



Alaska Marine Conservation Council



GUIDEBOOK

HOW TO INTERACT WITH
THE NORTH PACIFIC
FISHERY MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL





TABLE OF CONTENTS

01

What is the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council)?

02

Importance of Community Engagement

03

Understanding the Council

05

How to Engage with the Council

07

Appendix

A. Public Testimony

B. Submitting Written Comments

C. Sample Comment Letter

D. Meeting Participation (In-person & virtual)

E. Joining the Advisory Panel & Committees

F. Key Reports & Information Sources

at-a-glance



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

★ One of eight regional Councils throughout the US established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation & Management Act to manage our nation's marine fishery resources.

★ Manages the federal fisheries off Alaska's coast between three and 200 miles in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and the Gulf of Alaska.

★ Composed of 11 voting members (referred to as the Council), including federal and state officials, and appointed representatives from the fishing industry and other stakeholder groups.

★ Also has advisory bodies, such as the Science & Statistical Committee (SSC) and the Advisory Panel (AP), which provide scientific, Tribal and stakeholder input.

★ Meets five times annually to make decisions which have broad implications for Alaska's commercial, sport and subsistence fisheries, marine ecosystems and fishery-dependent communities.



Importance of Community Engagement

IMPROVES REPRESENTATION

- Incorporating diverse perspectives and valuable insights from all stakeholders and Tribes is the best opportunity to make sure that decision-making is informed and well-rounded.
- By involving the community, the Council can increase support for sustainable practices and long-term ecological balance, considering the broader impacts of fishing activities.

PROVIDES ACCOUNTABILITY

- Community participation increases transparency and information access, helping to build trust in the Council's process and decisions.
- Integrating Indigenous and local knowledge from fishermen and community members enhances the effectiveness of management plans.

FOSTERS ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

- Ongoing engagement supports policy and practice adjustments based on real-time feedback and changing conditions. This strengthens the implementation and resilience of fishery management policies.

LEADS TO SUCCESS

- Community engagement promotes inclusivity and equity, helping to address community interests through fishery management. We create a sustainable future for our fisheries and coastal communities when we work together.



Understanding the Council

The Council manages federal fisheries off Alaska's coast. Here's a detailed look at its role and responsibilities:

Key Responsibilities

- **Fishery Management Plans (FMPs):** The Council develops and amends FMPs, which include measures for sustainable fishing practices, habitat protection, and bycatch reduction.
- **Harvest Specifications:** The Council sets annual quotas for various fish stocks, ensuring that fishing activities do not deplete these resources.
- **Ecosystem-Based Management:** The Council works to adopt an ecosystem-based approach, considering the broader impacts of fishing on marine ecosystems.
- **Public Participation:** Stakeholders, including fishermen, Tribes, environmental groups, and the general public, are encouraged to participate in the Council's decision-making process through public meetings and comment periods.



Who makes up the Council?

- **Council Members:** Governor-appointed representatives (referred to collectively as the “Council”) from various stakeholder groups which may include commercial and recreational fishing industries, conservation organizations, and state and federal agencies. *Their role is to make informed decisions about fishery management plans and policies.*
- **Advisory Panels:** Industry experts, fishermen, Tribal members, scientists, and community representatives who provide advice and recommendations to the Council. *Their input is essential for ensuring that decisions are balanced and consider all perspectives.*
- **Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC):** Experts who evaluate scientific data and research related to fisheries. *They provide crucial analyses and recommendations that help the Council base its decisions on the best available science.*
- **Council Staff:** Supports the Council's work by conducting research, drafting documents, organizing meetings and serving as a resource for all stakeholders through their comprehensive analytical skills. *They are the backbone of the Council's operations, ensuring everything runs smoothly and efficiently.*
- **Committee Structures:** Various committees are often formed to focus on specific issues such as habitat protection, specific fishery management plans, or socioeconomic impacts. *These committees delve deeper into particular areas, allowing for specialized and detailed input from a wide array of stakeholders.*



Engaging with the Council

Here are ways to engage with the NPFMC. You'll find a deep dive on this list in the Appendix and as separate resources on our website.

- **GRAB A MIC - PUBLIC TESTIMONY**
- **SUBMIT WRITTEN COMMENTS**
- **ATTEND A MEETING IN-PERSON**
- **ATTEND A MEETING VIRTUALLY**
- **PARTICIPATE AT THE MEETING**
- **JOIN ADVISORY PANEL AND/OR COMMITTEE**

STAY INFORMED. SIGN UP FOR OUR E-NEWS TODAY.



Alaska Marine Conservation Council





Alaska Marine Conservation Council

AMCC was formed 30 years ago on the belief that fishermen are vital to the economic, social and ecological fabric of Alaska's fishing communities.

Fishermen and fishing communities are also the constituency best positioned to influence fisheries management decisions that impact our livelihoods and ways of life.

Our staff, board and members are proud fishermen, subsistence harvesters, coastal residents, business owners, scientists and allies. We stand for vibrant marine ecosystems, wild fisheries and working waterfronts for today and future generations. We advocate for proactive, forward-looking policies and implement programs to support this vision.

Become a member today and help send a strong message to decision-makers that collectively, we can't be ignored. Learn more at akmarine.org or scan the QR code!





Resources & Further Reading

- [North Pacific Fishery Management Council Webpage](#)
- [Current or Next Council Meeting Page](#)
- [Three Meeting Outlook](#)
- [Commonly used Acronyms](#)
- [Contact information for NPFMC](#)
- [Navigating the Council Process Documents](#)

Please reach out to us at fish@akmarine.org with any questions or comments.

Appendix A.

Public Testimony

BASICS



If you'd like to receive real-time text alerts during the meeting on Council timing, text the word "NPFMC" to the number 1-833-237-1598.

Preparing and delivering compelling testimony can significantly impact decision-making processes within federal fisheries management councils. Here's a comprehensive guide to help you craft and present persuasive testimony.

Understand the Process

<i>Research the issue.</i>	Thoroughly understand the topic. Review relevant reports, scientific data, and previous Council decisions. Reach out to Council staff with questions about the documents.
<i>Know the agenda.</i>	Familiarize yourself with the meeting agenda and the time allocated for public testimony.
<i>Know your audience.</i>	Familiarize yourself with what the Council can do and make concrete requests that fall within its capabilities.

Plan Your Testimony

<i>Set clear objectives.</i>	Determine the main points you want to convey. Focus on a few key messages rather than trying to cover everything.
<i>Gather evidence.</i>	Collect data, personal experiences, and examples that support your points. Anecdotes, traditional knowledge, and real-life stories can be powerful.

Structure Your Testimony

<i>Introduction</i>	Introduce yourself, your affiliation, and your experience in the fishing industry and/or subsistence practice, if applicable. <i>Please note: The Council now allows time for culturally appropriate introductions, which do not count toward your public testimony time limit.</i>
<i>Main Points</i>	Clearly state the issue, its impact on the fishing community, and your proposed solutions or recommendations.
<i>Conclusion</i>	Summarize your key messages and thank the Council for the opportunity to speak.

Appendix A. Public Testimony

BASICS PART 2

Write Your Testimony

<i>Be concise.</i>	Keep your written testimony to the point. Aim for clarity and brevity while ensuring all important points are covered.
<i>Use plain language.</i>	Avoid jargon and technical terms that may not be familiar to all Council members.
<i>Proofread.</i>	Carefully review your testimony for errors and practice reading it aloud to ensure it flows well.

Deliver Your Testimony

<i>Practice.</i>	Rehearse your testimony several times to gain confidence and refine your delivery.
<i>Be punctual.</i>	Arrive early to the meeting and be prepared for any changes in the schedule.
<i>Stay calm & professional.</i>	Speak clearly, maintain a steady pace, and make eye contact with the Council members.
<i>Respect time limits.</i>	Adhere to the allotted time for testimony. Practice ensuring your remarks fit within the time constraints. The Advisory Panel allows 5 minutes for all testifiers, and the Council allows 3 minutes for individuals and 6 minutes for organizations.

Follow up

<i>Submit a written testimony.</i>	Keep your written testimony to the point. Aim for clarity and brevity while ensuring all important points are covered.
<i>Stay engaged.</i>	Avoid jargon and technical terms that may not be familiar to all Council members.



TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- ★ **Be Passionate:** Your genuine concern will resonate with Council members.
- ★ **Be Respectful:** Even if you disagree, maintain a respectful and professional demeanor.
- ★ **Be Informed:** A thorough understanding of the issue adds credibility to your testimony.

Appendix B. Submitting Written Comments

BASICS

Writing a well-crafted comment letter is a powerful way to influence fisheries management decisions.

- Here's a [comprehensive guide \(provided by the Council\)](#) to help you create impactful written comments.
- You'll find our own suggestions below.

UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE



Purpose: Comment letters allow you to express your views, provide feedback, and offer solutions regarding policies or regulations.

Context: Review related documents and attend relevant meetings or webinars to ensure you understand the specific issue or proposal you're addressing.

STRUCTURE YOUR COMMENT LETTER

INTRODUCTION

- **Identify Yourself:** Clearly state your name, affiliation, and connection to the fishing industry and/or subsistence use.
- **Purpose of the Letter:** Mention the specific issue or proposal you are commenting on, including any relevant reference numbers or titles.

BODY

- **Main Points:** Present your key messages in a logical order. Focus on a few main points rather than trying to cover too much.
- **Evidence and Examples:** Support your points with data, personal experiences, and real-life examples. Use scientific data and research when available.
- **Impact:** Explain how the proposal will affect you, your community, and the broader fishing industry.

CONCLUSION

- **Summary:** Summarize your main points and restate your position.
- **Call to Action:** Clearly state any specific actions you want the Council to take.

Appendix B. Submitting Written Comments

BASICS PART 2



WRITING TIPS

- ★ **Be Clear and Concise:** Use plain language and avoid jargon. Ensure your comments are easy to read and understand.
- ★ **Stay Focused:** Stick to the main points and avoid straying off-topic. Ensure your comments are relevant to the issue at hand.
- ★ **Be Respectful:** Maintain a professional tone and avoid personal attacks. Constructive criticism and respectful language are more effective.
- ★ **Be Authentic:** You are the voice of Alaska, be you!



SUBMISSION PROCESS



- **Deadline:** Ensure you submit your comment letter before the deadline. Late submissions may not be considered.
- **Submission Method:** Follow the Council's instructions for submitting comment letters. This may include email, online portals, or postal mail.

FOLLOW UP

- **Track Progress:** Monitor the issue or proposal to see how your comments are considered and whether any actions are taken. Stay aware of issues through fisheries organizations, Tribal groups, and community groups.
- **Stay Engaged:** Continue participating in meetings, webinars, and other opportunities to provide input on fisheries management.

Appendix C.

Sample Comment Letter



To: [Council Name]

Subject: Comment on [Agenda Topic]

Dear Members of the [North Pacific Fisheries Management Council],

I am writing to provide my comments on the [Agenda Topic]. As a [role/connection to the fishing industry, marine resources], I am deeply invested in the sustainable management of our fisheries.

Main Point 1: [Provide your first key point, supported by evidence and examples]

Main Point 2: [Provide your second key point, supported by evidence and examples]

Main Point 3: [Provide your third key point, supported by evidence and examples]

In conclusion, I strongly urge the Council to consider [specific actions or changes you recommend]. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this important issue.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Affiliation]

[Your Contact Information]

Appendix D.

Participating in Meetings

BASICS

Find out how to attend a meeting on the [Council's website](#). This link provides resources including what to expect if you are attending remotely or in person as well as links to past Council livestreams and a [Three Meeting Outlook](#).

Attending in person

Check the schedule.

Confirm the meeting date, time, and location on the Council's website. Sign up to receive text message updates throughout the meeting for up-to-date timing.

Plan your travel.

Arrange transportation to the meeting location. Before the meeting, check the Council's website for Alaska Airlines discount travel codes.

Book accommodations if the meeting is out of town. Check the Council's website for room block discounts.

Arrive early to find seating and get settled before the meeting starts.

Prepare your materials.

Bring any documents, notes, or presentations you plan to use during the meeting. Ensure you have ID and any necessary registration confirmation.

Participate in the meeting.

Follow the agenda and be ready to present your testimony or comments at the appropriate time.

Engage respectfully with other attendees and Council members. Talk to Council members during breaks throughout the meeting; decision-makers benefit from understanding your viewpoints.

Take notes and gather information for follow-up actions.

Appendix D.

Participating in Meetings

BASICS PART 2

Attending virtually	
<i>Check the schedule.</i>	Confirm the date, time, and virtual platform (e.g., Zoom, YouTube) for the meeting on the Council's website.
<i>Set up your technology.</i>	Ensure your computer or device has a stable internet connection.
	Install any necessary software or applications (e.g., Zoom) beforehand.
	Test your microphone, speakers, and webcam to ensure they work correctly.
<i>Prepare your materials.</i>	Have any documents, notes, or presentations ready for reference during the meeting.
	Familiarize yourself with the virtual platform's features, such as muting/unmuting, raising your hand, and using chat functions.
<i>Join the meeting.</i>	Join the meeting a few minutes early to ensure you can connect smoothly.
	Follow the meeting agenda and participate when it is your turn. Take notes and gather information for follow-up actions.



General Meeting Tips

- ★ **Be Prepared:** Review the meeting agenda and any related documents beforehand.
- ★ **Stay Respectful:** Maintain a professional and respectful demeanor throughout the meeting.
- ★ **Follow-Up:** After the meeting, follow up on any actions, decisions, or further engagement opportunities.
- ★ **Be Authentic:** You are the voice of Alaska, be you!

Appendix E.

Tutorial on how to join Advisory Panels and Committees

BASICS

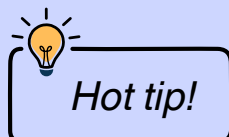
There are opportunities to engage the Council beyond testimony and written comments. Advisory bodies are a critical way for stakeholders to contribute to the policy-making processes that affect fisheries management and regulations.

PROCESS FOR BECOMING A MEMBER

- **Research and Identify Opportunities:** Visit the Council website for advisory panels and committees aligning with your expertise and interests.
- **Prepare Your Application:** Gather your resume, cover letter, and relevant certifications or qualifications. Highlight your expertise and experience in the field.
- **Submit Your Application:** Follow the application instructions on the Council Website. This may include completing an online form, submitting your documents via email, or mailing them.
- **Acceptance and Onboarding:** If selected, you will receive an acceptance letter and information about your role, responsibilities, and any required training or orientation.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- **Provide Expert Advice:** Offer insights and recommendations based on your expertise to help the Council make informed decisions.
- **Attend Meetings:** Participate in regular meetings, either in person or virtually, to discuss relevant issues and provide input.
- **Contribute to Reports and Recommendations:** Draft reports, recommendations, and other documents that guide the organization's actions.
- **Stay Informed:** Keep up-to-date with industry trends, research, and developments to ensure your advice remains relevant and valuable.
- **Network and Collaborate:** Engage with other members, stakeholders, and experts to share knowledge and foster collaboration.
- **Maintain Professionalism:** Uphold ethical standards, confidentiality, and a respectful demeanor in all interactions.



★ **Ask Questions:** Contact AMCC at fish@akmarine.org - we're here to support your success.

Appendix F. Key Reports & Information Sources



ANNUAL ASSESSMENTS OF FISH STOCKS

What are They? Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) reports include annual assessments of fish stocks, providing comprehensive data on the status of various fish species within our management area.

Importance in Setting Harvest Specifications These assessments are critical for setting harvest specifications. By understanding fish population dynamics, we can establish sustainable catch limits, ensuring the long-term health of our fisheries.

ECOSYSTEM STATUS REPORTS

Overview of Ecosystem Health and Trends Ecosystem status reports offer an in-depth look at the health and trends of marine ecosystems. These reports assess water quality, habitat conditions, and species interactions.

Impacts on Fisheries Management Decisions Understanding ecosystem health is essential for informed management decisions. These reports help us identify and mitigate potential threats to marine environments, ensuring a balanced and sustainable approach to fisheries management.

ECONOMIC & SOCIAL IMPACT REPORTS

Assessing the Economic and Social Effects of Management Measures Economic and social impact reports evaluate the effects of management measures on local economies and communities. They provide insights into the economic benefits and potential challenges associated with regulatory changes.

Why It Matters These assessments help us balance ecological sustainability with economic viability, ensuring that our policies support the environment and the communities that depend on it.



Hot tip!

★ **Ask Questions:** Contact AMCC at fish@akmarine.org - we're here to support your success.

Appendix F. Key Reports & Information Sources



PART 2

CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

- **Understanding Climate Impacts on Fisheries** Climate change and environmental reports analyze the effects of climate change on marine ecosystems and fish populations. They examine ocean temperature, acidification, and shifting species distributions.
- **Incorporating Climate Science into Management** Incorporating climate science into our management practices is crucial for adapting to changing conditions. These reports guide us in developing strategies that enhance the resilience of fisheries in the face of climate change.

COMMUNITY PROFILES & TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

- **Including Local and Indigenous Knowledge in Decision-Making** Community profiles and traditional knowledge, reports emphasize the importance of including local and Indigenous knowledge in fisheries management. These reports highlight the wisdom and experience of communities that have relied on fishing for generations.
- **Examples of Successful Integration** Successful integration of traditional knowledge into management decisions has led to more holistic and effective outcomes. For example, incorporating Indigenous practices for habitat conservation has resulted in healthier fish populations and improved ecosystem balance.



Special thanks to the fishermen and allies who generously shared their photographs:

Cover: **Tyee Lohse and Kanisha Tiedeman**. Page 1: **Alaska Seafood**. Page 2: **Theresa Peterson**. Page 3: Alaska Seafood. Page 4: **Marissa Wisniewski**. Page 5: **Kinsey Brown**. Page 6: **Michelle Stratton**, Alaska Seafood. Page 7: Alaska Seafood. Page 11: **The Carpenter Family, Nathan Hill and Billy Sarandria**. Page 17: **Kvichak Fish Co., Rich Crowder**, Alaska Seafood. Back Cover: Alaska Seafood.



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