

applicant meets the selection criteria listed above) for participation in the 2026 shark research fishery. The HMS Management Division will provide the list of qualified applicants, without identifying information, to the SEFSC. The SEFSC will then evaluate the list of applicants and, based on the temporal and spatial needs of the objectives, the availability of observers, the availability of applicants, and the available quota for a given year, will select applicants to conduct the prescribed research as part of the shark research fishery. If NMFS determines that a public meeting is necessary, NMFS will announce details of a public selection meeting in a subsequent **Federal Register** notice.

Once the selection process is complete, NMFS will notify the selected applicants and issue the shark research fishery permits. The shark research fishery permits will be valid through December 31, 2026, unless otherwise specified. If needed, NMFS will arrange a captain's meeting with the shark research fishery participants to discuss the objectives and protocols. In the past, NMFS held mandatory captain's meetings before placing observers on vessels, particularly if there are participants who have not participated in recent years or if there are changes in the permit terms and conditions from previous years. NMFS did not hold a captain's meeting in 2025. Once the fishery starts, shark research fishery participants must contact NMFS or the NMFS-designee to arrange the placement of a NMFS-approved observer for each shark research trip. Selected applicants must allow observers the opportunity to perform their duties and assist observers as necessary.

A shark research fishery permit will only be valid for the vessel, owner(s), and terms and conditions listed on the permit, and, thus, cannot be transferred to another vessel or owner(s). Shark research fishery participants must carry a NMFS-approved observer on shark research fishery trips. However, issuance of a shark research fishery permit does not guarantee that the permit holder will be assigned a NMFS-approved observer on any particular trip. Rather, issuance indicates that a vessel may be issued a NMFS-approved observer for a particular trip, and on such trips, may be allowed to harvest Atlantic sharks, including sandbar sharks, in excess of the retention limits described in § 635.24(a). Applicable retention limits will be based on available quota, number of vessels participating in the 2026 shark research fishery, NMFS' shark research fishery objectives, the extent of other

restrictions placed on the vessel, and may vary by vessel and/or location. When not operating under the auspices of the shark research fishery, the vessel would still be able to land other shark species subject to existing retention limits on trips without a NMFS-approved observer.

NMFS annually invites commercial shark limited access permit holders (Directed and Incidental) to submit an application to participate in the shark research fishery (see **ADDRESSES**). Final decisions on the issuance of a shark research fishery permit will depend on the submission of all required information by the deadline (see **DATES**), and NMFS' review of applicant information as outlined above. The 2026 shark research fishery will start after the commercial shark fishery opens on January 1, 2026 under base quotas and default retention limits, unless otherwise published in the **Federal Register**.

*Authority:* 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.* and 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: December 10, 2025.

**Kelly Denit,**

*Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,  
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XF388]

#### Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of public meetings.

**SUMMARY:** The Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Pacific Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will hold a virtual meeting to review additional analyses of the 2025 widow rockfish stock assessment and other requests from the November 2025 Pacific Council meeting. The Pacific Council's SSC Groundfish Subcommittee (GFSC) will hold a virtual meeting to review the 2025 groundfish stock assessment process and discuss process improvements for the next stock assessment cycle, to inform future revisions to the Terms of Reference for the Groundfish Stock Assessment Review Process, the Terms of Reference for Groundfish Rebuilding Analysis, and the Accepted Practices

Guidelines for Groundfish Stock Assessments. The Pacific Council's Groundfish Management Team (GMT) will hold a hybrid in-person/webinar work session to consider and develop items on the Pacific Council's 2026 Year-at-a-Glance calendar. These meetings are open to the public.

**DATES:** The SSC supplemental review meeting will be held Tuesday, January 20, 2026, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time) or until business for the day has been completed, and will continue on Thursday, January 22, 2026, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. or until business for the day has been completed.

The SSC GFSC process review meeting will be held Wednesday, January 21, 2026, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time) or until business for the day has been completed, and will continue on Friday, January 23, 2026, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. or until business for the day has been completed.

The GMT meeting will be held Monday, February 2, 2026, from 12:30 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time) until business for the day has been completed. The GMT will reconvene Tuesday, February 3 through Friday, February 6, 2026, from 8:30 a.m. until business for each day has been completed.

**ADDRESSES:** The SSC and SSC GFSC meetings will be conducted online. Specific meeting information, materials, and instructions for how to connect to the meeting remotely will be provided in the meeting announcement on the Pacific Council's website (see [www.pcouncil.org](http://www.pcouncil.org)).

The GMT meeting will be held at the Pacific Fishery Management Council Office, Large Conference Room, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, Oregon 97220-1384. This work session is being conducted in person with a web broadcast that provides the opportunity for remote public comment. Specific meeting information, including directions on how to join the meeting and system requirements will be provided in the meeting announcement on the Pacific Council's website (see [www.pcouncil.org](http://www.pcouncil.org)). Please contact Kris Kleinschmidt ([kris.kleinschmidt@pcouncil.org](mailto:kris.kleinschmidt@pcouncil.org)) or (503) 820-2412 for technical assistance.

*Council address:* Pacific Fishery Management Council, 7700 NE Ambassador Place, Suite 101, Portland, Oregon 97220.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Todd Phillips, Staff Officer, Pacific Council; telephone: (503) 820-2426, email: [Todd.Phillips@pcouncil.org](mailto:Todd.Phillips@pcouncil.org).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The full SSC supplemental review meeting will focus on any additional analyses for the 2025 widow rockfish stock assessment as requested by the Pacific Council at their November 2025 meeting. The SSC will prepare their recommendations for the Pacific Council consideration at their March 2026 meeting. No management actions will be decided by the SSC.

The SSC GFSC's meeting will include, (a.) evaluation of the 2025 groundfish stock assessment review process to solicit process improvements for future reviews, (b.) discuss potential changes to the Terms of Reference for the Groundfish Stock Assessment Review Process for 2027 and 2028, and Terms of Reference for the Groundfish Rebuilding Analysis for 2027 and 2028, that will inform the process for conducting and reviewing groundfish assessments and rebuilding analyses in the next cycle, and (c.) discuss potential changes to the Accepted Practices Guidelines for Stock Assessments in 2027 and 2028, which is a compilation of guidelines for groundfish stock assessment scientists. Stock assessment teams and review participants are encouraged to attend, as well as members of the Pacific Council's groundfish advisory bodies in order to prepare their recommendations to the Pacific Council.

No management actions will be decided by the SSC GFSC. Process improvement recommendations and proposed changes to the Terms of Reference and Accepted Practices Guidelines documents will first be considered during this online meeting, with a GFSC post-meeting report to the full SSC at their March 2026 meeting. The Pacific Council is scheduled to conduct scoping of the Terms of Reference for the 2027–2028 stock assessment cycle at their March 2026 meeting in Sacramento, California. The Pacific Council is scheduled to adopt preliminary Terms of Reference for the 2027–2028 stock assessment cycle for public review at their June 2026 meeting and adopt final at their November 2026 meeting.

The primary purpose of the GMT work session is to prepare for 2026 Pacific Council meetings. Specific agenda items will include: 2027–28 harvest specifications and management measure process and workload and new management measure prioritization. The GMT may also address groundfish management actions the Pacific Council has indicated on their Year-at-a-Glance calendar, such as the 2026 Pacific whiting fishery, specifications flexibility, and stock assessment terms

of reference. A detailed agenda will be available on the Pacific Council's website prior to the meeting.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the meeting agendas may be discussed, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this document and any issues arising after publication of this document that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

#### Special Accommodations

Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kris Kleinschmidt ([kris.kleinschmidt@pcouncil.org](mailto:kris.kleinschmidt@pcouncil.org); (503) 820–2412) at least 10 days prior to the meeting date.

*Authority:* 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: December 11, 2025.

**Key Israel Marquez,**

*Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XF371]

#### North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Notice of hybrid conference.

**SUMMARY:** The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) the Groundfish Harvest Control Rule Development Workshop will meet on January 20, 2026, and the Joint Groundfish Plan Teams will meet on January 21, 2026.

**DATES:** The meetings will be held on January 20, 2026 and January 21, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Pacific Standard Time (PST).

**ADDRESSES:** The meetings will be hybrid conferences. The in-person component of the meetings will be held at the Alaska Fishery Science Center in the Traynor Room 2076, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Building 4, Seattle, WA 98115. If you plan to attend either meeting in person you need to notify Diana Stram

([dstram@npfmc.org](mailto:dstram@npfmc.org)) at least 2 days prior to the meeting (or 2 weeks prior if you are a foreign national). You will also need a valid U.S. Identification Card.

**Council address:** North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 1007 W 3rd Ave., Suite 400, Anchorage, AK 99501–2252; telephone: (907) 271–2809. Instructions for attending the meeting via video conference are given under **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**, below.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Sara Cleaver, Council staff; email: [scleaver@npfmc.org](mailto:scleaver@npfmc.org) or Diana Stram, Council staff; email [dstram@npfmc.org](mailto:dstram@npfmc.org).

For technical support, please contact our administrative staff; email: [support@npfmc.org](mailto:support@npfmc.org); or telephone: 907–271–2809.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

##### Agenda

*Tuesday, January 20, 2026*

Groundfish Harvest Control Rule Development Workshop

This public workshop will discuss and refine draft frameworks for moving towards more climate resilient harvest control rules (HCRs) under the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Groundfish fishery management plan (FMP) harvest specifications process. The agenda is subject to change, and the latest version will be posted at <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/3115>.

*Wednesday, January 21, 2026*

Groundfish Plan Team Meeting

Joint BSAI/GOA Groundfish Plan Team meeting: Review the 2025 harvest specifications process; review and make recommendations for a range of draft frameworks for climate resilient HCRs. The agenda is subject to change, and the latest version will be posted at <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/3114> prior to the meeting, along with meeting materials.

#### Connection Information

You can attend the meetings online using a computer, tablet, smartphone, or by phone. Instructions and connection details for joining the Groundfish Harvest Control Rule Development Workshop via videoconference will be available at: <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/3115>.

Instructions and connection details for joining the Groundfish Plan Team Meeting via videoconference will be available at: <https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/3114>.

#### Public Comment

Public comment letters will be accepted and should be submitted