

MBDA awarded thirteen AIANNH projects during the 2021 competition cycle under funding opportunity number MBDA-OB-2021-2006916. MBDA designated at least one award in each of these service locations: (1) Alaska; (2) California; (3) Northwest Area (Idaho, Oregon and Washington); (4) Rocky Mountain Area (Montana and Wyoming); (5) Western Area (Arizona, Nevada, and Utah); (6) Southwest Area (Colorado and New Mexico); (7) Great Plains Area (Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota); (8) Southern Plains Area (Kansas, Oklahoma and Texas); (9) Midwest Area (Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin); (10) Eastern Area (Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia); and (11) Hawaii.

The AIANNH project cycle spanned from September 2021 through August 2023 and was extended through August 2024. The one-year extension allowed MBDA to conduct an analysis of current AIANNH projects, outcomes, and impact and to obtain public feedback through Tribal consultation and open comment period for future program design. The current AIANNH project awards will expire in August 2024.

II. Consultation Meetings

The purpose of the consultation meetings is, consistent with E.O. 13175 and DAO 218-8, to provide an accountable and transparent process that ensures meaningful and timely input from Tribal officials regarding MBDA's business development and entrepreneurial services in Indian Country, Alaska, and Hawaii and the implications that these programs have in these communities. The consultation meetings are closed to the public.

III. Questions for Public Comment

Members of the general public are invited to submit responses to the following questions. Please provide comments on any or all of the following issues and identify the specific AIANNH community addressed by these comments:

1. What is the primary challenge (or top three challenges) businesses encounter in AIANNH communities? What solutions do you think would help to address the challenge(s)?
2. What are some best practices that you have seen implemented that positively address the business challenges experienced by your

AIANNH community through self-funded and/or externally funded programs (e.g., Federal, State, local government, foundations, etc.)?

3. If you have direct or indirect experience with a MBDA AIANNH project, please provide your thoughts on which services and activities were most beneficial and which could have been more effective.

For comments to be considered, they must include the following identification of the commenter: name; title (if applicable); Tribe, Alaska Native Corporation, or native community (if applicable); organization or business (if applicable); city and state; and they must be submitted in written form at www.regulations.gov. To access the docket where comments may be submitted, please enter "DOC-2024-0003" in the search bar. Comments must be received no later than 11:59 p.m., EDT, Sunday, June 16, 2024.

Dated: April 16, 2024.

Eric Morrissette,

Acting Under Secretary, Minority Business Development Agency, U.S. Department of Commerce.

[FR Doc. 2024-08414 Filed 4-17-24; 11:15 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Draft Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Fisheries Research Conducted and Funded by the Alaska Fisheries Science Center

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), US Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of availability of a Draft Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the availability of the "Draft Supplemental Programmatic Environmental Assessment (SPEA) for Fisheries Research Conducted and Funded by the Alaska Fisheries Science Center." Publication of this notice begins the official public comment period for this SPEA. The purpose of this Draft SPEA is to evaluate potential direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of changes in research that were not analyzed in the 2019 Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC) Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA), or new research activities in the North Pacific Ocean and

marine waters off of Alaska. Where necessary, updates to certain information on species, stock status or other components of the affected environment that may result in different conclusions from the 2019 PEA are presented in this analysis.

DATES: Comments and information must be received no later than June 18, 2024.

ADDRESSES: Comments on the Draft SPEA should be addressed to Rebecca Reuter, Environmental Compliance Coordinator, NOAA/NMFS/AFSC, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115.

The mailbox address for providing email comments is: nmfs.afsc.spea@noaa.gov. NMFS is not responsible for email comments sent to addresses other than the one provided here. Comments sent via email, including all attachments, must not exceed a 10-megabyte file size.

A copy of the Draft SPEA may be obtained by writing to the address specified above, telephoning the contact listed below (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**), or visiting the internet at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/supplemental-programmatic-environmental-assessment-fisheries-research-conducted-and-funded>. Documents cited in this notice may also be viewed, by appointment, during regular business hours at the aforementioned address.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Rebecca Reuter, email: rebecca.reuter@noaa.gov, phone: (206) 526-4234.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The AFSC is the research arm of NMFS in the Alaska Region. The purpose of AFSC fisheries research is to produce scientific information necessary for the management and conservation of living marine resources in the North Pacific Ocean and marine waters off of Alaska. AFSC's research is needed to promote both the long-term sustainability of the resource and the recovery of certain species, while generating social and economic opportunities and benefits from their use. The AFSC provides scientific data and technical advice to a variety of management organizations and stakeholder groups, including the NMFS Alaska Regional Office, North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC), State of Alaska, Alaska coastal subsistence communities, and U.S. representatives participating in international fishery and marine mammal negotiations, as well as the fishing industry, environmental non-governmental organizations and other constituents.

NMFS has prepared the Draft SPEA under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to evaluate several

alternatives for conducting and funding fisheries and ecosystem research activities as the primary Federal action. Additionally, in the Draft SPEA, NMFS evaluates a related action—also called a “connected action” under 40 CFR 1508.25 of the Council on Environmental Quality’s regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*)—which is the proposed promulgation of regulations and authorization of the take of marine mammal incidental to the fisheries research under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). Additionally, because the proposed research activities occur in areas inhabited by species of marine mammals, birds, sea turtles and fish listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) as threatened or endangered, this Draft SPEA evaluates activities that could result in unintentional takes of ESA-listed marine species.

The following two alternatives are currently evaluated in the Draft SPEA:

- Alternative 1—Continue current fisheries and ecosystem research (Status Quo/no action) as described in the 2019 AFSC PEA.
- Alternative 2—Conduct current research with some modifications as well as new research activities that are planned for the future (*i.e.*, 2024–2029). New future research proposed under Alternative 2 was not previously analyzed in the 2019 PEA.

The alternatives include a program of fisheries and ecosystem research projects conducted or funded by the AFSC as the primary Federal action. Because this primary action is connected to a secondary Federal action, to consider authorizing incidental take of marine mammals under the MMPA, NMFS must identify as part of this evaluation “(t)he means of effecting the least practicable adverse impact on the species or stock and its habitat.” (section 101(a)(5)(A) of the MMPA [16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*]) NMFS must therefore identify and evaluate a reasonable range of mitigation measures to minimize impacts to protected species that occur in AFSC research areas. These mitigation measures are considered as part of the identified alternatives in order to evaluate their effectiveness to minimize potential adverse environmental impacts. The two action alternatives also include mitigation measures intended to minimize potentially adverse interaction with other protected species that occur within the action area. Protected species include all marine mammals, which are covered under the MMPA, all species listed under the

ESA, and bird species protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Potential direct and indirect effects on the environment are evaluated under each alternative in the Draft SPEA. The environmental effects on the following resources are considered: physical environment, special resource areas, fish, marine mammals, birds, sea turtles, invertebrates, and the social and economic environment. Cumulative effects of external actions and the contribution of fisheries research activities to the overall cumulative impact on the aforementioned resources is also evaluated in the Draft SPEA for the geographic regions in which AFSC surveys are conducted.

NMFS requests comments on the Draft SPEA for Fisheries Research Conducted and Funded by the National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Fisheries Science Center. Please include, with your comments, any supporting data or literature citations that may be informative in substantiating your comment.

Dated: March 29, 2024.

Robert Foy,

Science and Research Director, Alaska Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2024–07096 Filed 4–18–24; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XD884]

North Pacific Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Center of Independent Experts (CIE) review of the Gulf of Alaska walleye pollock stock assessment will be held in May, in Seattle, WA.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 7, 2024 through Thursday, May 9, 2024, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Pacific Time.

ADDRESSES:

Meeting address: The meeting will be in-person only and will be held in Room 2079 on Tuesday, May 7, 2024 and in Room 2143 on May 8–9, 2024, at the Alaska Fishery Science Center, Sand Point Way NE, Building 4, Seattle, WA 98115.

If you plan to attend, you need to notify Cole Monnahan (cole.monnahan@noaa.gov) at least 2 days prior to the meeting (or 2 weeks prior if you are a foreign national). You will also need a valid U.S. Identification Card.

Council address: North Pacific Fishery Management Council, 1007 W 3rd Ave., Anchorage, AK 99501–2252; telephone: (907) 271–2809.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Cole Monnahan, Alaska Fishery Science Center staff; phone: (206) 526–4224; email: cole.monnahan@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Agenda

Tuesday, May 7, 2024 Through Thursday, May 9, 2024

The CIE will review the Gulf of Alaska walleye pollock stock assessment input data and model. The agenda is subject to change, and the latest version will be posted at https://apps-afsc.fisheries.noaa.gov/Plan_Team/2024_GOA_pollock_cie/ prior to the meeting, along with meeting materials.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: April 16, 2024.

Key Israel Marquez,

Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2024–08402 Filed 4–18–24; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XD882]

Atlantic Highly Migratory Species; Meeting of the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting and webinar/conference call.

SUMMARY: NMFS will hold a 3-day Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Advisory Panel (AP) meeting in May 2024. The intent of the meeting is to consider options for the conservation and management of Atlantic HMS. The meeting is open to the public.

DATES: The AP meeting and webinar will be held on Tuesday, May 14, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET; Wednesday, May 15, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET; and Thursday, May 16, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. ET.