



Council Operations Update – March 18

With the rapidly evolving pandemic situation, I wanted to keep you informed of Council operations and planning.

Cancellation feedback - Following the announcement of the April meeting cancellation, I received numerous calls and emails from the Council family and public expressing appreciation for making this decision. Since our announcement, the GMFMC has canceled their meeting, and the PFMC and NEFMC have decided to meet by Webinar only.

Committee and Plan Team meetings - The following is the status of committees as of this morning.

- The Ecosystem Committee is scheduling a meeting by teleconference on April 24 to discuss fur seal management and other items that can be addressed by teleconference. Other agenda items will be delayed until an in-person meeting is possible.
- The Cook Inlet Salmon Committee is planning to hold a virtual meeting in May to review the preliminary draft analysis.
- The Community Engagement Committee has cancelled the April meeting and will meet again when they can meet in person.
- The IFQ Committee is holding off further meetings until they can meet in-person again.
- The Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee (FMAC) is scheduled to meet May 18-19.
- The Trawl EM Committee is planning a teleconference meeting for May 20.
- The Climate Change Taskforce has tentatively scheduled a teleconference meeting May 18 (T).
- The LK and TK Taskforce is planning a video conference for April 27-28.
- The Crab Plan Team meeting is scheduled for May 4-8 in Juneau; may be remote only.
- Other committee and plan team meetings are still in the process of being scheduled.

June meeting - Council leadership intends to make a decision by mid-April regarding the June meeting logistics and critical process issues, including whether or not we hold the meeting in-person or remotely, what items to agenda for the meeting, and how to take public comment if we decide to have a remote meeting. At a minimum, there are several items that require timely Council action [Final Action on St. Matthew BKC Rebuilding Plan, Scallop OFL/ABC Specifications, BSAI Crab Specs (AIGKC, PIBKC), and presumably the Cook Inlet Salmon Preliminary Review]. Staff is exploring different possibilities for holding a remote meeting by teleconference, Webex, or video conference platforms.

Disposition of analysis - Staff is continuing to work on analyses and discussion papers that were listed on the April (and June) meeting agendas -- and will be working to address all tasks listed on the 3-meeting outlook. As these documents are completed, they will be set aside and not posted publicly until they are put on a Council meeting agenda to avoid confusion. On the plus side, some analyses will be posted to a meeting agenda well before the normal posting date!

Reports - I am looking to post all of the non-action item reports that were listed on the April agenda on our website as information items when they become available. These reports may include the seabird report, marine mammal status report, the EFH consultation report, the sablefish apportionment workshop report, the salmon genetics report, and the pollock IPA reports. If we have a remote June meeting with a pared down agenda, I think the AFSC report on Arctic activities and the Adak RKC EFP report would be treated similarly. The SSC is looking to discuss some of these topics in June if time is available on the agenda.

Staff Operations - The staff continues to work on issues listed on the 3-meeting outlook. Most staff are teleworking; a few of us continue to work in the office this week. We may all be teleworking by next week as the infection spreads in Anchorage. We held our normal Monday morning staff meeting by videoconference (Zoom), and we are using this platform for administrative and analytical staff meetings, so we functioning as well as can be expected.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Dave