

Executive Director's Report

Dan Hull Terms Out

After serving three full terms (9 years), Chairman Dan Hull is terming off the Council. As you know, Dan has been the Council Chairman for the past 4 years and has served as chair of the Halibut and Sablefish IFQ Committee, the Observer Advisory Committee, the EM Working Group, and the Executive, Finance, and Legislative Committees. He has also served as an alternative commissioner to the IPHC and currently serves as alternate commissioner to the North Pacific Fish Commission. We will have brief opportunity to toast Chairman Hull during the reception Wednesday evening at the Afognak Building (across the bridge), beginning at 6pm. Thank you for your outstanding service on the Council Dan!

Staff News

I am pleased to announce that Ms. Sara Cleaver has accepted our offer to be a full-time fishery analyst for the NPFMC, on a 2-year temporary basis. Sara has been working with the Council staff as our Alaska Sea Grant Fellow since October and has proven herself to be a capable and reliable fishery analyst. She has been working on several projects including halibut retention in BSAI pot gear, the Bering Sea FEP, and GOA Groundfish plan amendment summaries, and will be taking on new assignments and responsibilities in her new capacity. Welcome aboard Sara! Alaska Sea Grant has published a story about her successful fellowship with the Council: <https://alaskaseagrant.org/2018/05/25/sea-grant-fellow-hired-by-fishery-council/>

I have also issued a vacancy announcement for a fishery economist position, on a 2-year temporary basis. The deadline for applications is June 8. Additional details can be found here: <https://www.npfmc.org/wp-content/PDFdocuments/MISC/Economist2018.pdf>

Plan Team Nominations

WDFW has nominated Ms. Lisa Hillier to serve on both the Bering Sea and Gulf Groundfish Plan Teams, with her time participating on those two bodies based on the issues under consideration by each team. Ms. Hillier is a scientist in the WDFW Marine Fish Science Unit with a background in population assessment for both groundfish and shellfish management, and ecosystem investigations. Her experience includes work with trawl and ROV surveys. Her resume is **attached**.

The Alaska Fisheries Science Center has nominated Dr. Cody Szuwalski to serve on the NPFMC Bering Sea Crab Plan Team. Dr. Szuwalski has strong quantitative skills and knowledge of crab life history, spatial modeling, snow crab stock assessment, fish and shellfish population dynamics. He recently authored the Bering Sea snow crab SAFE chapter, and has published papers on climate ready fisheries management, trophic cascades, spatial models and next generation stock assessment techniques. His CV is **attached**.

The Alaska Fisheries Science Center has nominated Dr. Steven Barbeaux to serve on the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Groundfish Plan Team. Dr. Barbeaux has strong quantitative

skills and knowledge of flatfish, pollock, and Pacific cod, population dynamics. In addition, he has authored stock assessments for Greenland turbot, Aleutian Island pollock, and GOA Pacific and publications on fisheries dependent sampling, spatial modeling and acoustics. His CV is **attached**.

The Alaska Fisheries Science Center has also nominated Dr. Kalei Shotwell to serve on the NPFMC Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Groundfish Plan Team, replacing Dr. Dana Hanselman who is now on the SSC. Dr. Shotwell has strong quantitative skills and knowledge of stock assessment and has authored and co-authored numerous rockfish SAFE chapters for over ten years, and has recently worked on integrating ecosystem and socio-economic considerations with stock assessment through the development of Ecosystem and Socio-economic Profiles (ESP) is a major step to bring ecosystem-based science to the NPFMC. Her CV is **attached**.

The Alaska Fisheries Science Center has nominated Dr. Peter Hulson to serve on the NPFMC Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Plan Team to replace Dr. Jon Heifetz who is retiring. Dr. Hulson has strong quantitative skills and knowledge of rockfish population dynamics, and has authored rockfish SAFE chapters, and other publications on spatial modeling, tagging data, and age composition sampling. Pete also has extensive at-sea fieldwork experience having participated in AFSC longline and acoustic surveys as well as working directly with the rockfish trawl industry. His CV is **attached**.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has nominated Ms. Jane Sullivan to serve on the Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Groundfish Plan Team. Jane has been participating in a temporary role on the Plan Team since Dave Barnard's retirement. Jane is currently a biometrician responsible for various groundfish stock assessments and is assisting in developing an age-structured Pacific herring model. Her CV is **attached**.

The SSC will provide a recommendation on these nominations and the Council will consider these appointments during its executive session on Friday.

S-K Proposals

On May 24, NMFS announced [the start of the Saltonstall-Kennedy \(S-K\) Grant Program application solicitation for FY 2019](#). The S-K Grant solicitation is a highly competitive process, and as such, includes a pre-proposal grant process to reduce the burden of preparing full proposals on projects that do not meet program criteria. Pre-proposals will be accepted for 60 days, [May 24 through July 23, 2018](#). The 2019 priority focus areas are Promotion, Development, and Marketing; Marine Aquaculture; and Support of Science that Maximizes

Fishing Opportunities, Revenue and Jobs in U.S. Fisheries While Ensuring the Long-Term Sustainability of Marine Resources.

Comfort Zone

The Hilton has informed us that they have purchased 1,400 new chairs. Come October, SSC, AP and public attendees will be a little more comfortable during the meetings.

Council Training

For new Council members and other members interested in Council training, NMFS has tentatively scheduled this for November 14-16, 2018.

Future Council members?

On May 1, several Council, SSC, AP, and Plan Team members participated in a mock Council meeting organized as the culmination of an ecosystems unit at the Floyd Dryden Middle School in Juneau. One hundred and five students researched and argued for how the mock Council should set Bering Sea pollock quotas, based on an understanding of the fishing industry, pollock abundance, their predators and prey, and environmental conditions. Glenn Merrill, Angel Drobnica, Franz Mueter, Dana Hanselman, Cindy Tribuzio, Elizabeth Siddon, Karla Bush, Jane Sullivan, Jocelyn Runnebaum and other scientists participated and helped the students understand the many factors and perspectives that are taken into account in any Council decision. We provided each student participant with a Council pen and a signed certificate.

A nice article about this project was published in the Juneau paper:

<http://juneauempire.com/news/local/2018-05-01/stem-schools-floyd-dryden-students-take-pollock-policy>

The ecosystems unit was also featured the NOAA Fisheries Alaska news May feature story:

https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/teachers-and-scientists-team-show-students-real-world-applications-what-they-learn?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Recent Staff/Council activities

Dr. Elizabeth Figus attended the annual meeting of the Society for Applied Anthropology in Philadelphia in April, where she gave a talk, titled, "Documenting relationships with non-target catch in the Pacific halibut fishery off Alaska."

Jim Armstrong attended the Technical Subcommittee of the Canada-U.S. Groundfish Committee, SWFSC, Santa Cruz, CA April 24-25. The TSC meets annually to exchange information on the status and management of groundfish stocks of mutual concern and coordinate programs of research. Jim also provided management information at the Center for Independent Experts review of the Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod stock assessment, AFSC, Seattle, WA on April 30-May 4.

Steve MacLean participated as a member of the Alaska SeaLife Center Science Advisory Committee in Seward on May 11.

Dr. Diana Stram attended the CIE review for BSAI Yellowfin sole, Northern rock sole and Alaska Plaice at the AFSC on April 16-18. Diana also attended the NMFS 13th National Stock Assessment Workshop (NSAW) on model stability and complexity and ensemble modeling in Irvine, CA on May 22-24.

On May 16, several staff (Witherell, Marrinan, Cunningham, Stram, and Armstrong) met with SAI Global assessors who are completing the Alaska Responsible Fisheries Management (AK RFM) Program surveillance audit for the Alaska halibut and sablefish commercial fisheries. These fisheries have been certified under the AK RFM program, and undergo independent surveillance audits for continued certification under this ASMI managed program that evaluates fisheries relative to FAO criteria and standards.

Mr. Tweit participated in the COMPASS Science and Decision Roundtable on ocean change and fisheries in Washington, D.C. on May 7-9. COMPASS is a non-profit, non-advocacy organization that strengthens relationships among scientists, journalists, and policymakers and supports scientists as they engage and advance the dialogue on environmental solutions. The roundtable objective was to inform the development and implementation of effective approaches to fisheries management in a changing ocean.

Mr. Tweit also participated at the first advisory committee meeting for an international study on operationalizing ecosystem-based fishery management, held in southern Chile on May 24-25. This meeting was funded by the Lenfest Foundation (USA) and CSIRO (Australia) as part of the project "Benchmarks for ecosystem assessment: Indicators and guidelines for practical Ecosystem Based Fishery Management (EBFM)" being led by Dr Beth Fulton (CSIRO) and Dr Keith Sainsbury (University of Tasmania).

Council Coordinating Committee

Chairman Hull, Mr. Kinneen, Diana Evans and I participated at the annual CCC meeting, which was held in Sitka Alaska on May 22-24. Several other NPFMC members also attended. The meeting was by the North Pacific Council and chaired by Mr. Hull. Discussions were based around issues listed on the agenda (**attached**), under an overall organizing theme of Collaborative Partnerships. Presentations are posted here: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/event/2018-may-council-coordination-committee-meeting> and meeting results are also posted here: <http://www.fisherycouncils.org/ccc-meetings/> A few noteworthy items from the meeting:

- OMB is reviewing a proposed rule on recusal policy that includes a definition of close causal link ("reasonably expected to impact"), a proportional attribution approach to determining a 10% significant interest based on ownership (< or > 50% ownership). A proposed rule is expected to be published in late fall, and NMFS staff is willing to provide a presentation to the Council (December?)

- NMFS is planning to issue a rule which establishes that aquaculture is allowed in the U.S. EEZ, with no regulations or permits (other than COE) pending further Council action. Aquaculture fish will be exempt from all regulations for wild fish harvest unless modified by Council action.
- NMFS will soon be publishing the draft EBFM regional implementation plans for public comment.
- The North Pacific is the only Council that annually updates its research priorities, and our list of priorities is far more comprehensive than others. The CCC has requested that NMFS integrate council priorities into research planning and into consideration of research grant applications, and report back on how the priorities are used.

Many thanks to Council members, staff, and industry folks (particularly Steven Rhoads, Jeff Favour, Linda Behnken and Stephanie Madsen) who assisted in making this a successful meeting!

Committee Meetings and Workshop

Several committees met on Tuesday, June 5. The Legislative Committee met to discuss CCC actions relative to MSA legislation and review a draft Aquaculture bill. The Enforcement Committee met to review the BSAI halibut pot gear analysis. The Ecosystem Committee met to review the Northern Fur Seal Conservation Plan, receive updates on US Army COE projects, receive a report from the Council's Ecosystem Workshop held in February, and an update on bathymetry data compilation.

The NPFMC will be hosting an Assessments Methods Workshop specifically addressing ensemble modeling and ABC adjustments June 27-28 at the AFSC Seattle. This workshop was initiated by the BSAI Groundfish Plan Team. The workshop will review ensemble modeling and evaluate how this fits within the NPFMC system as well as to discuss considerations for reducing an ABC from the maximum permissible. The workshop is open to the public. An agenda for the workshop is **attached** and it is also posted to the Council's website.

Events this week

On Tuesday, from 5-6:30 pm in the Pavillion Room, we are hosting an informal outreach and listening session on rural participation and entry-level opportunity in the halibut and sablefish IFQ fisheries. A flyer with more information is **attached**.

On Wednesday, from 6-8 pm, we have a seafood reception at the Afognak Center, across the bridge on Near Island. We will have a shuttle bus to transport people as needed. A flyer with more information is **attached**.

On Thursday, from 5:30-7:30 pm, the Governor's Climate Action for Alaska Leadership Team is holding a listening session to get input from the fishing industry and others in Kodiak. The team is charged with crafting a climate policy for the state, and they are in the process of receiving public input on its draft policy. The draft policy and other information about the Leadership team

is here: <http://climatechange.gov.alaska.gov/>. Members of the Leadership Team will provide a short overview and then an opportunity for anyone who wants to do so to provide oral comments on the process. Staff from the Governor's office will be available by phone to take notes, and those notes will become part of our record. A flyer with more information is **attached**.

On Friday at 4 pm, we have an Executive Session to review Plan Team appointments and potentially discuss other administrative issues.

Turning the Tide

In April, the Council requested a presentation on the recently published report "Turning of the Tide: How can Alaska address the 'graying of the fleet' and loss of rural fisheries access?" The report can be found here: <http://fishermen.alaska.edu/turning-the-tide> Dr. Courtney Carothers and Dr. Rachel Donkersloot are here to provide a presentation on the report. The presentation and other materials will be **attached** when available.

Ecosystem Workshop Report

The Council held a one-day ecosystem research workshop on Wednesday, February 7th, in conjunction with the February Council meeting. The workshop was intended to engage the broader Council community, including Council members, scientific and industry advisors, and stakeholders, in a discussion about how the growing body of ecosystem knowledge can be incorporated into the Council process. Fisheries Forum, who helped facilitate the workshop for the Council, have prepared a Summary Report for your review, which synthesizes the major themes of workshop discussions. Additionally, they have worked with the workshop Steering Committee (which includes representatives of Council and AFSC staff, and Council, AP, and SSC members) to develop a short discussion document to frame the Council's conversation about next steps. Katie Latanich will be at the meeting to present the report.