

- (1) Only a full-time state employee of the state agency responsible for marine and/or anadromous fisheries shall be appointed by a constituent state Governor as the principal state official for purposes of section 302(b) of the Act.
- (2) A principal state official may name his/her designee(s) to act on his/her behalf at Council meetings. Individuals designated to serve as designees of a principal state official on a Council, pursuant to section 302(b)(1)(A) of the Act, must be a resident of the state and be knowledgeable and experienced, by reason of his or her occupational or other experience, scientific expertise, or training, in the fishery resources of the geographic area of concern to the Council.
- (3) New or revised appointments by state Governors of principal state officials and new or revised designations by principal state officials of their designees(s) must be delivered in writing to the appropriate NMFS Regional Administrator and the Council chair at least 48 hours before the individual may vote on any issue before the Council. A designee may not name another designee. Written appointment of the principal state official must indicate his or her employment status, how the official is employed by the state fisheries agency, and whether the official's full salary is paid by the state. Written designation(s) by the principal state official must indicate how the designee is knowledgeable and experienced in fishery resources of the geographic area of concern to the Council, the County in which the designee resides, and whether the designee's salary is paid by the state.

2.3 Advisory Groups

The Council has established two formal advisory groups: a Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) and an Advisory Panel (AP). Subject to the availability of appropriations, stipends are available to members of committees formally designated as SSCs or APs who are not employed by the Federal Government or a state marine fisheries agency. For purposes of this section, a state marine fisheries agency includes any state or tribal agency that has conservation, management, or enforcement responsibility for any marine fishery resource.

The Council also maintains Plan Teams for each fishery management plan, and appoints standing and ad hoc committees necessary to advise the Council on particular conservation and management issues. Stipends are not available to members of plan teams or other committees.

2.3.1 Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC)

As required by the Act at Sec. 302(g)(1), the Council shall establish, maintain, and appoint the members of a SSC to assist it in the development, collection, and peer review of such statistical, biological, economic, social, and other scientific information as is relevant to the Council's development and amendment of any of its fishery management plans. The SSC is composed of experts in biology, statistics, economics, sociology, and other relevant disciplines from the federal, state, and private scientific communities and other appropriate sources. Members appointed by the Council to the SSC shall be federal employees, state employees, academicians, or independent experts and shall have strong scientific or technical credentials and experience. **Independent experts on the SSC cannot be employed by an interest group or advocacy group.** Each member of the SSC shall be treated as an affected individual for purposes of disclosure and financial interest and recusal provisions for SSC members as specified in the Act. Financial interest disclosures for SSC members will be reviewed annually by the Council prior to appointment, and when updated by an SSC member reporting any substantial changes in financial interest. Financial interest disclosures will be kept on file by the Secretary.

The SSC will provide the peer review process for scientific information used to advise the Council about the conservation and management of the fishery. The review process, which may include existing committees or panels, is deemed to satisfy the requirements of the guidelines issued pursuant to section

515 of the Treasury and General Government Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2001 (Public Law 106–554—Appendix C; 114 Stat. 2763A–153).

A. Objectives and Duties

As requested by the Council, through the Council Chair or the Executive Director, the SSC shall:

- 1) Provide ongoing scientific advice for fishery management decisions, including recommendations for acceptable biological catch, preventing overfishing, maximum sustainable yield, and achieving rebuilding targets, and report on stock status and health, bycatch, habitat status, social and economic impacts of management measures, and sustainability of fishing practices.
- 2) Provide expert scientific and technical advice to the Council on the development of fishery management policy, fishery management plans and amendments, their goals and objectives, proposed regulations, and criteria for judging plan effectiveness.
- 3) Assist in the identification, development, collection, and evaluation of statistical, biological, economics, social and other scientific information deemed relevant to the Council's fishery management planning, particularly with regard to determining the best scientific data available as required by National Standard 2.
- 4) Advise the Council on preparing comments on any relevant fishery management plan or amendment prepared by the Secretary or Secretary's delegate pursuant to Section 304(c) of the Act.
- 5) Submit to the Council reports deemed appropriate by the Committee or requested by the Council.
- 6) Perform other appropriate duties as may be required by the Council to carry out its functions under the Act.
- 7) Serve as the Council's peer review body for influential scientific information pursuant to requirements of the Information Quality Act (Section 515 of Public Law 106-554) and NOAA information quality guidelines.

B. Members and Chair

The SSC members shall be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of, the Council. They shall be appointed for one year, and may be reappointed. Vacancies may be filled for the remaining unexpired term. The SSC Chair and Vice Chair shall be nominated by the Committee from among its members and confirmed by the Council for one-year terms.

Each statutory agency designated as a member of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council by the Act may have a member on the Scientific and Statistical Committee. That member may have an alternate, although it is expected that the primary member from an agency will attend meetings of the Scientific and Statistical Committee in person whenever possible. The statutory agency may nominate the alternate for their primary member, notifying the chair of the SSC by letter of that selection. Alternates will be appointed for the same period as the primary member (i.e., one year).

Other Scientific and Statistical Committee members may have an alternate on a case-by-case basis (to be approved by the Council Chair or Executive Director in advance of the next meeting) when the member would be unable to participate for an extended period of time. It is expected that those alternates would be experts in the same field as the member and familiar with the work of the SSC and the Council.

The key requirement in appointing members or alternates is for the Council to maintain the highest level of objective scientific and technical expertise. Members should be able to make unbiased and objective scientific recommendations to the Council. Additionally, SSC members shall maintain high standards of ethical conduct..

C. Administrative Provisions

The SSC shall meet as a whole, or in part, at the request of the Chair of the SSC, with the approval of the Chair of the Council, as often as necessary to fulfill the SSC's responsibilities, taking into consideration time and budget constraints. Normally, the SSC will meet at least five times a year, starting two days prior to the scheduled Council meetings. The SSC shall hold its meetings in conjunction with meetings of the Council, to the extent practicable. The Executive Director of the Council shall provide such staff and other support as the Council considers necessary for SSC activities, within budgetary limitations.

The agenda for each SSC meeting shall be developed by the SSC Chair in consultation with the Deputy Director or Executive Director. SSC meetings will follow established protocols. Following staff reports, the public will have an opportunity to testify on scientific aspects of an issue prior to SSC deliberations. SSC members shall disclose any potential conflicts regarding a particular topic prior to any discussion of that issue. SSC decisions will be reached by consensus, whenever possible; however if a decision is required and consensus cannot be reached, the opinion of the majority will prevail.

Minutes of the meeting shall reflect the discussion and deliberations that were made during the SSC meeting. The SSC Chair, or designee, will be responsible for reporting the SSC's recommendations to the Council. Minutes of the SSC meeting will be made available to the public on the Council's website after the meeting.

SSC members shall serve without compensation, except that (subject to the availability of appropriations), a stipend may be paid to members of the scientific and statistical committees who are not employed by the federal government or a state marine fisheries agency, as defined at 50 CFR 600.133(b). SSC members will be paid their actual travel expenses in performing their duties in accordance with applicable law and Council travel policy

2.3.2 Advisory Panel (AP) / Fishing Industry Advisory Committee (FIAC)

The Council has established an advisory panel (AP) under Sec. 302(g)(3), as required by the Act (i.e., an FIAC). Subject to the availability of funds, members of the Advisory Panel are eligible to receive stipends provided they are not employed by the Federal Government or a state marine fisheries agency, as defined at 50 CFR 600.133(b).

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council appoints an Advisory Panel (AP) of recognized experts from the fishing industry and several related fields, and represents a variety of gear types, industry and related interests as well as a spread of geographic regions of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest having major interest in the fisheries off Alaska.

A. Objectives and Duties

The Council relies on the AP for comprehensive advice on how various fishery management alternatives will affect the industry and local economies, on potential conflicts between user groups of a given fishery resource or area, and on the extent to which the United States will utilize resources managed by the Council's fishery management plans.