



**NOAA**  
**FISHERIES**

# Alaska Fisheries Science Center

Protected Species Science Program Review

## Themes and Presentations



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# Protected Species Science Program Review Themes

Theme I: Information needs

Theme II: Otariid science

Steller sea lions  
Northern fur seals

Theme III: Phocid pinniped science

Ice-associated seals  
Harbor seals

Theme IV: Large cetacean science

Multi-species studies  
North Pacific right whales  
Humpback whales

Theme V: Small cetacean science

Cook Inlet beluga  
Killer whales  
Harbor porpoise

Theme VI: Operational issues

# Terms of Reference for the 2015 Review: Overarching Questions for Reviewers

1. Do current and planned protected species scientific activities fulfill *mandates* and requirements under the ESA and MMPA, and meet the needs of the regulatory partners?
2. Are there opportunities to be pursued in conducting protected species science, including shared and collaborative approaches with *partners*?
3. Are the protected species scientific *objectives* adequate, and is the best suite of techniques and approaches to meet those objectives?
4. Are the protected species studies being conducted properly (survey design, statistical rigor, standardization, integrity, peer review, transparency, confidentiality, etc.)? *[methods]*
5. How are advances in protected species science and methodological approaches being *communicated* and applied in NMFS?



# Terms of Reference for the 2015 Review: Information to be Provided to Reviewers

1. To what extent do available *data quality*, statistical precision, and frequency of data collection impact overall analytical accuracy, precision and timeliness of scientific products and advice?
2. What are the major *successes* in protected species research and how should they be supported?
3. What are the major limitations/*weaknesses* on protected species research and how could they be resolved?
4. What *recommendations* do you have for improvement in protected species science to meet the information needs for protected species conservation in the region?
5. Identify the *highest priority* needs for improving protected resources science in the region.
6. To what extent are protected resources *data* readily *accessible* to various external researchers who may wish to replicate NOAA Fisheries' analyses?



# Structure of Presentations for Each Species Group

1. Introduction.
  - a. Stocks, distribution, abundance, and trends.
  - b. Legal status, potential threats, and **mandates** for NMFS and its regulatory partners.
2. Overview of AFSC research.
  - a. All projects currently being conducted by AFSC.
  - b. **Highest priorities**: Describe the highest priority information needs for improving science in the region.
3. Project objectives: Describe how this scientific objective addresses high priority information needs.
  - a. **Partners**: Describe current and prospective partnerships that are being pursued for this objective, including shared and collaborative approaches.
  - b. **Methods**: Describe the research being conducted to address this objective (survey design, statistical rigor, standardization, integrity, peer review, transparency).
  - c. **Data quality**: Describe how the quality, statistical precision, and frequency of data collected provide sufficient analytical accuracy, precision and timeliness of scientific products and advice relevant to this objective.
  - d. **Successes**: Describe the major successes in research on this objective and how should they be supported.
  - e. **Weaknesses**: Describe the major limitations/weaknesses in research on this objective.
4. Communication: Describe how advances in science and methodological approaches are being communicated.
5. Data access: Describe to what extent data are readily accessible to various external researchers.
6. Recommendations: Present your recommendations for improving AFSC science to meet the information needs for conservation in the region.

