

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Pretesting and Implementing Alaska Saltwater Sport Fishing Surveys



Issue Date: September 3, 2015

Deadline for submission: October 2, 2015

Proposal Schedule

September 3, 2015	Request for proposals issued and posted on PSMFC's website at: http://www.psmfc.org/procurements/blog
September 18, 2015	Deadline for written questions
September 25, 2015	Responses to written questions will be provided
October 2, 2015	Deadline for submission of proposals Proposals shall be submitted by e-mail in pdf or as a MS Word document to: Mr. Michael Arredondo, PSMFC Grants and Contracts Specialist Telephone: (503) 595-3100 E-mail to marredondo@psmfc.org
October 12, 2015	Project finalists selected on or before this date

Request for Proposals

Pretesting and Implementing Alaska Saltwater Sport Fishing Surveys

The Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) is requesting proposals for a survey research project that collects information to estimate the economic value of saltwater sport fishing trips in Alaska, in order to understand the factors that affect participation in, and demand for, these trips by Alaska resident anglers (i.e., anglers, or recreational fishermen, who live and fish in Alaska) and non-resident anglers (i.e., anglers who live outside of Alaska but who fish in the state). The survey will collect stated and revealed preference information to allow estimation of recreational fishing demand and to assist in understanding angler preferences for different types of fishing opportunities.

PSMFC is seeking proposals for this survey research project consisting of two major tasks. **Task 1** is to conduct one-on-one cognitive interviews to pretest the survey instrument, which includes recruiting participants and making arrangements for facilities and personnel to assist in conducting the cognitive interviews. **Task 2** is to administer the survey implementation (we do not anticipate needing to conduct a formal pretest implementation since past survey implementations have utilized the same survey administration techniques to good effect. This task includes printing questionnaires, envelopes, cover letters, and all other supporting materials, administering the survey via mail and phone (and web, if this mode is used), entering survey data, and writing a report.

For this project, The Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC) will work with the successful bidder by assisting in the development of the questionnaires and telephone interview script. If a web-based survey instrument and implementation is included in the proposal (as an additional survey mode, not as a replacement for the mail-telephone survey), it will be programmed by the contractor from paper questionnaires developed by AFSC. The contractor will be responsible for (a) setting up cognitive interview sessions to pretest the survey, (b) administering the full implementation; (c) entering and cleaning the data; and (d) writing a summary report.

Background

This project will involve qualitative testing and implementing surveys developed by AFSC to two populations of Alaska *resident* anglers—those who reside in Southeast Alaska and those who live elsewhere in Alaska—as well as the population of *non-resident* Alaska anglers. The survey materials will be based heavily on previously-fielded mail-telephone surveys implemented in 2007 and 2012 that collected information on sport fishing behavior and fishing trip preferences in Alaska during 2006 and 2011, respectively.

The two previous survey implementations followed a modified Dillman Tailored Design Method mixed mode approach with five contacts: an advance letter, initial mailing with a

\$1 incentive, a follow-up postcard, a second full mailing, and a telephone contact to encourage response and collect basic information useful for non-response analysis. The second full mailing occurred after the telephone contact in the 2012 survey, but before it in 2007.

For the 2007 survey, a total of 900 Southeast Alaska anglers and 1,200 other Alaska resident anglers were sent surveys. Overall response rates, excluding undeliverables, were 53.8% for the Southeast resident angler sample and 52.2% for the rest of Alaska resident sample. 1,900 non-resident anglers were sent surveys, with a response rate of 61.9%. Across all samples, the response rate was 57.3%.

The 2012 survey was sent to 2,080 non-resident anglers, 1,000 Southeast Alaska resident anglers, and 1,500 rest of other Alaska resident anglers. Adjusted response rates for each sample were 53.7%, 41.1%, and 46.1%, respectively, for an overall response rate of about 48%.

The 2012 survey instrument for non-resident anglers was significantly revised from the 2007 survey. The Alaska resident versions of the survey changed little from the 2007 survey versions. **We expect the modified survey for this project to be very similar to the 2012 instrument and materials.**

Major Tasks

There are **two main tasks** associated with this survey research project.

Task 1: Cognitive Interviews (November 2015 – March 2016)

Given the survey instruments will be modifications of ones implemented in 2012, we do not anticipate the need for extensive qualitative pretesting of the survey instrument, despite the possible changes to the survey protocols used to collect the data. Two sessions of one-on-one cognitive interviews with Alaska resident anglers will be organized and conducted to pretest the Alaska resident angler versions of the survey.¹ These interviews will take two forms: verbal protocols (talk aloud) interviews and self-administered with follow-up interviews. In each session, there will be 2-3 verbal protocols and the remaining interviews will be self-administered with follow-up interviews. All interviews are expected to take approximately 1.0 (self-administered) to 1.5 (verbal protocols) hours each. For the verbal protocols, the participant is asked to give a verbal account of what they are thinking and reading as they fill out the survey, which is followed by a short debriefing interview. The self-administered with follow-up interviews will involve the participant filling out the survey (between 20-30 minutes), followed by a debriefing interview (30-40 minutes).

Alaska locations. The contractor will set up two cognitive interview sessions in Alaska, one in Southeast Alaska (Juneau, Ketchikan, or Sitka) and another in Southcentral Alaska

¹ Cognitive interviews with non-resident anglers are being organized in-house at the PSMFC and AFSC.

(Anchorage, Homer, or Seward). These locations have sufficient numbers of Alaska resident anglers from which participants can be recruited. The specific locations will be selected with input from the AFSC.

Moderating. AFSC researchers will conduct the interviews.

Recruiting. The contractor is responsible for recruiting the cognitive interview participants. Each cognitive interview session should include 9 participants, although it is expected that approximately 12-15 persons will need to be recruited to ensure 9 actually participate.² Cognitive interview participants should be recruited from residents near each interview location who saltwater fished in Alaska during the most recent fishing season (i.e., 2015). Individuals who have purchased a fishing license to fish in Alaska are identified in the ADF&G's Fish License data file, portions of which will be provided for the purpose of recruiting participants. The Fish License data file includes names and mailing addresses of all sport anglers who purchased a fishing license in Alaska, but no telephone numbers. There is no d.

istinction or identification of saltwater anglers versus freshwater anglers, and unfortunately no way to distinguish these separate types of anglers from the license data file *a priori*. It is expected that the contractor will recruit participants by phone. Since the License Data file does not contain phone numbers, the contractor will need to utilize a telephone number lookup service to acquire phone numbers.

For the cognitive interviews, eligible participants are those license holders who are 18 years or older and have fished in saltwater (i.e., in oceans or bays) in Alaska during 2015 or 2016. (Approximately 50% of the license holders fish in saltwater in each year). Thus, the main screening criteria are (a) living near the interview location, (b) being at least 18 years old, and (c) having fished in saltwater in Alaska during the applicable year. Additional screening based on fishing mode (by private boat, charter boat, or from shore)³ is likely to be needed to ensure the diversity of each group, but screening for demographics and socioeconomics is expected to be minimal (e.g., limited number of retirees or requiring at least 2 females, etc.). The contractor will mail a reminder and directions to the interview location one week in advance and contact recruited individuals by phone a day in advance of the cognitive interview to remind them of their participation and confirm the interview time and directions to it. A preliminary telephone recruitment screening script will be provided by AFSC, and will be used by the contractor to develop a final telephone recruitment script. The reminder phone call script and mailing materials will be developed and implemented by the contractor. The contractor will also provide any participation incentives that are used.

Test materials. Survey materials to be tested in these cognitive interviews will be developed by AFSC. Printing of cognitive interview test materials may be assigned to the contractor or facility at which the interviews occur.

² To adhere with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, each cognitive interview session is limited to 9 participants. If more participants show, they will be paid and dismissed.

³ Sport anglers may fish by more than one mode.

Facilities and amenities. There are few if any market research facilities with appropriate facilities in the Alaska locations listed above. As a result, the contractor will likely need to rent hotel conference room space (or comparable space) that can comfortably sit 2 persons (1 participant and 1 moderator) around a table, arrange for light refreshments (soft drinks, bottled water, cookies, or other snacks) for participants, and a digital audio and/or video recording device to record the cognitive interview sessions

Host. The contractor will provide a host to handle logistics, check in participants, coordinate with the hotel or other facility, and be responsible for recordings, refreshments, dismissing participants exceeding the maximum allowable number, and disbursing incentives at the conclusion of each interview session.

Task 2: Administering the Survey (December 2016 – September 2017)

The contractor is responsible for administering the full survey implementation. Two strata of Alaska resident anglers will be sampled from, resident anglers of Southeast Alaska (panhandle region of the state that includes the state capital, Juneau) and resident anglers of the rest of Alaska (Anchorage, Fairbanks, etc.). In addition, a third sample stratum consists of non-resident anglers (U.S. residents who fished in Alaska).

Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). This data collection will necessarily require Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval under the PRA. This clearance process takes several months to a year and is required prior to the survey being fielded. As part of this process, OMB must approve the survey methods proposed. While the AFSC will be seeking the PRA clearance and do not anticipate any unnecessary delays (given past experiences for the two earlier surveys), the contractor may be required to provide some input and advice to AFSC to help justify the methods proposed, should they involve novel techniques. In addition, delays in OMB approval may require modification of the timeline for fielding the survey. However, pending a timely OMB approval under the PRA, the final survey can be expected to begin in January 2017 or thereafter.

Implementation will include an advance letter, an initial mailing, a postcard reminder, a follow-up phone interview, and a second full mailing.

- The **advance letter** will be sent approximately a few days prior to sending out the initial mailing.
- The **initial mailing** will be sent approximately a few days after the advance letter is sent. Each mailing contains a personalized cover letter, a questionnaire, an insert (described below), and a pre-addressed and postage-paid return envelope. This *first* mailing will be sent by first-class mail and will include a token pre-incentive to boost participation (provided by contractor). Note that a \$1 bill was given as a token incentive in both past surveys and was believed to have worked well.
- The **postcard reminder** will be sent a few days after the initial mailing.
- The **second full mailing** will be sent to anyone who has yet to complete and return the survey.
- The **telephone interview** will be conducted several weeks after the second full mailing. All individuals who have not returned the survey to date will be contacted, provided a valid phone number can be procured via reverse telephone lookup. Contacted respondents will be encouraged to fill out and return the questionnaire. In addition to encouraging individuals to complete the survey and identifying and rectifying delivery problems, the interview will involve asking several attitudinal, behavioral, and socio-demographic questions that will assist in understanding non-response behavior. These phone interviews are expected to

last up to 10 minutes. In addition, any contacted respondent needing or requesting another copy of the survey will be mailed one.

It is important that the contractor maintain an accurate and timely database of respondents to minimize contact expenses and to avoid potential burden on respondents. Contractor suggestions for ways to enhance response rates are welcome.

Sampling frame. The final survey samples will be drawn from all individuals who purchased an Alaska state sport fishing license during 2016 (or 2017 if the survey implementation is delayed beyond 2017). The sampling frame for these populations is based on the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)'s Fish License Data file that contains the names and addresses of all Alaska residents who have purchased a license to sport fish in Alaska, both in saltwater and freshwater. Some records have phone numbers and e-mail addresses, but these items have not been mandated in the past and are likely sparse in the current Fish License Data file.⁴ In addition, a supplement to the Fish License Data file exists that contains the names and addresses for Alaska residents that have a permanent identification card (PIC), which is a permanent license to fish in Alaska for individuals meeting certain age and residential qualifications. This supplemental PIC list is updated periodically and will be added to the Fish License Data file when drawing random samples for this study. The final Fish License Data file and PIC data will not be available for a given fishing season (year) until January of the following year (e.g., available in January 2017 for the 2016 fishing season).

Sample size. We would like proposals to consider two overall sample sizes: 5,000 or 6,000. The selection of sample size will depend upon the overall project budget. For the final survey, AFSC will provide the random sample of 5,000 or 6,000 names and addresses. About 10% or less of each of the samples drawn from the License data file is expected to be invalid names or addresses. As such, the effective total samples size is expected to be 4,500 or 5,400, associated with the 5,000 or 6,000 initial sample sizes, respectively. A similar distribution between the resident and non-resident samples as was used in the past can be expected.

Expected response rates. The final survey should target at least a 50% response rate (2,750 completed and returned surveys in the final survey from the 4,500 in the "valid" sample size). The completed surveys by week of the 2007 (Figure 1) and 2012 (Figure 2) survey implementations are presented below.

Note: The 50% targeted overall response rate from all survey phases in the final survey is a minimum target, and the actual response rate will hopefully be higher.

⁴The Fish License Data file is not considered complete for a given year until the following year after it has undergone data cleaning and verification (usually completed in February or March). In part, this is because fish licenses sold at stores are reported irregularly and periodically, and sometimes not until the end of the season. Further, ADF&G only cleans and validates the file at the end of the year, not intra-annually. In the 2007 survey, a mostly-cleaned and verified Fish License Data file for the 2006 season obtained from ADF&G at the beginning of January 2007 was used.

Figure 1. Completes by week, 2007 survey

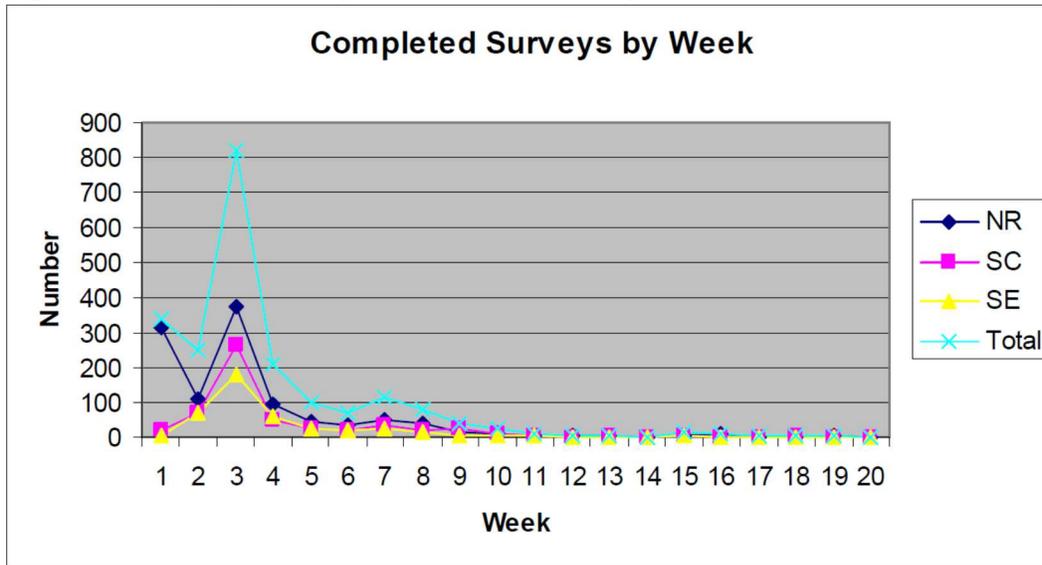
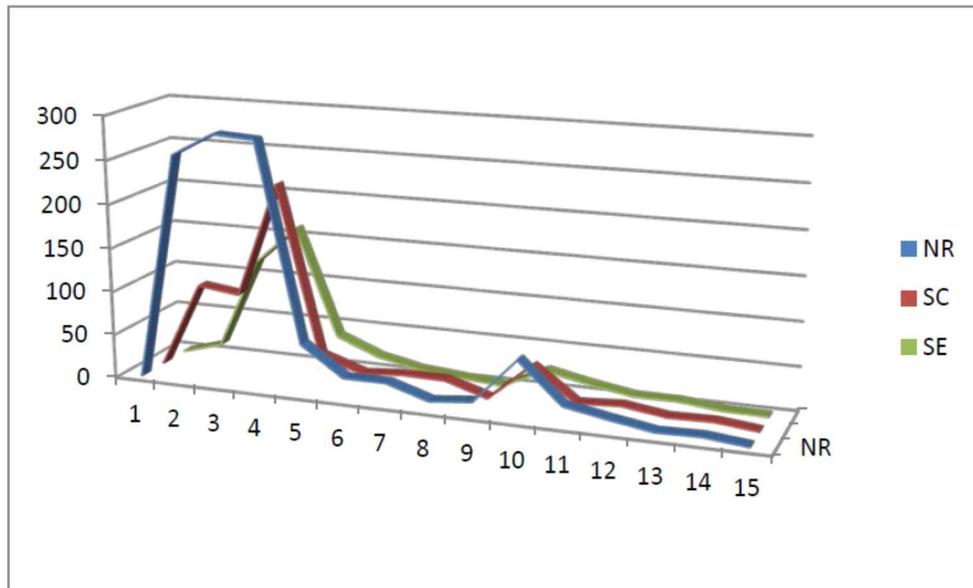


Figure 2. Completes by week, 2012 survey



Survey material specifications. Printing of all survey materials is the responsibility of the contractor. Choice of paper types, colors, and quality are subject to PSMFC and AFSC approval.

Insert. An insert will be mailed with each survey mailing. The insert will be a double-sided 8.5"×11" page containing color maps of regions in Alaska (one on each side of the page). Electronic copies of the maps will be provided by AFSC. The contractor will format the page and print the inserts.

Questionnaire basics. The questionnaire will be a 16-page booklet style survey, made from four 11"x17" pages double-sided, folded, and stapled on the spine (resulting in a booklet with sixteen 8.5"x11" pages). The paper used for the questionnaire will be high-quality book paper. Each questionnaire will have an individual identification number printed on it that uniquely identifies each respondent and survey version.

Questionnaire versions. There will be up to **150** different versions of the survey used in the final survey (sub-versions of the three main survey versions targeting the three Alaska angler populations). Each version will have a unique set of fishing trips described in stated preference choice (i.e., conjoint analysis-type) questions that the respondent will be asked to choose from. These fishing trips are distinguished by differing attribute levels contained in tables describing them. AFSC will provide the contractor with a table that defines the attribute levels associated with each survey version. The contractor will randomly assign each respondent to one of the versions. In **all** follow-up mailings, the respondent will receive the same survey version. Thus, the contractor will need to track which version each respondent receives. AFSC will provide the contractor with an electronic copy of the base survey (not every version) in Microsoft Word. The contractor is responsible for survey formatting.

Letters. The advance letter and survey cover letters will have the contractor's address displayed. These letters will be individualized by using the respondent's name, dated for the date it will be sent, and printed on letterhead using high-quality bond paper. The advance letter will be printed on NOAA letterhead that will be designed by the contractor. All correspondence should include a toll-free number for the contractor that the respondent can use for questions or comments. Letters will include a signature in contrasting ink (e.g., blue ink signature, black letter print).

Envelopes. Envelopes should be printed with "Address Correction Requested". The return envelopes will be 9"x12" Business Reply Mail envelopes. All envelopes will be designed by the contractor or the contractor will use the designs used in the previous implementation materials.

Web-based questionnaire (optional). The contractor may propose a web-based survey option, which would provide respondents with an alternative way of filling out the survey. We expect this option to be in addition to the mail and telephone contacts. All programming would be the responsibility of the contractor, and the contractor would have to devise a password-protected individual-specific manner for respondents to access a customized survey version (that matches the specific questionnaire version they received in the mail). The web-based survey would be programmed using the paper-version of the survey provided by AFSC as a template.

Incentives. Our experience is that small monetary pre-incentives help response rates and are agreeable to OMB. We anticipate that a monetary pre-incentive of \$1 will be used in the survey.

Follow-up telephone interview. After the second full mailing has been completed, respondents will be contacted by telephone and encouraged to complete and return the survey. Questions will also be asked to determine if the respondent is not eligible to receive the survey (e.g., the respondent did not purchase an Alaska state sport fishing license), and asked some classification questions that can be used to analyze non-response bias (e.g., income, age, gender, fishing experience, own a boat). Each respondent should be called up to 6 times before phone attempts are discontinued. The contractor will obtain the respondent's phone number using a phone lookup service. AFSC will provide the contractor with a preliminary telephone script for use in the phone interview that identifies the set of questions to be asked. From this script, the contractor will develop the final script for actual use.

Name and address verification. The contractor will verify for accuracy the names and addresses in the sample using a national address database.

Handling respondent inquiries. The contractor shall supply a toll-free number and/or web address on each of the mailings to notify respondents where to go to if they have questions or comments. The contractor is responsible for handling respondent inquiries and questions. The AFSC project manager will work with the contractor to develop answers to inquiries or questions. The contractor shall inform the AFSC project manager about the nature and number of inquiries each week during the survey process.

Data entry. The contractor should provide details of the data entry process and mechanisms that will be put into place to ensure data quality and accuracy, particularly given the number of survey versions that will be fielded. Each completed survey will be scanned into its own PDF file that will be named by the survey ID number. Later, these PDFs of the completed surveys will be sent to the AFSC project manager as a deliverable.

Examination of early returns. The contractor will examine early returns of surveys for survey administration issues that can be addressed in later contacts, discuss these with the AFSC project manager, and devise and implement measures to address these issues.

Progress reports during implementation. The contractor will provide a weekly progress report to AFSC by e-mail while the surveys are being administered. The report shall contain the status of the survey, response rates by survey version/sample (and, upon request, by survey version), and identify and discuss any problems or issues associated with the survey. It will also contain a list of the respondent questions and comments, organized by respondent identification number, if applicable.

Final data sets and report. The contractor shall supply a SAS data file (or other agreed upon electronic file format) no later than 8 weeks after the completion of the final mailings for the full survey. The data file will include all coded responses to the questionnaire questions, plus respondent-specific data related to which survey version was sent, which mailings or other contacts were done, when the completed survey was received, what attempts were made to contact the individual by phone or e-mail, the date and disposition of each contact attempt (e.g., for phone: busy, no answer, voice mail or answering machine, answered but not home, answered but refused, etc.), and responses to any phone interview questions.

1. Documentation of the transferred file shall include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:
 - a. variable name
 - b. position
 - c. description
 - d. length
 - e. alpha-numeric description
2. The contractor shall deliver all of the completed questionnaires to PSMFC and AFSC as pdfs. The pdfs for each questionnaire should be named by the respondent's unique ID number and sorted into folders by survey version. The contractor will keep the hardcopies of the returned surveys for up to 1 year or until PSMFC is satisfied the pdfs fully represent the scanned hardcopy versions.
3. The contractor shall also supply a final report no later than 8 weeks after the mailing of the final survey mailing. The final report should contain the following:
 - a. List and describe the survey procedures that were implemented.
 - b. Attempted number of surveys, total, by region of residence, and by survey version.
 - c. An analysis of response rates by survey version, region of residence, boat ownership, income, age, gender, and education.
 - d. Response rates to each mailing and by week. Response rates are defined as the number of completed and returned surveys over all "valid" surveys mailed (excludes undeliverables, deceased, and the like, but includes refusals).
 - e. A full enumeration of any telephone, internet, and other survey protocols implemented.
 - f. Number of responses attributable to each survey contact.
 - g. Other analysis or descriptive statistics that the contractor believes to be useful to easily identify problems with the data or that will assist in identifying the success of the survey.

AFSC will be responsible for the statistical/econometric analysis of the survey responses.

Proposal Details

Requested information. Those wishing to submit a proposal should include the following information as part of their proposals.

1. A brief description of the cognitive interview services the contractor will provide. Include information about the locations and facilities of pretest activities, amount of participant incentives, and other major costs (facility rental, hosting, audio/DVD recordings, etc.).
2. A description of the survey administration services the contractor will provide. Provide information about the incentives proposed and a full explanation of the survey methods proposed, timing, expected response rates,
3. Specify how addresses will be verified and phone numbers procured for the samples, as well as e-mail addresses if part of the proposal.
4. A list of qualifications of key personnel involved in the project.
5. A brief statement of previous experience the firm has in organizing cognitive interviews and other qualitative pretesting, and in mail, telephone, and mixed mode surveys. List relevant work experience regarding recreational surveys, fishery-related surveys, or conducting surveys in Alaska.
6. A breakdown of costs by major task (Tasks 1 and 2).
 - For Task 1, costs should be reported for the following categories: personnel, facilities (by location), pretest incentives, other operating expenses (incl. travel, equipment, supplies), administrative overhead (if any), and total cost.
 - For Task 2, separate costs should be reported for the survey implementation using the following categories: personnel, printing and materials, mailing, programming, telephone interviews, other operating expenses, administrative overhead (if any), and total cost. Additionally, separate costs for Task 2 should be reported for the two sample size assumptions (5,000 and 6,000).
7. Specify any additional services the contractor will provide (e.g., additions to the final report, survey procedures and development, etc.).

Selection criteria. Proposal selection will be based on the following criteria:

1. Cost (50%)
2. Experience, expertise, and methods as discussed above in “Requested information” (50%)

Submission deadline. The deadline for submitting proposals to PSMFC is 5 p.m. Pacific on **October 2, 2015**. Selection results will be announced on or before **October 12, 2015**.

Proposals shall be submitted by e-mail to Mr. Michael Arredondo (marredondo@psmfc.org).

Information requests or questions. Questions should be directed to Michael Arredondo of the PSMFC at marredondo@psmfc.org. Written questions must be submitted to Michael Arredondo by September 18, 2015. Responses to all written questions will be posted on the PSMFC website by September 25, 2015.