accurate and complete.

Butch Smith [00:10:56] Okay, can we get a second to this motion? Maybe we better have another second. Can we get another, can we get a.....Briana Braby? Or I saw Briana, so seconded the motion? Briana, yeah. All right, so would you like to speak to your motion?

Sharon Kiefer [00:11:33] What I just said except with the addition that staff is comfortable. That they're not likely to get any additional and so to be efficient we should go ahead and adopt as final.

Butch Smith [00:11:44] Okay, any questions of the motion maker? Not discussion, questions? Okay, seeing none, any questions.....discussion, excuse me, on the floor of the motion? Seeing none I'll call for the question. All those in favor?

Council [00:12:02] Aye.

Butch Smith [00:12:03] Those opposed? Those abstained? Motion carries unanimously. So I don't think there's any other discussion on this. So Katrina, did we do our job complete and accurate as best we could?

Katrina Bernaus [00:12:25] Yes, thank you. You have adopted a final Terms of Reference for CPS stock assessments to be applied beginning in 2027 and have completed your work on this action. Thank you.

Butch Smith [00:12:40] Okay, I will be turning the gavel over to Chairman Pete and looking for some Tylenol in my briefcase. Thank you.