



**NOAA  
FISHERIES**

# NOAA Fisheries Update

Presentation for the 2014 Interim Council  
Coordination Committee

February 19, 2014

# FY13 Accomplishments and FY14 Priorities

- Significant accomplishments in FY13
- For FY 2014 our focus remains on our two core mandates:
  - *Ensure the productivity and sustainability of fisheries and fishing communities through science-based decision-making and compliance with regulations.*
  - *Recover and conserve protected resources through the use of sound natural and social sciences.*

# NS1 Guideline Revision

- NMFS is considering revisions to NS1 guidelines to address several issues:
  - Improved guidance on rebuilding plans and for determining adequate progress towards rebuilding
  - Guidance for providing increased stability in annual catch limits while preventing overfishing
  - Revised definition of ecosystem component species to provide increased flexibility
  - Improved guidance for ACLs and AMs, particularly for data poor stocks.
  - Reviewing the definition of stocks with low biomass caused by environmental factors, not overfishing (i.e. “depleted”)
  - Management of mixed-stock fisheries
- Next steps:
  - NMFS is targeting the fall of 2014 for publication of proposed revisions
  - In determining the length of the comment period, NMFS will consider the schedule of Council meetings so that each Council has an opportunity to consider the issue and provide comments

# NEPA

- CCC recommended changes to the February 2013 NMFS NEPA Policy Directive
- NMFS staff worked with the CCC NEPA subcommittee to “fine tune” the revised draft that was approved by the full CCC
- Some revisions were made, however, the revised draft essentially retains the revisions suggested by the full CCC
- NMFS decided to take public comment on the revised draft
- Revised draft will be posted on the SF website
- Notice of availability will be published in the FR with a 45-day public comment period

# Inspector General Audit Report Update

- **OIG Recommendations 1, 2, 3**
  - Addresses the development of policies and procedures on financial disclosures and conflict of interests
  - NMFS established a workgroup with representatives from the Councils and NOAA GC to review and revise policy guidance
  - For recommendation 1, the workgroup worked to revise the financial disclosure form and the revised form will incorporate new guidance
    - OMB has a total of 60 days to review, which incorporates a 30 day comment period (started January 27, 79 FR 4326).
    - NMFS expects the new form to be approved by OMB by the end of March
  - For recommendations 2 & 3, NMFS has drafted policy guidance on conflicts of interest and financial disclosures and will begin the review process for this new guidance this month.
    - We will continue to work with the Council workgroup on these recommendations
    - New guidance is scheduled to be reviewed and completed by June 2014.

# Inspector General Audit Report Update

- **OIG Recommendations 4 & 5**
  - Addresses development of Operational Guidelines and Regional Operating Agreements
  - NMFS established a workgroup with representatives from the Councils and NOAA GC to work on these recommendations
  - Recommendation 4 relates to Operational Guidelines for NMFS and the Councils
    - Agenda topic on this scheduled for more detailed discussion on Thursday
  - For recommendation 5, NMFS and the Councils have been diligently working to update and finalize Regional Operating Agreements.
    - MAFMC, SAFMC, CFMC, and PFMC all completed their ROAs in 2013.
    - The remaining 4 Councils are making good progress and should be done soon.
- **OIG Recommendation 6**
  - Addresses record keeping and administrative records
  - Completed 2013.