#1 Questions on PSMFC RFP: Collecting Regional Economic Data for Southwest Alaska Fisheries – Survey Instrument Development and Key Informant Interview

Project scope:

1.1. Is the focus of the project on state or federal fisheries (or both) in Southwest Alaska?

The project covers both federal and state fisheries.

1.2. What is the scope of the vessel owner survey?

a) Participants of state or federal fisheries?

Participants of both federal and state fisheries.

b) Catcher vessels or catcher processors?

The vessel owner survey collects data from catcher vessels only. Data from catcher processors will be collected using key informant interviews.

c) Occasional or full-time participants in Southwest Alaska fisheries?

The vessel owner survey will collect data for all catcher vessels (both occasional and full-time participants) landing at ports in Southwest AK region, as reported in CFEC data.

d) Is the unit of analysis the vessel or the owner?

The unit of analysis is vessel. That is, we are interested in vessel level employment and expenditure information.

1.3. What is the scope of the key informant interviews?

a) Processors of state or federal fishery landings?

Processors of both federal and state landings, including catcher processors, motherships, and shoreside processors.

b) Processors of fish landed only from Southwest Alaskan fisheries?

The contractor will need to collect data from processors (shoreside processors and motherships) located in/near Southwest AK region. In case of catcher processors, the contractor will need to obtain data on the purchases of the catcher processors made in the region.

1.4. What are the geographic boundaries of the Southwest Alaska Fisheries region?

Aleutians East Borough; Aleutians West Census Area; Bethel Census Area; Bristol Bay Borough; Dillingham Census Area; Lake and Peninsula Borough; and Wade Hampton Census Area.

Including Kodiak region, and dropping couple BCAs that do not rely much on fisheries, could be an option.

1.5 Will the vessel owner survey only target vessel owners (as listed in the CFEC database) or does it refer to the operator who knows the most about crew, labor payments and their calculation, vessel expenditures, and other operational and fiscal arrangements?

The target will be either owners or operators, depending on the willingness of respondents to respond and on the knowledge of the respondents about the vessel expenditure and employment information.

Design of the survey instrument:

2.1. The RFP states that for survey questions "the total questions to be asked should not exceed eight". Is this maximum limit fixed or is this general guidance that will be collaboratively solidified during the project?

The reason why we want to limit the number of questions is to increase response rate. However, if it is necessary, adding two to three more questions will be acceptable, as long as the additional questions will not require a significant amount additional time from the respondents.

a) The RFP lists more pieces of desired data than the question limit. How does putting questions in a matrix count?

Putting questions in a matrix is acceptable. The important thing is that we don't want the time per response to exceed 20-25 minutes.

b) Because the number of requested data points exceeds the question limit, how are you defining a question?

There is no hard and fast rule to define a question. A sample survey / question format is attached.

2.2. Are focus groups mandatory for the pre-test of the survey instrument?

Yes.

a) If yes, how many groups and who will be responsible for the identification and recruitment of participants?

About two to three groups. The contractor will be responsible for the identification and recruitment of participants.

b) If the same information can be obtained more efficiently in a different way, are focus groups required?

Unless the proposal indicates strong evidence that other method is more efficient than focus group, we recommend that the contractor use focus groups.

2.3. Is it anticipated that the surveys will be administered by telephone, face to face, online, via US mail, Email, Fax etc.?

Yes. The contractor who will field the survey (via another, unrelated project) is expected to use a combination of these methods to maximize the response rate. But fielding the survey of catcher vessels is NOT a task in the present project.

Design of the key informant interviews:

3.1. The RFP states that for interview questions "the total questions to be asked should not exceed six". Is this maximum limit fixed or is this general guidance that will be collaboratively solidified during the project?

Adding couple more questions will be acceptable. The important thing is that we don't want the maximum amount of time per response to exceed 40-45 minutes.

3.2. In the RPF it states "the contractor will select 20 processors" and will identify 15 local businesses for personal interviews. Is the expectation to complete as many interviews as possible among the 20/15 selected processors and local businesses or is the goal 20 and 15 completed interviews?

The goal is to complete 20/15 interviews.

Overall implementation of the project:

4.1. Would the contractor have access to the data collected through the survey instrument and informant interviews after the completion of the project?

No, unless the same contractor develops the regional economic models using the data through another project.

4.2. The RPF is very concise in the expected tasks and products. Is there any recommended budgetary guidance?

The available funding for this task cannot exceed $69,850.

4.3. Are there any recent studies that have been completed that are available to assist in developing the proposal?

A sample vessel survey is attached.

4.4. As a University, there are sometimes terms and conditions or other assurances in an agreement such as indemnification and insurance that we can't agree to as a contractor. If this is the case, are you willing to work with us on an appropriate agreement/contract language?

Yes. PSMFC has worked with universities in the past to modify language so that it is agreeable to both parties.

4.5. The RFP states the project will be performed over a two year period with the net time the contractor will spend compiling this project not to exceed six months. Is there a timeline that shows a sequence and timing of the proposed activities over the two years?

Here is a timeline, although PRA clearance may take much longer time.

June 1 – Aug 31, 2014:	Develop survey questions, key informant interview scripts, and PRA documents.
Sep 1, 2014 – Feb 28, 2015:	Clear PRA documents from OMB
Mar 1 – Apr 30, 2015:	Implement Key informant interviews.

4.6. Some of the information that is being asked for in this project is already collected by other NMFS efforts, such as the Economic Data Reports. Is the intent of this data collection process to focus on collecting missing data to fill critical gaps? Or, is it to collect information from vessels and processors that don't normally supply data?

This project covers ALL Southwest fisheries and species.

#2 Questions on PSMFC RFP: Collecting Regional Economic Data for Southwest Alaska Fisheries – Survey Instrument Development and Key Informant Interview

1) Which BCAs are included in the Southwest Alaska study region? The RFP doesn't specify how the Southwest Region is defined. It mentions there are seven boroughs and census areas within the Southwest region but doesn't provide a list. Different organizations define Southwest Alaska differently. (From the perspective of federally-managed fisheries it probably makes sense only to include three BCAs in a "Southwest Alaska" region: Aleutians West CA, Aleutians East CA and Kodiak Island.)

   Aleutians East Borough; Aleutians West Census Area; Bethel Census Area; Bristol Bay Borough; Dillingham Census Area; Lake and Peninsula Borough; and Wade Hampton Census Area.

   Including Kodiak region, and dropping several Southwest BCAs that do not rely heavily on fisheries, could be an option.

2) The RFP doesn't specify which fisheries are to be covered by the surveys. Is it intended to cover only commercial fisheries? Does the survey include recreational charter vessels? What about non-federally managed fisheries (such as salmon) conducted solely under state authority? If the latter, what is the rationale for including non-federally managed fisheries in this (federally funded) data collection?

   The project covers both federal and state fisheries. We include state fishery in order for the collected data to be consistent with IMPLAN data structure. That is, if state fishery is excluded and the state fishery (salmon) has significant indirect and induced effects, the resulting regional economic model will be biased. We consider only commercial fisheries.

3) Is the contractor expected to collect primary information from fisheries that are already covered under EDRs (e.g., Crab, AM80)?

   Yes.

4) What is the reason for the specific limitations on the number of questions, i.e., eight questions for vessel surveys and six for the key informant interviews of processors and suppliers? (The appendices list 23 vessel cost categories, 19 processor cost categories and 14 input commodity categories.)

   The reason why we want to limit the number of questions is to increase response rate. However, if it is necessary, adding two to three more questions will be acceptable, as long as the additional questions will not require a significant amount additional time from the respondents.

5) Since vessels and processors will be asked to report where their input purchases are made, what additional information is expected to be gained from interviewing local suppliers? Is it just a check on information collected from vessels and processors, or will information

collected from local suppliers be used to revise local suppliers' production/expenditure functions? If the latter, then in addition to sales of the goods and services (listed in Appendix C) to vessels and processors, shouldn't the list of questions for local input suppliers also include the amounts and locus of their own input purchases?

Yes, the reason for obtaining data from local suppliers is that we want to validate the local businesses' sales of inputs to seafood industries and to revise local suppliers' production/expenditure functions. The questions can include the amounts and locus of their own input purchases to better regionalize the IMPLAN data.