

# **Native Peoples Action**

## **NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL TOOLKIT**

**April 2024**



## The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) will meet April 1-9, 2024

- The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) will meet April 1-3, 2024.
- The Advisory Panel (AP) will meet April 2-6, 2024.
- The Council will meet April 4-9, 2024.

(Dates are subject to change.)

## The NPFMC will review their chum bycatch draft EIS

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will discuss the Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement on Bering Sea Chum Salmon Bycatch Management (DEIS). The full Council is scheduled to receive reports and discuss chum bycatch April 4-7 and will take in-person public testimony. The Council took written comments from March 8 to March 29. Those comments are now visible online. NPA's written comment can be found [here](#).

The draft schedule for all meetings can be found [here](#). Click [here](#) to sign up for public testimony, or watch the meetings live.

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

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act in 1976 to manage fisheries in the 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zone, 3 miles off the coast of Alaska.

The council has been outlined by the Magnuson Stevens Act (MSA) to:

1. Set harvest quotas
2. Set prohibited species catch limits
3. Set gear/season area restrictions
4. Design ecosystem and habitat protections
5. Develop community protections
6. Construct monitoring programs
7. Create limited entry access privileges

The council manages trawling, longline, jig, pot and dredge fishermen; catcher vessels and catcher-processors in the industry and groundfish, Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands crab, scallops, salmon bycatch, and halibut.



## Why is it important to engage in North Pacific Fishery Management Council decision making processes?

It is especially important that we as Indigenous people are present in these spaces; our traditional knowledge and thousands of years of stewardship sustained us long before any current management system. Indigenous knowledge must be part of the conversation. Each of us has the ability to make change, share our story and be part of creating a solution that will take care of our families now and into the future. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (council) will discuss chum salmon bycatch in their April meeting. Your voice is needed in this process.

## What does the Council do? Who are they?

The full North Pacific Fishery Management Council is responsible for making final decisions on voting issues. There are 15 council members - 11 voting and 4 non-voting.



Back row, L to R: John Seabourne, LCDR Jed Raskie, Bill Tweit (vice-chair), Anne Vanderhoeven, Jon Kurland, Nicole Kimball, Angel Drobnica (chair). Front row, L to R: Rachel Baker, Chris Oliver, Karla Bush, Kenny Down, Molly Watson, Andy Mezirow. Not Pictured: RADM Megan Dean, Pete Fasbender, John Jensen, Rudy Tsukada, Dimitri Varmazis, Steve Williams.

You can read more about the members [here](#).

## What is the AP & SSC? Who are they?

**The Advisory Panel (AP)** The Advisory Panel (AP) is made up of members that represent major fishery sectors in Alaska. The body is responsible for making recommendations to the full North Pacific Fishery Management Council.



The members are: L to R Rick Laitinen, Patrick O'Donnell, Matt Upton (former), Heather Mann, James Johnson, Lauren Howard (Vice Chair), Jessie Edson (former), Megan O'Neil (former), Chelsae Radell, Susie Zagorski, Paul Wilkins (Vice Chair), Brian Ritchie (Chair), Tamara Briggie, Gretar Gudmundsson, Landry Price, Mellisa Maktuayaq Johnson. Not pictured: Tiffany Andrew, Eva Burk, Nels Evens, Tim Heuker, Julie Kavanaugh, Annika Saltman.

You can read more about the AP members and their backgrounds [here](#).

**The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC)** is responsible for providing recommendations to the full council with technical and scientific matters. The committee is composed of leading scientists in biology, economics, statistics, and social science.



Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) Members are: L to R Jason Gasper, Robert Foy, Patrick Sullivan, Curry Cunningham, Michael Jepson, Kailin Kroetz, Mike Downs, Chris Siddon, Brad Harris, Andrew Munro, Franz Mueter, Ali Whitman, Amy Bishop, Sherri Dressel, Chris Anderson, Robert Suryan, Ian Stewart, Martin Dorn. Not Pictured: Dana Hanselman, Kat Meyer.

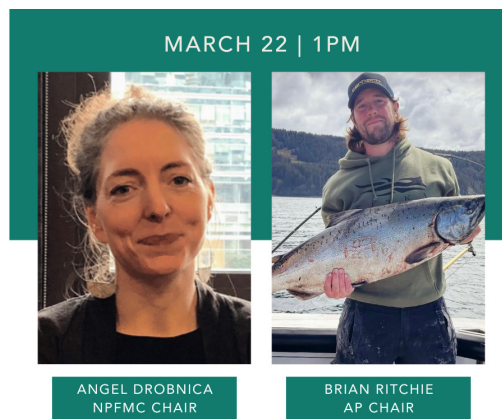
You can read more about them [here](#).

## #SmokehouseStories Webinars with NPFMC Advisory Panel members

Native Peoples Action Community Fund (NPACF) hosted a Smokehouse Stories Webinar with guest speakers Eva Burk, Mellisa Maktuayaq Johnson, and Tiffany Agayar. In this webinar, our guest speakers, who are all tribally enrolled members and North Pacific Fishery Management Council Advisory Panel members, discussed their roles, the incorporation of traditional knowledge, and ways Alaska Natives can engage in the council process. Watch the recording [here](#).



On March 22, 2024, NPACF hosted another webinar ahead of the NPFMC Meeting with NPFMC Chair Angel Drobica and Advisory Panel Chair Brian Ritchie. Angel and Brian talked about chum bycatch and the upcoming discussion and alternatives for chum bycatch mitigation in the Preliminary [Draft Environmental Impact Statement on Bering Sea Chum Salmon Bycatch Management \(DEIS\)](#). Watch the recording [here](#).

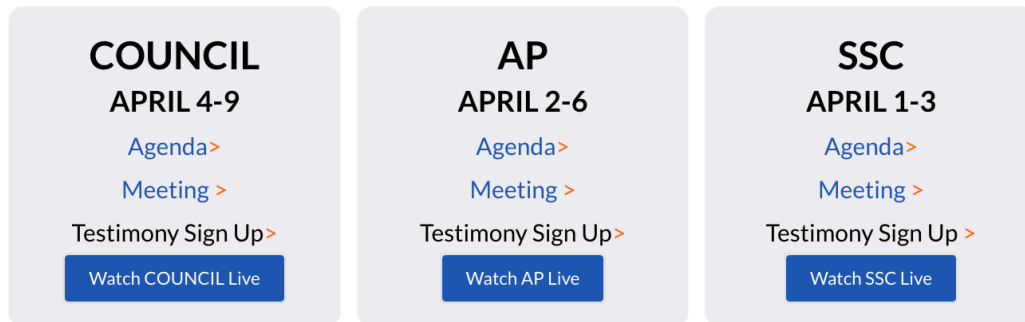


## #Smokehouse Stories Webinar



## How can I provide public testimony at the meetings?

You can sign up to testify both online and in person for the NPFMC Council, AP, and SSC. To sign up to testify online, visit <https://www.npfmc.org/current-or-next-council-meeting/> and scroll down to the boxes pictured below and select "agenda", next scroll down to Agenda Item C2 if you'd like to sign up to comment on salmon by-catch. You can sign up to provide oral testimony after April 2nd. Written comment period is now closed.



## How much time are individuals given to speak?

Individuals have three minutes to speak and organizations have six minutes. The council members may ask questions and you can speak longer to respond. If you'd rather not take questions, you can select the box that you do not want to take questions.

## What if I need some help drafting public testimony?

You are the expert in your lived experience and we as Indigenous people have been connected to and stewarded these lands and waters for thousands of years. Indigenous knowledge and representation is important to incorporate into the process, so utilize your voice and experience and speak from the heart. However, if you need assistance, NPA is here to help. Reach out to Craig Chythlook, Laureli Ivanoff or email [info@nativepeoplesaction.org](mailto:info@nativepeoplesaction.org).

## Tips for providing oral testimony

1. Introduce yourself - state your name and where you are from
2. Share what your "ask" is. What are you hoping is changed?
3. You may want to prepare your testimony in advance. As an individual, you have three minutes to speak. If you are providing testimony on behalf of an organization/Tribe, you have six minutes.
4. Wondering what you should say? See possible talking points on the next page.



## Summary of Talking Points

1. Included in the current National Environmental Policy Act - Draft Environmental Impact Statement, the alternatives are insufficient to meaningfully reduce chum bycatch. We ask that staff incorporate additional analyses including Indigenous knowledge, public testimony, comment letters, and tribal priorities.
2. Time and area closures are needed to protect chum passage on their way to spawning grounds, as at least one of the additional analysis alternatives.
3. The proposed chum bycatch caps are too high. All suggested numbers in all alternatives are not low enough to meaningfully reduce chum bycatch (current lowest of 200k to an upper bounds of 550k).
4. We want a hard cap on chum at all levels of abundance, not just when chum abundance is low.
5. We want to conserve not just chum in any single year, but also immature chum. Chum still spending time in the ocean do not return when caught as bycatch while still living in the ocean.
6. Based on historical information, any alternative hard cap above, and including, 200,000 is status quo.
7. Nothing over 300,000 should be included in the EIS. A chum bycatch cap this high does not meet the Purpose and Need portion of NEPA EIS.
8. Abundance based caps are not working for Chinook. This is why we are suggesting time and area closures, in combination with hard caps, that are low enough to meaningfully reduce chum bycatch.
9. EVERY SALMON MATTERS!
10. The Purpose and Need statement in this DEIS is prioritizing Coastal Western Alaska Chum stocks, however NEPA is a federal process that needs to conserve all chum stock to all federally recognized tribes, including Eastern Gulf of Alaska/Pacific Northwest stocks. E. GOA/PN stock equals 26.9% of all chum caught as bycatch. Western Alaska Chum Bycatch is also 19.3% of all chum caught as bycatch - **more than 46% of all chum caught as bycatch are bound for subsistence nets.**
- 11. Indigenous knowledge is best available scientific evidence.**
12. This current Draft EIS is weak and does not meet the purpose and needs of an EIS.
13. The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (NPFMC) needs better Indigenous representation to understand and utilize Indigenous knowledge.
14. NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service and NOAA Alaska Fisheries need better Indigenous representation to fully understand and utilize Indigenous knowledge in decision making, including the Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and Subsistence Protocols.

# Take action and sign on to our letter addressed to the NPFMC

Visit <https://nativepeoplesaction.org/bycatch/> to sign before Friday, April 5th at 5pm.

## Need help understanding the material/website?

Contact us today at [info@nativepeoplesaction.org](mailto:info@nativepeoplesaction.org) if you'd like more information and assistance.

## Visit our social media pages to view graphics to share!

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/nativepeoplesaction>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/NPActionAlaska>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/nativepeoplesaction/>

## Additional resources

### Organization Comment Letters - C2 Chum Bycatch and D3 Research Priorities

- [C2 Chum Bycatch Letters - Google Drive](#)
- [D3 Research Priorities - Google Drive](#)

### Organizations

- [Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association](#)
- [Kuskokwim Intertribal Fish Commission](#)
- [Bering Sea Elders Group](#)
- [TCC Hunting Fishing Gathering Taskforce](#)
- [Kawerak Natural Resources](#)

### Reports

- [2023 North Pacific Fisheries Management Council Salmon Bycatch Report](#)
- [Chum Bycatch Discussion Paper](#)
- [Bering Sea Non-Chinook \(Chum\) Salmon Bycatch Reduction Environmental Impact Statement](#)
- [NOAA Bycatch Report](#)
- [NOAA State of the Ecosystem 2023: New England 2023](#)
- [Alaska Bycatch Review Taskforce Report](#)
- [Kuskokwim River Salmon Situation, March 20, 2023. Salmon Bycatch Committee](#)
- [Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group](#)
- [Kuskokwim River Salmon Situation Report Oct 2022](#)
- [Kuskokwim River Salmon Situation Report Sept 2021](#)
- [Factors affecting 2022 Western Alaska Chinook Salmon Runs & Subsistence Harvest \(page 24\)](#)