



# NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

605 W. 4th Ave. Suite 306  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
(907) 271-2809  
Fax (907) 271-2817

## Action Memo

**File Number:**Cons 15-048

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**Agenda Date**12/7/2015

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**Dan Hull, Chairman**  
**Chris Oliver, Executive Director**

**SUBJECT:**  
Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan - Discussion Paper

**STAFF CONTACT:** Diana Evans

**ACTION REQUIRED:**  
Review discussion paper and consider whether to initiate a BS Fishery Ecosystem Plan

**BACKGROUND:**  
The Council has been considering whether to develop a Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) since June 2013, including scoping objectives for a Bering Sea FEP and evaluating how the plan should be structured to benefit fishery management decision making. Between February and October 2014, the Council received public input from stakeholders and its advisors, which expressed interest in developing an FEP. In October 2014, the Council requested the Ecosystem Committee continue developing an approach and format for an FEP, and draft goals and objectives for Council consideration. Given concerns about the staff resources needed for this project in relation to other Council priorities, the Council has not yet committed to tasking the FEP, but rather has asked for more information to support a future Council decision, and illustrate how an FEP would function in the Council process. The attached discussion paper has been prepared with the input of the Ecosystem Committee, for Council consideration at this meeting. The Ecosystem Committee recommends that the Council initiate work on a Council Fishery Ecosystem Plan for the Bering Sea. The discussion paper identifies potential benefits from developing an FEP, in the short and long term, and recommends how the FEP should be structured, and next steps. The Committee recommends developing a core FEP with the potential for various action modules to be developed under the FEP framework, as time and resources allow.

The SSC will not be reviewing the discussion paper at this meeting, but has reviewed earlier iterations and is supportive of the Council's effort to develop a Bering Sea FEP, as outlined in both the October 2014 and April 2015 SSC minutes (and described in the discussion paper).

The Ecosystem Committee's minutes from the most recent meeting (October 2015) are also included as a separate attachment to this agenda item. In addition to the recommendation on the Bering Sea FEP, the Committee reviewed NOAA's draft ecosystem-based fishery management policy, and provided recommendations for the Council.