

ECOSYSTEM SCIENCE INFORMATION SESSION

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) is in the process of incorporating ecosystem-based fishery management principles through an Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management Plan (EFMP). The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the Council's Ecosystem Plan Development Team (EPDT) have recommended regular reports on available ecosystem science and the status of the California Current Large Marine Ecosystem.

The Council and the EPDT have been reviewing ecosystem-based fishery management initiatives around the country, including the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's (NPFMC) Aleutian Islands Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP). At its September 2010 meeting in Boise, Idaho, the Council scheduled this information session and requested a more detailed presentation on Aleutian Islands FEP, particularly, the types of scientific information considered and examples of how that information is used in management.

The stated goal of the Aleutian Islands FEP is to “provide enhanced scientific information and measurable indicators to evaluate and promote ecosystem health, sustainable fisheries, and vibrant communities in the Aleutian Islands region” and “was developed to provide the [NPFMC] Council with an understanding of important relationships among ecosystem components, which are not always considered together by managers. The FEP also identifies areas of uncertainty, describes how the [NPFMC] Council may currently be addressing the associated risk, and provides suggestions for other tools the [NPFMC] Council may wish to consider.”

The FEP provides background information and analyses on the Aleutian Islands ecosystem:

- Describes and synthesizes the Aleutian Islands ecosystem processes and interactions,
- Delineates the regulatory and bio-physical boundaries of the Aleutian Islands,
- Conducts a qualitative risk assessment of Aleutian Islands interactions,
- Uses management objectives of Aleutian Islands fisheries to identify priorities for the FEP,
- Identifies ecological indicators appropriate to monitor key ecosystem interactions,
- Identifies knowledge gaps and research needs, and
- Provides a framework by which ecosystem considerations identified herein could be implemented within the current [North Pacific] Council structure and management practice.

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item D.1.a, Attachment 1: Overview of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council's Aleutian Islands Fishery Ecosystem Plan.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. North Pacific Fishery Management Council Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- d. Public Comment
- e. Council Discussion

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10/18/10