



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XG049]

Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public online meeting.

SUMMARY: The Groundfish Subcommittee of the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Pacific Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will convene to review the suitability of a standardization of fishery-dependent indices for midwater rockfishes and an eDNA-based index of abundance for application in groundfish stock assessments. The methodology review meeting is open to the public and being conducted in person with the opportunity for public comment.

DATES: The groundfish methodology review meeting will be held Tuesday, October 6, 2026, through Thursday, October 8, 2026, from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. (Pacific Daylight Time) or until business for the day has been completed.

ADDRESSES: The groundfish methodology review will be conducted as an in-person meeting with web broadcasting. Specific meeting information, including the agenda and directions on how to join the meeting and system requirements, will be provided in the workshop announcement on the Pacific Council's website (see www.pcouncil.org). You may send an email to Hayden York (hayden.york@pcouncil.org; (503) 820-2424) for technical assistance.

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

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Diana Perry, Staff Officer, Pacific

Council; telephone: (503) 820-2414, email: *Diana.Perry@pcouncil.org*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the groundfish methodology review meeting is aimed at evaluating fishery-dependent indices for midwater rockfishes and an eDNA-based index of abundance, which has been developed for the Pacific hake stock assessment, and has been informally proposed for application to widow rockfish and other groundfish species. The fishery-dependent methodology review will focus on practices for data filtering, index standardization model structure, and variables to consider in standardization. The proposed model includes a standard spatiotemporal delta-model for catch rates, positive encounters, and a third layer which supports the estimation of the magnitude of preferential sampling behavior (aggregate, or by vessels) and compares indices to models that do not account for non-random sampling. The eDNA-based index of abundance method review will include the application of eDNA approaches in building an abundance index using Pacific hake as a case study and how the same samples collected and analyzed for hake can be repurposed to examine the abundance and distribution of a wide range of groundfish and coastal pelagic species. This review is planned in preparation for the 2029 groundfish stock assessment cycle. The results of this review are not considered final until reviewed by the full SSC at a future Pacific Council meeting.

No management actions will be decided by the meeting participants. The participants' role will be development of recommendations and reports for consideration by the SSC and the Pacific Council at a future Pacific Council meeting.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the meeting agenda may be discussed, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice 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 of the workshop participants to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Hayden York (*hayden.york@pcouncil.org*; (503) 820-2424) at least 10 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: September 9, 2026.

Anna Michelle Harrison,

Acting Deputy Director,

Office of Sustainable Fisheries,

National Marine Fisheries Service.