



New England Fishery Management Council

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John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D., *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 21, 2018
TO: Executive Committee
FROM: Tom Nies, Executive Director
SUBJECT: State Agency Support to the Council

Background

At the January 2018 Executive Committee meeting, the Committee discussed Council support to state agencies. The proposal suggested a two-tier system of funding for 2018 and 2019. States would receive \$20,000 for Council membership and \$20,000 for participation on technical bodies. This arrangement would be formalized through a contract with participating states that would define responsibilities, including annual reporting requirements. The Committee directed the Executive Director to contact the state agencies for their level of interest, and to consider as an alternative the hiring of additional staff.

State Agency Input

The five state directors were contacted via email. The program under consideration was described to them and they were asked four questions. Responses are summarized in italics.

- Is the amount of funding sufficient to be useful to you? *All five states believed the proposed funding would be useful and would help the states support Council activities.*
- Would this proposal, if adopted, change the level of support you provide the Council? *Responses were mixed. Two states said the finding would lead them to consider additional support; one state said it would help it maintain its current level of engagement (which is at risk because of reduced state funding); and two states were silent.*
- Are you aware of any state regulations or policies that would prevent your state from participating? *None of the states reported any impediments to this approach.*
- Do you have suggestions on how to improve this proposal? *None of the states suggested improvements. All prefer a simple approach to administrative requirements.*

Hiring Additional Staff

The Committee directed staff to further explore hiring additional staff as an alternative to state financial support. An earlier memo described the strengths and weaknesses of that approach in general terms. Cost to the Council of a new hire depends on starting salary (related by education, experience, and position) and family status (due to medical insurance). The costs would range from \$92,000 to \$130,000 for most likely candidates. There are several possible ways that additional staff could be helpful.

Budget

Given our current budget situation the Executive Committee is not facing an either/or decision. The Council could afford to provide state support at \$200,000/year for two years and, if the need exists, could hire an additional staff person.

Recommendation

The Council could approach the state directors and offer \$40,000 per year in support to each state over the next two years. Terms would be negotiated. The states would be required to file annual reports and funding for 2019 would not be provided until the report was received for 2018. Continuation of this program into the next grant cycle (2020-2025) would depend on evaluation of the two-year program and the future budget.

Enclosure (1)

State Participation in NEFMC Technical Committees

SSC: Rhode Island

Habitat PDT: Massachusetts/Maine

Herring PDT: Maine/New Hampshire/Massachusetts

Monkfish PDT: Connecticut/Maine

Whiting PDT: None

Scallop PDT: Maine/Massachusetts

Skate PDT: Rhode Island

Groundfish PDT: Maine/Massachusetts

Enclosure (2)

Council Funding to States				
Council	Year	Total	Recipient	Amount
Pacific	2016	\$535,807		
			Alaska	\$ 22,527
			California	\$ 145,691
			Idaho	\$ 42,814
			Oregon	\$ 146,619
			Washington	\$ 136,619
			PSMFC	\$ 41,537
South Atlantic	2016 Draft	\$ 309,500		
			North Carolina	\$ 58,250
			South Carolina	\$ 58,250
			Georgia	\$ 58,250
			Florida	\$ 58,250
			Florida FWC	\$ 38,250
			Florida Eco Data Base	\$ 38,250
Gulf	2016	\$ 270,000		
			Alabama	\$ 45,000
			Florida	\$ 45,000
			Louisiana	\$ 45,000
			Mississippi	\$ 45,000
			Texas	\$ 45,000
			GSMFC	\$ 45,000