

**Habitat Protection and Restoration Committee
Action Guide and Next Steps for Tab P**

Agenda Item IV: Draft Generic Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Amendment

Timeline Status: Presentation and Discussion

Council input and next steps: Council staff will provide a presentation on the development of a webtool to visual alternatives for updating the Council’s descriptions of EFH. The presentation will focus on the creation of maps generated using available benthic habitat layers, ecoregions, and depth zones. Updated habitat association tables for each managed finfish and shrimp species were used to inform decision processes for clipping habitat and zone designations to described EFH for each considered life stage (eggs, larvae, post larva, early juvenile, late juvenile, adult, spawning adult). This methodology is being considered for EFH Generic Amendment Action 1, Alternative 2.

During the process of constructing these visualizations, Council staff identified a number of instances where EFH descriptions were likely inaccurate. Examples of these issues will be included in the presentation. The SSC was also presented this information at its September meeting and provided several recommendations to address these issues. Council staff is working to incorporate these comments in an updated version of the webtool.

For future work, Council staff will engage with agency partners to collect improved spatial habitat data, document the decision process for constructing every map for all managed species and life stages, and continue developing the webtool. Council staff will then provide another presentation to the SSC and report back to the Committee. The Committee should provide feedback to Council staff as it continues developing the supporting tools needed to complete the Generic Amendment.
