

Stakeholder listening session on the Groundfish Programmatic SEIS

Thursday, March 29, 2012, 5:30-8pm

Dillingham/Katmai Room (Advisory Panel room), Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, AK

The Council developed its current groundfish management policy in 2004, following a comprehensive review of the BSAI and GOA groundfish fisheries. The Alaska Groundfish Fisheries Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (PSEIS) evaluated the cumulative changes in the management of the groundfish fisheries since the implementation of the Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) around 1980, and considered a broad array of policy-level, programmatic alternatives. On the basis of the analysis, the Council adopted a management approach statement, and 9 policy goal statements, with 45 accompanying objectives.

The Council is considering whether the time is right to revise the 2004 Groundfish PSEIS. The decision will take into account many different factors, but one important element is whether the Council wants to change the objectives, policy statements, or overall management approach for the groundfish fisheries. The Council has scheduled a listening session at the April Council meeting to solicit comment from stakeholders, and will also accept written comments submitted to the Council office until May 1st. A comprehensive discussion of the PSEIS is planned for the June Council meeting, which will take into account stakeholder input, scientific input from the SSC, and consideration of any benefits and efficiencies that may be gained from a revised PSEIS.

COUNCIL QUESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS

- Are the Council's current groundfish management approach, policy goal statements, and objectives still relevant?
- How is the Council doing relative to achieving its groundfish management objectives?
- Are there new objectives that ought to become part of the groundfish management policy?

DRAFT AGENDA

- 5:30-6 Introductions
 Council's objective for this listening session
 Short primer on the Council groundfish management policy and the 2004 Groundfish PSEIS
- 6-6:15 Questions or discussion
- 6:15-8 Open mic, opportunity for people to provide input
- there will be a sign up sheet
 - depending on the total number of people wanting to comment, we may have a 5 minute time limit
 - if everyone has had the opportunity to speak, we will adjourn early

NEXT STEPS

Written report for Council

Staff will compile any comments offered by members of the public at the listening session, or submitted in writing before 5pm, May 1st, into a report for the Council at the June meeting. Written comments will be accepted by mail or fax (see below), or by email to npfmc.comment@noaa.gov. If submitting comment by email, please include PSEIS in the subject line.

June Council discussion

In June, the Council will further consider the Groundfish PSEIS and whether it is in need of revision. The Council has asked for input from several sources to inform their discussions:

- stakeholder input on whether the existing groundfish management objectives continue to be relevant, or are in need of revision
- SSC scientific guidance on whether we understand the environmental impacts of the groundfish management program today, and the continued relevance of the analysis in the 2004 Groundfish PSEIS
- examples of how an updated PSEIS could address efficiencies in our analytical or regulatory process

At that time, the Council will consider what the appropriate process might be for revising the programmatic groundfish SEIS, and when might be the right time for initiating that process.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Various documents are available on the Council website that provide additional information on this topic (www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/npfmc/public-meetings/committees-related-meetings.html). These include:

- the Council's groundfish management approach, policy goal statements, and specific objectives
- February 2012 discussion paper that was presented to the Council
- 2004 PSEIS primer (available at April Council meeting)
- April 2012 SSC briefing document (available at April Council meeting)
- 2004 PSEIS (<http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/seis/default.htm>)