

## Background on the S-K Program

The Saltonstall-Kennedy Act (S-K Act), as amended (15 U.S.C. 713c-3), established a fund (known as the S-K fund) that the Secretary of Commerce uses to provide grants or cooperative agreements for fisheries research and development projects addressed to any aspect of U.S. fisheries, including, but not limited to, harvesting, processing, marketing, and associated infrastructures. U.S. fisheries<sup>1</sup> include any fishery, commercial or recreational, that is, or may be, engaged in by citizens or nationals of the United States, or citizens of the Northern Mariana Islands (NMI), the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia.

The objectives of the S-K Grant Program, and, therefore, the funding priorities, have changed since the program began in 1980. The program has evolved as fishery management laws and policies, and research needs, have evolved in response to changing circumstances.

The original focus of the program was to develop underutilized fisheries within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ, i.e., 3-200 miles (5.6-370.4 kilometers) off the coast). This focus was driven in part by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). The Magnuson-Stevens Act, originally passed in 1976, directed us to give the domestic fishing industry priority access to the fishery resources in the EEZ. In 1980, the American Fisheries Promotion Act (AFPA) amended the S-K Act to stimulate commercial and recreational fishing efforts in underutilized fisheries. The competitive S-K Program initiated as a result of the AFPA included fisheries development and marketing as funding priorities.

In the following years, the efforts to Americanize the fisheries were successful to the point that most nontraditional species were fully developed and some traditional fisheries became overfished. Therefore, we changed the emphasis of the S-K Program to address conservation and management issues and aquaculture.

In 1996, the Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA) (Pub. L. 104-297), was enacted. The SFA amended the Magnuson-Stevens Act and supported further adjustment to the S-K Program to address the current condition of fisheries.

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<sup>1</sup>For purposes of this document, a fishery is defined as one or more stocks of fish, including tuna, and shellfish that are identified as a unit based on geographic, scientific, technical, recreational and economic characteristics, and any and all phases of fishing for such stocks. Examples of a fishery are Alaskan groundfish, Pacific whiting, New England whiting, and eastern oysters.

The Magnuson-Stevens Act, as amended by the SFA, requires us to undertake efforts to prevent overfishing, rebuild overfished fisheries, insure conservation, protect essential fish habitat (EFH), and realize the full potential of U.S. fishery resources. It further requires that we take into account the importance of fishery resources to fishing communities; provide for the sustained participation of such communities; and, to the extent possible, minimize the adverse economic impacts of conservation and management measures on such communities. The Magnuson-Stevens Act defines a "fishing community" as "a community which is substantially dependent on or substantially engaged in the harvest or processing of fishery resources to meet social and economic needs, and includes fishing vessel owners, operators, and crew and United States fish processors that are based in such community." (16 U.S.C. 1802 (16)). In the late 1990s, we refocused the S-K Program to address the needs of fishing communities as defined by the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

The NOAA Strategic Plan, 1998 version, also shaped the S-K Program. The Strategic Plan had three goals under its Environmental Stewardship Mission: Build Sustainable Fisheries (BSF), Recover Protected Species, and Sustain Healthy Coasts. There are three BSF objectives in the 1998 Strategic Plan:

1. Eliminate and prevent overfishing and excess harvesting capacity.
2. Attain economic sustainability in fishing communities.
3. Develop environmentally and economically sound marine aquaculture.

The fisheries research and development mission of the S-K Program tracks with these objectives and has been reflected in the program funding priorities.

Successful applications will be those aimed at helping fishing communities to resolve issues that affect their ability to fish; make full use of currently managed species or explore the potential for development of new sustainable managed fisheries; develop environmentally sound aquaculture; and address the socioeconomic impacts of overfishing and excess harvesting capacity.