



# **E Staff Tasking**

December 2025 Council Meeting

## **Action Memo**

Council Staff: Diana Evans

- Action Required:
1. Review Committees, Plan Teams, and upcoming meetings, including update on Social Science Planning Team
  2. Review IRA funding / climate resilience planning timeline update
  3. Provide direction on tasking priorities, scheduling, and future meetings

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Committee and Plan Team Membership and Upcoming Meetings**

#### Membership

Posted on the eAgenda is the updated Council committee list reflecting changes since October 2025.

At this meeting during Executive Session, the Council will consider appointments to the AP and SSC. As described in the B1 Executive Director's Report, a call for nominations for AP members for 2026 ended on October 31<sup>st</sup>. Nomination materials for AP seats, including letters of interest and resumes, are [posted on the eAgenda](#). In June, the Council noted that due to budget contingencies, the Council may consider suspending AP stipends in 2026, and/or may choose not to fill all vacancies. There were 21 members on the AP for most of 2025; ten AP seats have terms that are expiring at the end of the year. Two of those seats are associated with departing members; the remaining members are all eligible to be reappointed and have requested reappointment.

SSC members are appointed for one year and may be reappointed at the pleasure of the Council. All current SSC members are requesting reappointment, with the exception of Dr. Mike Downs and Dr. Pat Sullivan, who will step down from the SSC at the end of the year.

#### Social Science Planning Team and the Data Gap Analysis

In October, the Council requested an update on the Data Gap Analysis that has been in development by the Council's Social Science Planning Team (SSPT). Council staff SSPT coordinator Sarah Marrinan prepared a short overview of the SSPT's mission, current membership, as well as the remaining work and required capacity to complete the data gap analysis. The overview is posted to the eAgenda, and Sarah will provide an update during the agenda item.

#### Executive/Finance Committee

The Council's Executive/Finance Committee is meeting in Executive Session on Wednesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Council may have a brief report to provide on this meeting during staff tasking.

#### Status of future advisory group meetings

The following Committee and Plan Team meetings are currently anticipated:

Advisory Group	Dates and location	Draft agenda topics ( <i>may change</i> )
BSAI Crab Modeling Workshop	January 13-15, 2026 Seattle, WA and virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual BSAI crab modeling workshop for authors and quantitative Crab Plan Team members</li> </ul>
BSAI Crab Plan Team	January 15 (PM), 2026 Virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations for the Council's exploration of alternative Harvest Control Rules to support climate resilience</li> <li><i>Chionoecetes</i> maturity data flow</li> </ul>
Harvest Control Rule team workshop	January 20, 2026 Seattle, WA and virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to develop draft climate-resilient Harvest Control Rule framework options and explore the conditions for using them to set maximum permissible ABCs</li> </ul>
Joint BSAI/GOA Groundfish Plan Teams	January 21, 2026 Seattle, WA and virtual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review 2025 harvest specifications process</li> <li>Recommendations for the Council's exploration of alternative Harvest Control Rules to support climate resilience</li> </ul>
Ecosystem Committee	Spring 2026 ( <i>exact dates and details TBD</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss EFH 5-Year Review process and information products</li> <li>Discuss IRA/climate resilience activities</li> <li>Update on Groundfish Management Policy Review process</li> <li>Update on exploration of alternative Harvest Control Rules to support climate resilience</li> </ul>

## IRA Funding/ Climate Resilience Planning Timeline Update

The Council will receive a written update (posted to the eAgenda) and a presentation on the Council's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)-supported climate resilience planning, including an update on work in progress and potential ideas for further activities to support the objectives of the IRA proposal. This update includes adjustments to the Council's IRA workplan reflecting the Council's decision in October 2025 to take no further action on the Programmatic Evaluation. No action is necessary if the Council feels the activities and next steps in this update are sufficient. The Council could provide direction at this meeting, and/or could also task the Ecosystem Committee with providing input and direction at a future Council meeting.

## Tasking and Scheduling

Posted on the eAgenda is an updated version of the 3-meeting outlook. Additionally, the eAgenda includes an updated list of Council staff responsibilities and the groundfish workplan as background.

### Groundfish Management Policy Review

Staff is preparing an upcoming Groundfish Management Policy Review, which is required approximately every three years and was last completed in February 2022. These reviews are a longstanding, although self-imposed, monitoring requirement that the Council established in the Groundfish FMPs. They provide the opportunity for the Council to review groundfish actions relative to goals and objectives, and consider modifications to FMP guidance. Staff have outlined a proposed approach that is more holistic than past “snapshot” reviews, which would also support the Council's Inflation Reduction Act objectives for climate resilience planning and would describe the implementation of Groundfish Management Policy over the last 20 years. A separate description is posted to the eAgenda, and Council staff Katie Latanich will provide a presentation.

### Upcoming Council meetings

The next two Council meetings are currently scheduled to be held in-person, assuming funding allows: the February 2026 meeting at the Egan Center in Anchorage, AK, and the June 2026 meeting in Vancouver, WA (just outside Portland, OR). **There will not be an April 2026 meeting**, as that meeting was moved to instead occur in February. If budget constraints require us to hold one of our meetings virtually in 2026, it will likely be the October meeting once again. Recall that in April 2025, the Council agreed to alternating in-person and virtual Council meetings *if required* to meet budget reductions, as a cost-saving measure.

A **preliminary February 2026 agenda** is posted to the eAgenda for your review. Please note that this preliminary draft is intended for discussion and feedback purposes only and will be revised following this meeting. The Council's February 2026 meeting will be a regular meeting, not a special meeting, as in 2025, and will therefore include B reports and staff tasking agenda items. Final action on the chum salmon bycatch measures analysis will comprise the majority of the meeting, along with Cook Inlet salmon annual harvest specifications.

Regarding comments on the Bering Sea chum salmon bycatch item, NMFS [published](#) the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for this action on September 12, 2025, and the agency's public comment period will close on January 5, 2026. Public comments on the DEIS that are submitted to NMFS will be linked to the February eAgenda and included in a summary report for the Council meeting. Note that the published DEIS is the version of the analysis that will inform the Council's decision-making at final action. The DEIS will also be accessible on the Council's February 2026 e-Agenda when that page is published (once the December meeting concludes). Regardless of whether they have submitted comments to NMFS, members of the public may also provide comments to the Council on this issue using our usual process for written and oral public comment.

### Planning for 2027 and beyond

As described in October 2025, with the Council's transition to a 4-meeting/year annual schedule, the Council's Finance Committee asked that staff look into options for changing the timing of the annual schedule due to the increasingly high cost of holding June meetings in Alaska. As highlighted in October, if the Council were to move forward with this proposal, the most likely change to the schedule would be:

- Feb/Mar meeting: target the SSC/AP to begin the last week of February
- Mid-May meeting: schedule the SSC/AP to begin 2 weeks before the Memorial Day holiday
- October meeting: as current, generally target the first week of October
- December meeting: as current, generally target the first week of December

The Finance Committee is scheduled to discuss this issue at its December meeting and will report on any recommendations to the full Council for discussion.

## **Proposals and Public Comment**

Written public comments that have been submitted to the Council are available on the eAgenda.