



NOAA
FISHERIES

NOAA Fisheries Update

Presentation for the 2014 Interim Council
Coordination Committee

February 19, 2014

FY13 Accomplishments and FY14 Priorities

- Significant accomplishments in FY13
- For FY 2014 our focus remains on our two core mandates:
 - *Ensure the productivity and sustainability of fisheries and fishing communities through science-based decision-making and compliance with regulations.*
 - *Recover and conserve protected resources through the use of sound natural and social sciences.*

NS1 Guideline Revision

- NMFS is considering revisions to NS1 guidelines to address several issues:
 - Improved guidance on rebuilding plans and for determining adequate progress towards rebuilding
 - Guidance for providing increased stability in annual catch limits while preventing overfishing
 - Revised definition of ecosystem component species to provide increased flexibility
 - Improved guidance for ACLs and AMs, particularly for data poor stocks.
 - Reviewing the definition of stocks with low biomass caused by environmental factors, not overfishing (i.e. “depleted”)
 - Management of mixed-stock fisheries
- Next steps:
 - NMFS is targeting the fall of 2014 for publication of proposed revisions
 - In determining the length of the comment period, NMFS will consider the schedule of Council meetings so that each Council has an opportunity to consider the issue and provide comments

NEPA

- CCC recommended changes to the February 2013 NMFS NEPA Policy Directive
- NMFS staff worked with the CCC NEPA subcommittee to “fine tune” the revised draft that was approved by the full CCC
- Some revisions were made, however, the revised draft essentially retains the revisions suggested by the full CCC
- NMFS decided to take public comment on the revised draft
- Revised draft will be posted on the SF website
- Notice of availability will be published in the FR with a 45-day public comment period

Inspector General Audit Report Update

- **OIG Recommendations 1, 2, 3**
 - Addresses the development of policies and procedures on financial disclosures and conflict of interests
 - NMFS established a workgroup with representatives from the Councils and NOAA GC to review and revise policy guidance
 - For recommendation 1, the workgroup worked to revise the financial disclosure form and the revised form will incorporate new guidance
 - OMB has a total of 60 days to review, which incorporates a 30 day comment period (started January 27, 79 FR 4326).
 - NMFS expects the new form to be approved by OMB by the end of March
 - For recommendations 2 & 3, NMFS has drafted policy guidance on conflicts of interest and financial disclosures and will begin the review process for this new guidance this month.
 - We will continue to work with the Council workgroup on these recommendations
 - New guidance is scheduled to be reviewed and completed by June 2014.

Inspector General Audit Report Update

- **OIG Recommendations 4 & 5**
 - Addresses development of Operational Guidelines and Regional Operating Agreements
 - NMFS established a workgroup with representatives from the Councils and NOAA GC to work on these recommendations
 - Recommendation 4 relates to Operational Guidelines for NMFS and the Councils
 - Agenda topic on this scheduled for more detailed discussion on Thursday
 - For recommendation 5, NMFS and the Councils have been diligently working to update and finalize Regional Operating Agreements.
 - MAFMC, SAFMC, CFMC, and PFMC all completed their ROAs in 2013.
 - The remaining 4 Councils are making good progress and should be done soon.
- **OIG Recommendation 6**
 - Addresses record keeping and administrative records
 - Completed 2013.