

RFP 26-009 - West Coast Groundfish Observer Program

Question and Answers May 8, 2026

1. What is the proposed annual budget?

We do not have a budget in place yet for the upcoming year. This award is contingent upon NOAA awarding PSMFC funds for FY2027.

2. What were the annual program expenditures each of the last five years?

The national observer program creates an annual report that outlines funding and activities of the regional observer programs. The report can be found here <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/fisheries-observers/fy-2023-national-observer-program-annual-report>

3. What is the average number of hours an observer works each day on a vessel?

This is highly variable and dependent on the vessel, fishery, area, etc. Observers should be prepared to work up to 2-16 hours a day when at sea.

4. Can you provide # of observers grouped by the following categories?

- a. less than a year
- b. greater than 1 year less than 2 years
- c. greater than 2 years less than 3 years
- d. greater than 3 years less than 4 years
- e. greater than 4 years less than 5 years
- f. greater than 5 years less than 10 years
- g. greater than 10 years

PSMFC doesn't have data about observers' previous experience. Current observers in the WCGOP NCS program range from less than 1 year to 25 years experience. There is a mix of seasonal and year-round positions each year determined by coverage needs.

5. How often are observers assigned to one port group traveling across state borders?

The WCGOP deploys observers across all three West Coast states and has set up port groups to maintain a local presence. The WCGOP typically deploys observers within their assigned port group. Observers can be deployed outside their homeport

for a variety of reasons including; covering observer illness, injury, time-off, and/or response to the fishing effort dynamics and coverage needs.

6. Are there any collective bargaining agreements or standardized pay structures currently in place?

No. Please see page 7 of the RFP.

7. What is the current annual turnover rate for WCGOP observers?

There are year-round and seasonal positions. Turnover is greater within the seasonal group. Overall turnover rate for the last few years is:

2024-2025-11.5% Turnover

2023-2024- 33.3% Turnover

2022-2023- 39.5% Turnover

8. What are the primary causes of observer attrition?

Observer attrition is highly varied and is often personal to the individual observer. WCGOP has experienced both high and low rates of attrition over the years.

Observing is a difficult job, and the WCGOP experiences similar attrition rates as other observer programs. In addition, we see higher turnover from our seasonal positions as the work is seasonal, and some observers find other work in the off season.

9. How many observers completed an initial observer training each of the last four years?

2025-3

2024-15

2023-17

2022-24

10. Has PSMFC had difficulty meeting coverage goals? And if so in which areas?

No.

11. How many observers are actively deployed on vessels at any given time?

It is possible for all observers to be deployed at one time. Weather windows play a large role in vessel activity as well as market needs.

12. How many last-minute cancellations/no-shows by vessel representatives occur after an observer has arrived at the dock?

During the course of a year, we would estimate 3% or less. This is very unusual and does not occur normally.

13. How frequently do observers fail to respond to trips or decline assignments?

The failure rate of observers to respond to work communications and/or decline trips that are in accordance with WCGOP policy is extremely low and is unacceptable behavior.

14. How often do candidates/trainees fail the initial training?

Since 2022- 4 observers out of 59 new observers failed or dropped out of their initial training. Since 2024, all new observers have completed and passed training.

15. What are the consequences for observers who miss calls or decline trips?

PSMFC will recommend steps such as, but not limited to, termination, a probation period with clearly designated improvement tasks, retraining, etc.

16. How much advance notice by the industry is typical vs shortest notice?

The WCGOP requires 24-hour notice but attempts to work with industry to meet short notice needs when observer resources are available. Notice typically falls in the range of 48 hours to 24 hours.

17. Are contractors expected to provide housing or housing stipends for observers?

There is no requirement to provide housing. This would be at the discretion of the provider.

18. Are there specific port areas where housing relocation has been a challenge?

Housing for observers can be challenging as housing costs, and the availability of shorter-term housing can be a challenge coast wide. Newport, Oregon and the Mid-to-Southern California assigned observers have struggled the most with housing costs and availability issues.

19. Can PSMFC clarify the intended contract type (e.g., cost reimbursable, time and materials, hybrid)?

PSMFC expects this contract to be set up as a cost reimbursable contract with the units to be spelled out in the proposal.

20. What billing structure does PSMFC expect (e.g., hourly labor, daily sea/shore rates, or other units defined by the contractor)?

PSMFC expects this contract to be set up as a cost reimbursable contract with the units to be spelled out in the proposal.

21. What level of documentation will be required to support invoices (timesheets, activity logs, etc.)?

All costs will need to be documented, and PSMFC will work with the selected provider to establish invoice standards.

22. The WCGOP database appears to track trip level information including departure and return ports, as well as at-sea days by port. Can you provide historical data on the number of trips and sea days by port group for the last three to five years?

Year	Port	Trips	Sea Days
2023	ASTORIA / WARRENTON	60	281
2023	AVILA	9	9
2023	BELLINGHAM BAY	7	58
2023	BODEGA BAY	9	10
2023	BROOKINGS	14	29

2023	CHARLESTON (COOS BAY)	27	65
2023	CRESCENT CITY	43	60
2023	DEPOE BAY	23	23
2023	EUREKA	25	52
2023	FORT BRAGG	49	113
2023	GARIBALDI (TILLAMOOK)	10	10
2023	GOLD BEACH	19	19
2023	HUNTINGTON BEACH	5	11
2023	ILWACO/CHINOOK	4	18
2023	MONTEREY	4	4
2023	MORRO BAY	13	21
2023	MOSS LANDING	17	36
2023	NEAH BAY	5	33
2023	NEWPORT	85	260
2023	NEWPORT BEACH	3	3
2023	OCEANSIDE	1	3
2023	OXNARD	14	16
2023	PACIFIC CITY	13	13
2023	POINT ARENA	4	5
2023	PORT ORFORD	107	107
2023	PRINCETON (HALF MOON BAY)	60	78
2023	SAN DIEGO	16	27
2023	SAN FRANCISCO	72	82
2023	SANTA BARBARA	17	22
2023	SHELTER COVE	8	8
2023	VENTURA	13	22
2023	WARRENTON	6	26
2023	WESTPORT	32	136
2023	WINCHESTER BAY	14	68
2024	ANACORTES	3	18
2024	ASTORIA / WARRENTON	47	248
2024	AVILA	11	12
2024	BELLINGHAM BAY	18	131
2024	BODEGA BAY	10	11
2024	BROOKINGS	15	32
2024	CHARLESTON (COOS BAY)	42	140
2024	CRESCENT CITY	31	38
2024	DEPOE BAY	3	3
2024	EUREKA	16	34

2024	FORT BRAGG	58	113
2024	GARIBALDI (TILLAMOOK)	7	7
2024	GOLD BEACH	14	14
2024	HUNTINGTON BEACH	2	5
2024	ILWACO/CHINOOK	2	2
2024	MONTEREY	7	12
2024	MORRO BAY	3	6
2024	MOSS LANDING	42	85
2024	NEAH BAY	4	24
2024	NEWPORT	75	286
2024	OCEANSIDE	2	4
2024	OXNARD	1	4
2024	PACIFIC CITY	11	11
2024	POINT ARENA	6	8
2024	PORT ORFORD	116	121
2024	PRINCETON (HALF MOON BAY)	53	68
2024	SAN DIEGO	17	24
2024	SAN FRANCISCO	52	68
2024	SANTA CRUZ	3	4
2024	SHELTER COVE	6	7
2024	VENTURA	1	3
2024	WARRENTON	7	27
2024	WESTPORT	43	223
2024	WINCHESTER BAY	14	63
2025	ANACORTES	6	38
2025	ASTORIA / WARRENTON	46	202
2025	AVILA	2	3
2025	BELLINGHAM BAY	17	148
2025	BODEGA BAY	10	10
2025	BROOKINGS	13	48
2025	CHARLESTON (COOS BAY)	16	60
2025	CRESCENT CITY	10	19
2025	EUREKA	15	38
2025	FORT BRAGG	41	114
2025	MONTEREY	15	29
2025	MORRO BAY	6	17
2025	MOSS LANDING	10	24
2025	NEAH BAY	12	70
2025	NEWPORT	45	214

2025	OCEANSIDE	4	10
2025	POINT ARENA	5	8
2025	PORT ORFORD	2	4
2025	PRINCETON (HALF MOON BAY)	23	40
2025	SAN DIEGO	9	10
2025	SAN FRANCISCO	13	37
2025	SANTA CRUZ	12	13
2025	SHELTER COVE	9	9
2025	VENTURA	1	3
2025	WARRENTON	6	22
2025	WESTPORT	12	82
2025	WINCHESTER BAY	7	40

23. To better understand workload distribution, can PSMFC provide historical monthly data (past 3-5years) showing observer activity by standby, travel, and shoreside work ideally broken out by month?

Year	Month	ACTIVITY	DAYS
2023	Jan	Briefing	4
2023	Jan	Debriefing	1
2023	Jan	Standby	465
2023	Jan	Training	5
2023	Jan	Travel	4
2023	Feb	Debriefing	1
2023	Feb	Meeting	1
2023	Feb	Standby	401
2023	Mar	Briefing	5
2023	Mar	Meeting	24
2023	Mar	Standby	401
2023	Mar	Training	127
2023	Mar	Travel	24
2023	Apr	Meeting	10
2023	Apr	Standby	737
2023	Apr	Training	103
2023	Apr	Travel	15
2023	May	Briefing	1
2023	May	Debriefing	4
2023	May	Meeting	3

2023	May	Standby	790
2023	May	Training	14
2023	May	Travel	12
2023	Jun	Debriefing	1
2023	Jun	Meeting	3
2023	Jun	Standby	721
2023	Jun	Training	5
2023	Jun	Travel	9
2023	Jul	Debriefing	4
2023	Jul	Meeting	2
2023	Jul	Standby	679
2023	Jul	Travel	8
2023	Aug	Debriefing	5
2023	Aug	Meeting	4
2023	Aug	Standby	653
2023	Aug	Travel	19
2023	Sep	Debriefing	5
2023	Sep	Meeting	3
2023	Sep	Standby	627
2023	Sep	Travel	12
2023	Oct	Debriefing	4
2023	Oct	Standby	661
2023	Oct	Training	1
2023	Oct	Travel	23
2023	Nov	Debriefing	7
2023	Nov	Meeting	3
2023	Nov	Standby	389
2023	Nov	Travel	9
2023	Dec	Briefing	28
2023	Dec	Debriefing	1
2023	Dec	Standby	291
2023	Dec	Training	34
2023	Dec	Travel	15
2024	Jan	Briefing	4
2024	Jan	Debriefing	3
2024	Jan	Standby	397
2024	Jan	Travel	2
2024	Feb	Debriefing	3
2024	Feb	Standby	340

2024	Feb	Training	12
2024	Feb	Travel	7
2024	Mar	Briefing	15
2024	Mar	Debriefing	1
2024	Mar	Meeting	3
2024	Mar	Standby	523
2024	Mar	Training	296
2024	Mar	Travel	12
2024	Apr	Briefing	1
2024	Apr	Debriefing	4
2024	Apr	Meeting	9
2024	Apr	Standby	974
2024	Apr	Training	3
2024	Apr	Travel	23
2024	May	Briefing	1
2024	May	Debriefing	5
2024	May	Meeting	5
2024	May	Standby	918
2024	May	Training	18
2024	May	Travel	9
2024	Jun	Debriefing	1
2024	Jun	Meeting	1
2024	Jun	Standby	842
2024	Jun	Travel	8
2024	Jul	Debriefing	1
2024	Jul	Meeting	2
2024	Jul	Standby	880
2024	Jul	Travel	9
2024	Aug	Debriefing	3
2024	Aug	Meeting	3
2024	Aug	Standby	821
2024	Aug	Travel	10
2024	Sep	Debriefing	1
2024	Sep	Meeting	1
2024	Sep	Standby	782
2024	Sep	Travel	8
2024	Oct	Debriefing	8
2024	Oct	Meeting	2
2024	Oct	Standby	862

2024	Oct	Travel	5
2024	Nov	Debriefing	8
2024	Nov	Meeting	3
2024	Nov	Standby	358
2024	Nov	Travel	12
2024	Dec	Standby	336
2024	Dec	Travel	11
2025	January	Briefing	43
2025	January	Debriefing	4
2025	January	Standby	224
2025	January	Training	12
2025	January	Travel	27
2025	February	Debriefing	2
2025	February	Meeting	4
2025	February	Standby	263
2025	February	Travel	6
2025	March	Briefing	54
2025	March	Debriefing	6
2025	March	Meeting	4
2025	March	Standby	475
2025	March	Training	4
2025	March	Travel	17
2025	April	Briefing	1
2025	April	Debriefing	4
2025	April	Standby	601
2025	April	Training	1
2025	April	Travel	15
2025	May	Meeting	17
2025	May	Standby	923
2025	May	Training	4
2025	May	Travel	16
2025	June	Debriefing	2
2025	June	Meeting	3
2025	June	Standby	894
2025	June	Travel	12
2025	July	Meeting	1
2025	July	Standby	596
2025	July	Travel	27
2025	August	Debriefing	1

2025	August	Meeting	1
2025	August	Standby	466
2025	August	Training	31
2025	August	Travel	24
2025	September	Debriefing	1
2025	September	Meeting	1
2025	September	Standby	559
2025	September	Travel	43
2025	October	Standby	646
2025	October	Travel	42
2025	November	Meeting	2
2025	November	Standby	651
2025	November	Travel	14
2025	December	Briefing	50
2025	December	Debriefing	4
2025	December	Standby	631
2025	December	Training	17
2025	December	Travel	35

24. Can you provide historical data showing the number of trips or sea days by month for each of the last two years?

Year	Month	Trips	Sea Days
2024	Jan	7	8
2024	Feb	25	30
2024	Mar	23	25
2024	Apr	68	113
2024	May	87	249
2024	Jun	111	269
2024	Jul	85	223
2024	Aug	123	331
2024	Sep	80	268
2024	Oct	75	211
2024	Nov	34	80
2024	Dec	24	49
2025	Jan	6	22
2025	Feb	5	17
2025	Mar	12	24
2025	Apr	28	103

2025	May	22	97
2025	Jun	31	125
2025	Jul	48	154
2025	Aug	56	179
2025	Sep	63	249
2025	Oct	55	205
2025	Nov	30	98
2025	Dec	11	39

25. The RFP mentions annual briefings in Newport. Is travel for these briefings billable?

Yes

26. The RFP states that the contractor must provide a real-time list of observer whereabouts. Is there a preferred format?

PSMFC and NOAA staff must be able to determine real-time observer whereabouts. Proposals should include details on how PSMFC and NOAA staff can quickly and easily determine observer's whereabouts. This is particularly important should an PLB or InReach device be activated.

27. The RFP states the debriefing will occur approximately every 2 months. Are these in person, remote, or a combination of the 2?

Debriefings can be in person or remote depending on the performance of the observer and the debriefers' schedule.

28. If debriefings are in person, and travel is required, is that billable?

Yes, these costs are reimbursable and part of the travel costs. PSMFC staff work to control costs and when feasible, a debriefer will travel to meet several observers in one trip, but observers may be asked to travel to meet their debriefer.

29. The RFP states that observers may be required to travel outside of their home port for an assignment. Who decides if that is to occur? PSMFC or Contractor?

The PSMFC field coordinator will determine this and coordinate with the provider when necessary.

30. How does PSMFC define overtime while deployed? Active working hours or consecutive hours on a boat?

It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure overtime compliance is met. Proposals should outline how overtime will be handled.

31. Is there a page limit for proposals? Will tables and appendixes be part of the page limit?

There is no page limit.

32. Is there a required format for proposals? ie, font, size, double or single spaced?

No

33. Is there a Not to Exceed value for this contract?

We do not have a budget in place yet for the upcoming year. This award is contingent upon NOAA awarding PSMFC funds for FY2027 and a contract NTE value will be established upon award.

34. Will PSMFC be providing a pricing template to ensure the Contracting Reviewer will receive comparable price quotes for the evaluation process?

Page 13 outlines the business proposal requirements.

35. Will PSFMC consider a deadline extension to June 5, 2026?

No