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MRAG Americas, Inc.

Bering Sea - Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska Pacific Cod Fisheries

MSC Expedited Audit Announcement

MRAG Americas announces an expedited audit for the Gulf of Alaska Pacific Cod Unit of Certification based on new information on stock status provided by NOAA fisheries and decisions of the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council in December of 2019. This will be a desk-based audit covering Principle 1 only. The new information to be reviewed is available at the following links. Stakeholders wishing to provide further information or speak with the assessment team are invited to do so according to the instructions given further down in this announcement.

Links to new information:

https://www.afsc.noaa.gov/refm/stocks/plan_team/2019/GOApcod.pdf

https://meetings.npfmc.org/CommentReview/DownloadFile?p=3b77f86a-2be2-41ee-a2fe-55e2866950be.pdf&fileName=PRESENTATION%20GOA%20PCOD_Council.pdf

<https://meetings.npfmc.org/CommentReview/DownloadFile?p=c5e33c24-4140-4592-a84d-50343fa8bcef.pdf&fileName=MOTION%20GOA%20Specifications.pdf>

Table 1 – Surveillance announcement

1	Fishery name
	Bering Sea - Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska Pacific Cod Fisheries
2	Surveillance level and type
	Expedited Audit-Desk-based
3	Surveillance number
	1st Surveillance
	2nd Surveillance

	3rd Surveillance	
	4th Surveillance	
	Other (expedited etc)	Expedited audit
4	Proposed team leader	
	<p>Ms. Erin Wilson Erin joined MRAG Americas Inc. in 2015, where she currently works as a Senior Fisheries Consultant. She has worked as a team member for several MSC assessments and conducts routine audits for the International Seafood Sustainability Foundation (ISSF). Prior to joining MRAG Americas, she spent 2 years working at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) as a Natural Resource Specialist and Biological Technician for the Oregon Marine Reserves. She has collaborated on a multitude of projects that focus on marine science and conservation in both a biological and social science aspect. She received a M.Sc. in Marine Resource Management from Oregon State University and a B.S. in Zoology (with a marine emphasis) from Colorado State University, along with a Spanish minor.</p> <p>MRAG Americas confirms that Ms. Wilson meets the competency criteria in Annex PC for team leader as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She has an appropriate university degree and more than five years' experience in management and research in fisheries; • She has passed the MSC team leader training; • She has the required competencies described in Table PC1, section 2; • She has passed the MSC Traceability training module; • She meets ISO 19011 training requirements; • She has passed the MSC Risk Based Framework training and has experience in applying the RBF to fishery assessments; • She has undertaken two fishery assessments as a team member in the last five years, and • She has experience in applying different types of interviewing and facilitation techniques and is able to effectively communicate with clients and other stakeholders. <p>MRAG Americas confirms that Ms. Wilson has no conflicts of interest in relation to the fishery under assessment.</p>	
5	Proposed team members [remove if not applicable]	
	<p>Dr. Jake Rice. Dr. Jake Rice is Chief Scientist for the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada. He previously served as Director of Peer Review and Science Advice and held senior DFO Science positions in Pacific and Newfoundland Regions. He received BSc. from Cornell (1970 Conservation) and Ph. D. from University of Toronto (1974 - Ornithology). He has more than 270 publications in the scientific and technical literature, primarily on the ecosystem approach to integrated management. He is a member of the Group of Experts for the UN Regular Process for Global Marine Assessments, and a Lead Authors for the chapter on Drivers, Trends and Mitigation, for the next IPCC Assessment Report. He has been active as an expert or delegate to many UN meetings and agencies (FAO, CBD, GEF, UNEP, UNESCO-IOC, ICP, BBNJ etc.).</p> <p>MRAG Americas confirms that Dr. Rice meets the competency criteria in Annex PC for team members as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He has an appropriate university degree and more than five years' experience in management and research in fisheries; 	

- He has undertaken at least two MSC fishery assessments or surveillance site visits in the last five years;
- He is able to score a fishery using the default assessment tree and describe how conditions are set and monitored.

In addition, he has the appropriate skills and experience required to serve as a Principle 1 assessor as described in FCP Annex PC table PC3, and MRAG Americas confirms he has no conflicts of interest in relation to the fishery under assessment.

The whole assessment team collectively meets the requirements as described in FCP Annex PC table PC3.

A discussion between team members regarding conflict of interest and biases was held and none were identified.

6 Audit/review time and location

A remote expedited audit will occur 06 February 2020.

7 Assessment and review activities

This expedited audit will review the new information regarding the GOA Pacific cod stock status.

MRAG Americas invites stakeholders to provide any information considered relevant, including knowledge and concerns about the fishery, to the expedited assessments of the fishery. Unless covered by FCP 4.4.1 any information that cannot be shared with other stakeholders even under a confidentiality agreement shall not be: referenced in the surveillance audit, used to determine the surveillance audit outcome or used as the basis for an objection to certification. The MSC has developed a guide for stakeholder input, available at <https://www.msc.org/what-you-can-do/engage-with-a-fishery-assessment> and a template for stakeholder response available at MSC program supporting documents. You must use the template to provide your response. All comments and inquiries should be directed to MRAG Americas. MRAG will schedule meetings with stakeholders if requested. To schedule a meeting please provide:

- your name and contact details
- your association with the fishery
- the issues you would like to discuss
- where and when you would like to meet

We request that stakeholders provide written information or request a meeting by 5pm GMT on 30 January 2020.

More information on the fishery is available at <https://fisheries.msc.org/en/fisheries/bsai-and-go-pacific-cod/@@view>.

Please send any documentation, requests for meetings, or inquiries to:

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Submitted by: Michealene Corlett

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