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NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Angel Drobnic, Chair | Diana Evans, Executive Director
1007 W. 3rd Avenue, Suite 400, Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone 907-271-2809 | www.npfmc.org

D2 Gulf of Alaska Groundfish 2025 Survey

June 2026 Council Meeting

SSC Action Memo

Council Staff: Sara Cleaver
Other Presenters: Dr. Pete Hulson (AFSC)
Action Required: 1) Review white paper and presentation
2) Provide feedback as appropriate

BACKGROUND

This agenda item is for the SSC only.

This agenda item is focused on the restratified GOA 2025 bottom trawl survey (BTS) design and results and is intended to address questions that came forward in the Council process last year regarding interpretation of the 2025 GOA BTS estimates. This agenda item provides an opportunity for discussion of survey results across GOA groundfish stocks rather than by individual stock during the fall assessment cycle.

In October 2025, the SSC and the AFSC survey group discussed whether changes to the survey implemented in 2025 impacted the survey results. The survey leads noted that the observed changes were within the historical range and that the survey had small changes in the trawl footprint and depths covered. The SSC recommended, to the degree feasible, further investigation into the impacts on the redistributed survey effort, particularly regarding depth and areas surveyed compared with historical survey results. At that time, the SSC also noted that the survey showed guild-level patterns of increases in several flatfish and roundfish groups and decreases in rockfishes that may reflect changes in survey catchability rather than true changes in abundance. SSC recommendations for considering composition data alongside other indices of abundance and comparing to longline survey results when evaluating whether survey changes may have influenced catchability are noted in the [October 2025 SSC Report](#).

Overall survey results and earlier concerns will be addressed and discussed at this meeting to provide any general recommendations to authors. Evaluation of survey and assessment results at the stock level will be provided by authors this fall. The SSC may provide feedback or recommendations on this agenda item as appropriate.