

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Angela Forristall, Staff Officer, Pacific Council; telephone: (503) 820-2419.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The purpose of the Peer Review Panel (Panel) meetings are to conduct a comprehensive review of the Sacramento River fall Chinook Workgroup's (SRWG's) work related to updating the SRFC S_{MSY} value, develop a recommendation for consideration by the Pacific Council and its Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) for an approach to update the S_{MSY} value, if applicable, and compare the scientific merits of the recommendation to the scientific basis of the status quo S_{MSY} value.

The Panel consists of one chair and independent experts with expertise in large river ecosystems and the influence of inland environmental conditions on salmon population dynamics, including river capacity constraints, hydrologic drivers, and freshwater survival processes relevant to major interior river systems; salmon escapement estimation and participation in federally led watershed- or stock-assessment programs; West Coast salmon fisheries science, including assessment methodologies, harvest models, and scientific review processes; and reference point estimation methods.

The Pacific Council Chair has appointed one member each of the Pacific Council's SSC, Salmon Technical Team, and Salmon Advisory Subpanel to participate in the review as advisors.

No management actions or best scientific information available determinations will be decided by the Panel. The Panel's role is the development of recommendations and reports for consideration by the Pacific Council and its SSC at the Pacific Council's November 2026 meeting in Garden Grove, California.

Although non-emergency issues not contained in the meeting agendas may be discussed, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this document and any issues arising after publication of this document that require emergency action under section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, provided the public has been notified of the intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids

should be directed to Mr. Hayden York (hayden.york@pcouncil.org; 503-820-2424) at least 10 days prior to the meeting date.

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

Dated: July 23, 2026.

Rey Israel Marquez,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648-XF828]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Cost Recovery Program

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

ACTION: Notification of fee percentage.

SUMMARY: NMFS publishes notification of a 0.67 percent fee for cost recovery under the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program (Program). This action is intended to provide holders of crab allocations notice of the 2026/2027 crab fishing year fee percentage so they can calculate the required cost recovery fee payment, which must be submitted to NMFS by July 31, 2027.

DATES: The Crab Rationalization Program Registered Crab Receiver permit holder is responsible for submitting the fee liability payment to NMFS by July 31, 2027.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tristan Mandeville, (907) 586-7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

NMFS Alaska Region administers the Program in the North Pacific. Fishing under the Program began on August 15, 2005. Regulations implementing the Program can be found at 50 CFR part 680.

The Program is a limited access privilege program authorized by section 313(j) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). The Program includes a cost recovery provision to collect fees to recover the actual costs directly related to the management, data collection, and enforcement of the Program. The Program is consistent with the cost recovery provisions included

under section 304(d)(2)(A) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. NMFS developed the cost recovery regulations to conform to statutory requirements and to reimburse the agency for the actual costs directly related to the management, data collection, and enforcement of the Program. The Program provides that a proportional share of fees charged will be forwarded to the State of Alaska for reimbursement of its share of management and data collection costs for the Program.

A crab allocation holder generally incurs a cost recovery fee liability for every pound of crab landed during the crab fishing year, from August 1 to July 31. The crab allocations subject to cost recovery include Individual Fishing Quota, Crew Individual Fishing Quota, Individual Processing Quota, Community Development Quota, and the Adak community allocation. The Registered Crab Receiver (RCR) permit holder must collect the fee liability from the crab allocation holder who is landing crab. Additionally, the RCR permit holder must collect their own fee liability for all crab delivered to the RCR. The RCR permit holder is responsible for submitting this payment to NMFS on or before July 31, in the year following the crab fishing year in which landings of crab were made.

The dollar amount of the fee due is determined by multiplying the fee percentage (not to exceed 3 percent) by the ex-vessel value of crab debited from the allocation. Program details may be found in the implementing regulations at § 680.44.

Fee Percentage

Each year, NMFS calculates and publishes in the **Federal Register** the fee percentage according to the factors and methodology described at § 680.44(c)(2). The formula for determining the fee percentage is the "direct program costs" divided by "value of the fishery," where "direct program costs" are the direct program costs for the Program for the previous fiscal year, and "value of the fishery" is the ex-vessel value of the catch subject to the crab cost recovery fee liability for the current year. Fee collections for any given year may be less than or greater than the actual costs and fishery value for that year, as regulations establish the fee percentage in the first quarter of the crab fishing year based on the fishery value and costs in the prior year.

According to the fee percentage formula described above, the estimated percentage of costs to value for the 2025/2026 fishery is 0.67 percent. Therefore, the effective fee percentage for 2026/2027 crab fishing year is 0.67

percent. This is lower than the effective fee percentage for the 2025/2026 crab fishing year of 1.2 percent (90 FR 35508, July 28, 2025). The fishery value increased by approximately 37.5 percent from the prior year. Overall direct program costs decreased by approximately 10 percent, resulting in a reduced fee percentage. A more detailed explanation will be provided in the annual Cost Recovery Report, which will be published in April of 2027. Similar to previous years, the largest direct Program costs were incurred by the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1862; Pub. L. 109-241; Pub. L. 109-479.

Dated: July 23, 2026.

Shannon Bettridge,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[RTID 0648–XF765]

Takes of Marine Mammals Incidental to Specified Activities; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to the Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities' Ward Creek Bridge Replacement Project in Ketchikan, Alaska

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

ACTION: Notice; issuance of incidental harassment authorizations.

SUMMARY: In accordance with regulations implementing the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) as amended, notification is hereby given that NMFS has issued two incidental harassment authorizations (IHAs) to Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF) for authorization to take marine mammals incidental to the Ward Creek Bridge Replacement Project in Ketchikan, Alaska (AK).

DATES: These authorizations are effective from May 1, 2028, through April 30, 2029 for Year 1 and May 1, 2029, through April 30, 2030 for Year 2.

ADDRESSES: Electronic copies of the application and supporting documents, as well as a list of the references cited in this document, may be obtained

online at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/incidental-take-authorizations-construction-activities>. In case of problems accessing these documents, please call the contact listed below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kristy Jacobus, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

MMPA Background and Determinations

The MMPA prohibits the “take” of marine mammals, with certain exceptions. Among the exceptions is section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1361 *et seq.*) which directs the Secretary of Commerce (as delegated to NMFS) to allow, upon request, the incidental, but not intentional, taking by harassment of small numbers of marine mammals by U.S. citizens who engage in a specified activity (other than commercial fishing) within a specified geographical region if certain findings are made and the public has an opportunity to comment on the proposed IHA.

Specifically, NMFS shall issue an IHA if it finds that the taking will have a negligible impact on the species or stock(s) and will not have an unmitigable adverse impact on the availability of the species or stock(s) for taking for subsistence uses (where relevant). Further, NMFS must prescribe the permissible methods of taking and other “means of effecting the least [practicable] adverse impact” on the affected species or stocks and their habitat, paying particular attention to rookeries, mating grounds, and areas of similar significance, and on the availability of such species or stocks for taking for certain subsistence uses (referred to here as “mitigation”). NMFS must also prescribe requirements pertaining to the monitoring and reporting of such takings. The definitions of key terms, such as “take,” “harassment,” and “negligible impact,” can be found in the MMPA and the NMFS’ implementing regulations (see 16 U.S.C. 1362; 50 CFR 216.103).

On May 11, 2026, a notice of NMFS’ proposal to issue two IHAs to ADOT&PF for take of marine mammals incidental to the Ward Creek Bridge Replacement Project in Ketchikan, AK was published in the **Federal Register** (91 FR 25528). In that notice, NMFS indicated the estimated numbers, type, and methods of incidental take proposed for each species or stock, as well as the mitigation, monitoring, and reporting measures that would be required should

the IHA be issued. The **Federal Register** notice also included analysis to support NMFS’ preliminary conclusions and determinations that the IHA, if issued, would satisfy the requirements of section 101(a)(5)(D) of the MMPA for issuance of the IHA. The **Federal Register** notice included web links to a draft IHA for review, as well as other supporting documents.

No substantive comments were received during the public comment period. With the exception of the minor change described below, there are no changes to the specified activity, the species taken, the proposed numbers, type, or methods of take, or the mitigation, monitoring, or reporting measures in the proposed IHA notice. No new information that would change any of the preliminary analyses, conclusions, or determinations in the proposed IHA notice has become available since that notice was published, and therefore, the preliminary analyses, conclusions, and determinations included in the proposed IHA are considered final.

Changes From the Proposed IHA to the Final IHA

As a result of our consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), for Year 2 of the project, NMFS has increased the Level B harassment takes for the Hawai’i stock of humpback whale from 62 to 63 and has decreased the Level B harassment takes for the Mexico-North Pacific stock of humpback whale from 2 to 1.

National Environmental Policy Act

To comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA; 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*) and NOAA Administrative Order (NAO) 216-6A, NMFS must review our proposed action (*i.e.*, the issuance of an IHA) with respect to potential impacts on the human environment.

This action is consistent with categories of activities identified in Categorical Exclusion B4 (IHAs with no anticipated serious injury or mortality) of the Companion Manual for NAO 216-6A, which do not individually or cumulatively have the potential for significant impacts on the quality of the human environment and for which we have not identified any extraordinary circumstances that would preclude this categorical exclusion. Accordingly, NMFS has determined that the issuance of the IHAs qualifies to be categorically excluded from further NEPA review.

Endangered Species Act

Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) requires that each