

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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## Meeting Summary

236<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
December 4 - 11, 2017  
Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska

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### Attachments

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1) C4 Table 1 & 13 (BSAI 2018/2019 Groundfish Specifications) | 5) C5c GOA Pacific Cod/Pollock Adjustments |
| 2) C4 Table 12 (Halibut DMRs)                                 | 6) C5d Halibut PSC Limits                  |
| 3) C4 Table 14, 15, 16, 17 (BSAI PSC Limits)                  | 7) C5 Table 12 GOA Halibut DMRs            |
| 4) C5 2018 and 2019 GOA Groundfish Specifications             | 8) Time Log                                |
|   | 9) Newsletter                              |

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council met Wednesday, December 6, through Monday, December 11, 2017 at the Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska. The following Council, NPFMC staff, SSC, and AP members attended the meetings.

### **Council Members**

Balsiger, Jim	Marx, Steve	Peterson, Theresa
Cotten, Sam	Kinneen, Simon	LCDR Corrie Sergent
Cross, Craig	Laukitis, Buck	Smoker, Lauren (GC)
Down, Kenny	Lepore, John (GC)	Sullivan, Maura
Hanson, Dave	CAPT Stephen White	Tweit, Bill (Vice Chair)
Hartill, Trent (Alt for Cotten)	Merrill, Glenn (Alt for Balsiger)	
Hull, Dan (Chair)	Mezirow, Andy	

### **NPFMC Staff**

Armstrong, Jim	Kircher, Peggy	Shawback, Maria
Cunningham, Sam	MacLean, Steve	Schmidt, Nicole
Evans, Diana (DD)	Marrinan, Sarah	Stram, Diana
Fey, Mike (AKFIN)	McCracken, Jon	Witherell, Dave (ED)
Gleason, Shannon	Cleaver, Sara (SeaGrant Fellow)	

### **Scientific and Statistical Committee**

The SSC met from December 4 - 6, 2017 at the Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, AK.

Members present were:

Farron Wallace, Chair <i>NOAA Fisheries—AFSC</i>	Amy Bishop <i>Alaska Sea Life Center</i>	Robert Clark <i>Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game</i>
Jason Gasper, Acting Vice Chair <i>NOAA Fisheries – Alaska Region</i>	Brad Harris <i>Alaska Pacific University</i>	Anne Hollowed <i>NOAA Fisheries—AFSC</i>
George Hunt <i>University of Washington</i>	Gordon Kruse <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Dayv Lowry <i>Washington Dept. of Fish and Game</i>
Seth Macinko <i>University of Rhode Island</i>	Franz Mueter <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Terry Quinn <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>
Kate Reedy <i>Idaho State University Pocatello</i>	Matt Reimer <i>University of Alaska Anchorage</i>	Ian Stewart <i>Intl. Pacific Halibut Commission</i>
Alison Whitman <i>Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife</i>		

Members absent were:

Chris Anderson <i>University of Washington</i>	Sherri Dressel, Vice Chair <i>Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game</i>
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### **Advisory Panel**

The AP met Tuesday, December 5, through Friday, December 8, 2017. Members present were:

Carroll, Shannon  
Christiansen, Ruth  
Cochran, Kurt  
Crowley, John  
Donich, Daniel  
Downing, Jerry  
Drobnica, Angel (Co-V Chair)  
Donich, Daniel

Gruver, John  
Kauffman, Jeff  
Kwachka, Alexis  
Lowenberg, Craig  
McCallum, Chuck  
Nichols, Carina  
O'Donnell, Paddy

Peterson, Joel  
Scoblic, John  
Stephan, Jeff  
Stevens, Ben  
Upton, Matt (Co-Vice Chair)  
Weiss, Ernie (Chair)  
Wilt, Sinclair

## B REPORTS

The following reports were given and discussed. Actions were deferred to staff tasking.

### **B1 Executive Director's Report** – David Witherell

- Whale Entanglement Presentation - Dr. Craig George
- AM 80 Co-op Sector Report – Mark Fina & Beth Concepcion
- B2 – Legislative Report – David Witherell

### **B3 NMFS Management Report** – Glenn Merrill

- In Season Management Report – Mary Furuness

### **B4 NOAA GC Report** – Maura Sullivan

### **B5 NOAA Enforcement Report** – Will Ellis & Nathan Lagerwey

### **B6 ADF&G Report** – Trent Hartill

- Subsistence Report – Jim Fall

### **B7 USCG Report** – LCDR Corrie Sergeant

### **B8 USFWS Report** – Karen Clark

- Seabird Die Off Report – Rob Kayler

### **B9 Protected Species Report** - Steve MacLean

### **B10 IPHC Interim Report** – Dave Wilson & Ian Stewart

## C1 2018 CHARTER HALIBUT MANAGEMENT MEASURES

The Council heard a presentation from ADF&G staff Scott Meyer. NPFMC staff, Steve MacLean also gave the Charter Halibut Committee report. The following action was taken:

### **Mr. Mezirow made the following motion which was seconded by Ms. Peterson:**

The Council recommends the following charter halibut management measures for implementation in 2018 in Areas 2C and 3A:

#### Area 2C

The Council recommends the following management measures be implemented with a one-fish bag limit.

If the allocation is 0.69 million pounds:

- U35:O80 no annual limit.

If the allocation is below 0.69 million pounds:

- 4 fish annual limit, U35:O80, and if necessary 3 fish annual limit, U35:O80

If the allocation is above 0.69 million pounds:

- No annual limit, and increase lower slot limit as allowed to stay within allocation.

Area 3A

Status quo measures include two fish bag limit, including one fish any size and 28” maximum size limit on one fish, 4 fish annual limit, one trip per CHP per day, one trip per vessel per day, Wednesdays closed all year, 3 Tuesdays closed between July 24 and August 7.

If the allocation is 1.70 million pounds:

- Status quo measures plus close 7 additional Tuesdays as outlined in the attached Table 11 (June 19-Aug 21).

If the allocation is higher or lower than 1.70 million pounds:

- Increase or decrease Tuesday closures to remain within the allocation, as described in Table 11 below.

Table 11. Estimated potential harvest reductions and projected removals associated with status quo management measures combined with additional Tuesday closures during June through August of 2018. Status quo management measures include one fish any size, 28-inch maximum on second fish, four fish annual limit, vessel and permit trip limits, Wednesday closure, and Tuesdays closed three days. Projections include corrections for errors in estimation of average weight and an additional 1.2% release mortality by weight. Shaded values represent projections that do not exceed the 1.70 Mlb allocation associated with the reference SPR.

Number of Closed Tuesdays	Beginning and Ending Dates	Percentage reduction in harvest relative to status quo	Projected Harvest (no. Fish)	Projected Removals (Mlb)
3 (Status quo)	Jul 24 - Aug 07	0.0%	136,734	1.855
4	Jul 17 - Aug 07	-1.3%	134,986	1.830
5	Jul 17 - Aug 14	-2.5%	133,298	1.808
6	Jul 10 - Aug 14	-4.1%	131,068	1.777
7	Jul 03 - Aug 14	-5.5%	129,257	1.752
8	Jul 03 - Aug 21	-6.4%	127,977	1.736
9	Jun 26 - Aug 21	-7.6%	126,313	1.712
10	Jun 19 - Aug 21	-8.8%	124,686	1.689
11	Jun 19 - Aug 28	-9.5%	123,794	1.677
12	Jun 12 - Aug 28	-10.4%	122,449	1.659
13	Jun 05 - Aug 28	-11.2%	121,391	1.645
47 (all season)	Feb 01 - Dec 31	-13.2%	118,749	1.608

(from Meyer and Powers, 2018. Analysis of Management Options for the Area 2C and 3A Charter Halibut Fisheries for 2018. Report to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council)

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously December 7, 2017 at 11:04 a.m.

## C2 CHARTER HALIBUT PERMITS; Latent Capacity, RQE Ownership Caps

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Sarah Marrinan. The following actions were taken.

**Mr. Mezirow made the following motion on Charter Halibut Latency which was seconded by Ms. Peterson:**

The Council moves to take no action at this time.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously December 7, 2017 at 3:33 p.m.

**Mr. Mezirow made the following motion on RQE Ownership Caps which was seconded by Mr. Hartill:**

The Council moves to postpone action on Ownership Caps.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously December 7, 2017 at 3:38 p.m.

### **C3 SELF-GUIDED HALIBUT RENTAL BOATS**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Steve MacLean. The following action was taken.

**Mr. Mezirow made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Hartill:**

The Council adopts the following purpose and need statement and directs staff to develop an expanded discussion paper exploring an unguided rental boat registration requirement.

**Purpose and Need:**

*Due to declines in halibut abundance and associated changes in charter halibut sport fishing regulations, the charter halibut sector in IPHC Areas 2C and 3A currently has more restrictive management measures than non-charter halibut anglers. Additionally, charter halibut catch is limited by an allocation between the commercial and charter sectors; whereas the non-charter halibut harvest is not constrained by a sector catch limit.*

*The Council is concerned that differences in regulations between the charter and non-charter sectors, and growth of unguided halibut rental vessels affiliated with charter operations may result in increased halibut harvest in the non-charter sector that may negatively impact other sectors. To address this concern, the Council intends to a) establish a registration requirement for vessels affiliated with charter operations, remote lodges, or businesses that require annual saltwater fishing guide licenses, and b) estimate halibut catch from this segment of the sector. The intent of the registration requirement and catch estimation is to identify and track these unguided vessels to better understand impacts of this portion of the sector to communities, the halibut resource and other halibut stakeholders. This information will help the Council determine whether additional management actions are necessary for this segment of the fishery.*

In addition, the Council requests staff provide focused discussion of the following tradeoffs and considerations:

- Appropriate agency to administer a registration (State of Alaska or NMFS)
- Number of businesses and vessels that meet the proposed registration requirement
- Whether the registration should be annual or valid for some number of years
- Further examination of the number of unguided vessels associated with charter operations
- Steps necessary to estimate catch from this segment of the unguided sector.

- Challenges of a selective registration requirement focused on vessels affiliated with charter operations, remote lodges, or businesses that require annual saltwater fishing guide licenses.
- Define the kind or business that supplies unguided halibut rental boats. Consider adapting the State of Alaska definition of a Hunting Outfitter as a guideline.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously December 7, 2017 at 5:06 p.m.

## **C4 BSAI GROUND FISH SAFE REPORT AND 2018/2019 SPECIFICATIONS**

The Council heard a presentation on Ecosystem Considerations from NMFS' AFSC staff, Dr. Stephanie Zador, the Joint Plant Team report from NPFMC staff, Dr. Diana Stram, and the BSAI Plan Team report from NMFS' AFSC, staff and BSAI Plan Team co-chair, Dr. Dana Hanselman. The following actions were taken.

**Mr. Cross made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Tweit:**

The Council moves to adopt the 2018/2019 OFLs, ABCs, and TACs for Groundfish in the BSAI as shown in Table 1 and 13 (attachment 1).

**Mr. Cotten made the following amendment which was seconded by Mr. Kinneen:**

Change the 2018 TAC for Octopus from 200 to 250 and change the 2018 TAC for Bogoslof Pollock from 500 to 450.

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT:** Amendment passed with no objection December 8, 2017 at 12:08 p.m.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously December 8, 2017 at 12:11 p.m.

**Mr. Cross made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Tweit:**

The Council moves to approve the DMRs for 2018 as shown in table 12 (attachment 2).

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously December 8, 2017 at 12:13 p.m.

**Mr. Cross made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Kinneen:**

The Council moves to approve the PSC amounts and distributions shown in table 14, 15, 16, 17 and to approve the BSAI SAFE Report (attachment 3).

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously December 8, 2017 at 12:15 p.m.

## C5 GOA GROUND FISH SAFE AND 2018/2019 HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS

The Council heard a presentation on GOA Pacific Cod from NMFS' AFSC staff Dr. Steven Barbeaux, as well as a presentation from, Jim Armstrong (NPFMC staff) and Dr. Jim Ianelli (NMFS' AFSC staff and GOA Plan Team co-chair). The following action was taken.

**Mr. Laukitis made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Down:**

The Council recommends approving the 2017 GOA SAFE report.

The Council recommends the final 2018 and 2019 Gulf of Alaska groundfish specifications for OFLs and ABCs as recommended by the SSC, and the TACs as recommended by the AP, as shown in the attached table (attachment 4).

The only change to the AP's TAC recommendations are for the Central GOA arrowtooth flounder TAC limit, which is reduced to 48,000 metric tons for both 2018 and 2019.

The TACs for both Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod and pollock have been adjusted to account for the State water Guideline Harvest Level fisheries. The GOA Pacific cod and pollock adjustments are shown in C5c (attachment 5) to the action memo.

The Council recommends setting the final 2018 and 2019 Pacific halibut PSC limits, allowances, and apportionments in the GOA in Tables C5d (attachment 6) in the action memo.

Finally, the Council recommends the updated halibut DMRs for 2018 and 2019 as shown in action memo item C5e (attachment 7).

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously December 9, 2017 at 9:31 a.m.

## C6 SMALL SIDEBOARDS

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Jon McCracken. The following action was taken.

**Mr. Balsiger made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Cross:**

The Council recommends releasing the analysis for public review after revising Alternative 2 as recommended by staff and incorporating the SSC's comments to the extent practicable.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed with no objection December 9, 2017 at 10:18 a.m.

## C7 BERING SEA COD TRAWL CV PARTICIPATION

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC contractor, Darrell Brannan and NPFMC staff, Jon McCracken. The following action was taken.

**Mr. Cotten made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Cross:**

The Council adopts the following Purpose and Need Statement and initiates an analysis of the following alternatives:

*During development of Amendment 80 to the Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Fishery Management Plan, and associated rule making, the Council was silent on the ability of catcher processors defined in Amendment 80 to act as motherships in limited access fisheries. Recent increases of Amendment 80 catcher processors acting as motherships has resulted in an increase in the amount of Pacific cod delivered to Amendment 80 catcher processors, an increase in the number of catcher vessels delivering Pacific cod to motherships, and a decrease in the amount of Pacific cod delivered to shoreside processing facilities. The Council is concerned about the impacts of the recent increases and potential for future growth in offshore deliveries of Pacific cod to Amendment 80 vessels or other vessels operating as motherships, and the potential impacts those increases could have on shoreside processors, communities, and participating catcher vessels. The Council intends to address the activity of vessels acting as motherships.*

*In addition, there are 108 licenses endorsed to fish in the BSAI trawl cod fishery including 76 exempt and non-exempt AFA vessels. Information shows a large number of AFA endorsed vessels are not participating, but whose catch history contributes to the AFA Pacific cod sideboard in the Bering Sea trawl cod fishery. These AFA endorsed vessels that are not participating also benefit from secure allocation of pollock. Despite a high level of latency, the pace of the fishery has increased shortening the season, resulting in decreased ability to maximize the value of the fishery and negatively impacting fishery participants. Additional entrants could exacerbate these issues and threaten the viability of the fishery. The Council is considering improving the prosecution of the fishery, with the intent of increasing the value of the fishery, by considering limiting entry of vessels that have not participated, or have not participated recently.*

Alternative 1. No action

Alternative 2. A catcher processor may take deliveries of Pacific cod from catcher vessels participating in the Bering Sea Aleutian Islands (BSAI) non-CDQ Pacific cod trawl fishery if the catcher processor acted as a mothership and received Pacific cod deliveries as follows:

Option 1: Amendment 80 catcher processors acting as motherships during 2015-2017

Sub-option 1.1: in any year

Sub-option 1.2: in any two years

Sub-option 1.3: in any three years

Option 2: Non Amendment 80 vessels acting as motherships during 2015-2017

Alternative 3. The total amount of BSAI non-CDQ Pacific cod catcher vessel trawl sector allocation that can be delivered to Amendment 80 vessels acting as a mothership is equal to the percentage of trawl catcher vessel sector's BSAI Pacific cod delivered to catcher processors acting as motherships relative to the total BSAI catcher vessels trawl catch between:

Option 1: 2015-2017

Option 2: 2016-2017

Option 3: 2008-2017



Alternative 4: Prohibit use of LLP licenses in the BSAI trawl cod fishery that are not attributed a directed Bering Sea trawl cod landing between:

Option 1: 2010-2017

Option 2: 2012-2017

Option 3: 2010-2015

Option 4: 2012-2015

The Council establishes a control date of December 31, 2017 that may be used as a reference date for a future management action to limit catcher processor vessels from acting as motherships in the BSAI trawl catcher vessel Pacific cod fishery.

**Mr. Down made the following amendment which was seconded by Mr. Cross:**

(add and ~~strikeout~~ the following language **in bold**)

Alternative 4: Prohibit use of LLP licenses in the BSAI trawl cod fishery that are not attributed a directed **BSAI Bering Sea** trawl cod landing between:

Option 1: 2010-2017

Option 2: 2012-2017

Option 3: 2010-2015

Option 4: 2012-2015

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT:** Amendment passed with no objection December 9, 2017 at 4:50 p.m.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed with no objection December 9, 2017 at 4:58 p.m.

## **D1 WESTERN GOA PACIFIC COD A SEASON HALIBUT PSC RATES**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Jim Armstrong and Sam Cunningham. Actions for this agenda item were taken after agenda item D4.

## **D2 WESTERN GOA POLLOCK C/D SEASON TIMING CHINOOK PSC**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Jim Armstrong and Sam Cunningham. Actions for this agenda item were taken after agenda item D4.

## **D3 WESTERN GOA POLLOCK TRIP LIMITS**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Sam Cunningham. Actions for this agenda item were taken after agenda item D4.

## **D4 STRANDED COD IN GOA TRAWL B SEASON**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Sam Cunningham. Actions for D1 through D4 were taken after this presentation.

### **Mr. Cotten made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Laukitis:**

The Council tasks staff to develop a discussion paper that evaluates modifications to the seasons, and allocations of pollock and Pacific cod in the Gulf of Alaska. Staff should evaluate the potential changes to available harvest, halibut and Chinook salmon PSC data from 2012 through 2017. To the extent possible, staff should provide an initial assessment of the potential changes in ex-vessel and first wholesale value, bycatch, and improvement in management efficiency that could result from these modifications.

### **Pollock in Areas 610, 620, 630 and 640**

Option 1: Modify the allocation of pollock among existing A, B, C, and D seasons as follows:

Sub-option 1: A Season: 30%; B Season: 25%; C Season 25%; D season 20%

Sub-option 2: A Season: 30%; B Season: 30%; C Season 20%; D season 20%

Option 2: Combine the A and B season into a single season, and combining the C and D season into a single season, and allocate pollock among a combined A/B and C/D seasons as follows:

Sub-option 1: A/B Season: 50%; C/D season 50%

Sub-option 2: A/B Season: 55%; C/D season 45%

Sub-option 3: A/B Season: 60%; C/D season 40%

Option 3: Increase the amount of unharvested pollock that may be reallocated from one season to the following season from 20% to:

Sub-option 1: 25%

Sub-option 2: 30%

- Option 3 could be applied to the existing A, B, C, and D seasonal allocation, or to A/B and C/D allocations described in Options 1 and 2.

### **Pacific cod in the Western and Central Gulf of Alaska**

Modify the allocation of Pacific cod among the existing A and B seasons as follows:

Option 1: A Season: 65%; B Season: 35%

Option 2: A Season: 70%; B Season: 30%

Option 3: A Season: 75%; B Season: 25%

**Mr. Merrill made the following amendment which was seconded by Mr. Cotten:**

(add the following language **in bold**)

Option 3: Increase the amount of unharvested pollock that may be reallocated from one season to the following season, **or among areas**, from 20% to:

Sub-option 1: 25%

Sub-option 2: 30%

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT:** Amendment passed with no objection December 10, 2017 at 5:01 p.m.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed with one objection (Mr. Downs) December 10, 2017 at 5:06 p.m.

**Mr. Cotten made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Mezirow:**

The Council tasks staff to develop a discussion paper considering how the following actions might impact participating vessels, processors, and communities.

In the Western Gulf of Alaska,

- Implement a vessel size limit of 58 feet overall length during the pollock fishery,
- Establish a sideboard limit on catch of pollock by trawl vessels over 58 feet in length.

To the extent possible, the evaluation should consider the extent these measures may protect the historical dependence of 58 foot vessels on the pollock fishery, and protect the communities supported by the pollock fishery in the Western Gulf.

The discussion paper should include:

- Evaluation of the economic contribution of vessels over and under 58 feet in length to Western Gulf of Alaska communities.
- Historical harvest distributions and regulatory changes and external factors that influence participation and harvest by vessel sizes.

**Mr. Merrill made the following amendment which was seconded by Mr. Laukitis:**

(add the following language **in bold**)

To the extent possible, the evaluation should consider the extent these measures may protect the historical dependence of 58 foot vessels on the pollock fishery, **affect Chinook salmon and halibut PSC rates and use**, and protect the communities supported by the pollock fishery in the Western Gulf.

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT:** Amendment passed with no objection December 10, 2017 at 5:31 p.m.

**Mr. Merrill made the following amendment which was seconded by Mr. Laukitis:**  
(~~strike~~ the following language)

The discussion paper should include:

- Evaluation of the economic contribution of vessels over and under 58 feet in length to ~~Western Gulf of Alaska~~ communities.
- Historical harvest distributions and regulatory changes and external factors that influence participation and harvest by vessel sizes.

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT:** Amendment passed with no objection December 10, 2017 at 5:34 p.m.

**VOTE ON AMENDED MAIN MOTION:** Motion passed with two objections (Mr. Marx, Mr. Down) December 10, 2017 at 5:43 p.m.

## **D5 FIXED GEAR CV ROCKFISH RETENTION**

The Council heard a presentation from NPFMC staff, Jon McCracken. The following action was taken.

**Mr. Merrill made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Kinneen:**

The Council adopts the following purpose and need statement and initiates an analysis with the following suite of alternatives.

### **Purpose and Need Statement**

Fixed-gear catcher vessels in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) discard much of their incidental catch of rockfish (*Sebastes* and *Sebastalobus spp.*). The greatest amount of discarded rockfish occurs in the GOA hook-and-line fisheries. Requiring the full retention of rockfish could: benefit vessel operators by improving the identification of species when catcher vessels are subject to electronic monitoring; improve data collection by providing more accurate estimates of catch; reduce incentives to discard rockfish; reduce waste; reduce overall enforcement burden; and promote more consistent management between State of Alaska and Federal fisheries.

### **Alternatives**

Alternative 1: No Action (status quo). Most rockfish species would not be required to be retained. Rockfish species not open to directed fishing would continue to be managed by maximum retainable amount (MRA) limits. Once a total allowable catch limit is reached, NMFS places that rockfish species on prohibited species catch (PSC) status and prohibits retention.

Alternative 2: Require full retention of rockfish species by all fixed-gear catcher vessels (hook-and-line, pot, and jig) in the BSAI and GOA.

Alternative 3: Require full retention of rockfish species by hook-and-line catcher vessels in the GOA.

- Option under Alternatives 2, and 3: Require full retention of rockfish even if the species is on PSC status, but prohibit these retained rockfish from entering commerce.

As part of this analysis, the Council requests that staff consider:

- Whether increasing the MRAs for rockfish species would reduce the amount of catch that would need to be monitored to ensure that it does not enter commerce;
- The costs and feasibility of processing, handling, and donating rockfish that are retained in excess of an MRA and that cannot enter commerce.
- Potential inconsistencies between State and Federal management

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed unanimously December 11, 2017 at 9:30 a.m.

## **D6 CHINOOK SALMON EXCLUDER EFP**

The Council received a presentation from Sara Cleaver, SeaGrant fellow at the NPFMC, and John Gauvin of the Alaska Seafood Cooperative. The following action was taken.

**Mr. Merrill made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Kinneen:**

The Council supports issuance of an exempted fishing permit to continue testing salmon excluder devices on Bering Sea pollock vessels in the 2018 through 2020 Bering Sea pollock fishery A seasons.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** Motion passed with no objection December 11, 2017 at 10:15 a.m.

## **E1 STAFF TASKING**

David Witherell presented a list of items for discussion at staff tasking from the B reports and other items during the meeting and other staff tasking materials. Diana Stram gave a report on the NPRB Proposal. In addition to discussing the relative priority of previously tasked projects, the Council initiated new actions and letters and clarified direction and tasking for its various committees.

### **Appointments**

#### **SSC**

The Council approved the following reappointments for a one-year term to the SSC: Dr. Chris Anderson, Dr. Amanda Bishop, Dr. Jennifer Burns, Robert Clark, Dr. Sherri Dressel, Dr. Jason Gasper, Dr. Brad Harris, Dr. Anne Hollowed, Dr. George Hunt, Jr., Dr. Gordon Kruse, Dr. Dayv Lowry, Dr. Ian Stewart, Dr. Franz Mueter, Dr. Terry Quinn, Dr. Katherine Reedy, Alison Whitman, and Dr. Matthew Reimer. The Council also approved the one-year appointments of Ms. Heather Renner (USFWS), Dr. Dana Hanselman (NMFS AFSC), and Dr. Mike Downs (independent).

#### **AP**

The Council reappointed Shannon Carroll, Carina Nichols, Ernie Weiss, and Matt Upton to the Advisory Panel for three-year terms. Additionally, three new AP members were appointed for a three-year term: Natasha Hayden of Kodiak; Jim Johnson of Washington; and Anne Vanderhoeven of Washington. The Council also appointed Samantha Weinstein of Juneau to serve for the remaining year of the term vacated by Art Nelson.

### **Plan Teams**

The Council appointed Dr. Kresimir Williams (AFSC) to the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Plan Team. The Council made two new appointments to the BSAI Crab Plan Team: Ms. Katie Palof (ADF&G) replaces Ms. Karla Bush; and Mr. Bill Gaeuman (ADF&G) replaces Ms. Laura Slater.

### **Committees**

Dave Fraser was appointed to the IFQ Committee to represent the community quota entities. Buck Laukitis was appointed to the Joint Protocol Committee which includes members from the Council and State of Alaska Board of Fisheries.

**THE COUNCIL ADJOURNED ON MONDAY DECEMBER 11, 2017 AT 2:03 P.M.**

Table 1. Council recommended TACs and SSC Recommended BSAI Proposed OFL and ABC Recommendations (metric tons) for 2018-2019

Species	Area	2016			Catch	2017			Catch as of 11/25/2017	2018			2019			
		OFL	ABC	TAC		OFL	ABC	TAC		OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	TAC	
Pollock	EBS	3,910,000	2,090,000	1,340,000	1,352,707	3,640,000	2,800,000	1,345,000	1,358,426	4,797,000	2,592,000	1,364,341	4,592,000	2,467,000	1,383,000	
	AI	39,075	32,227	19,000	1,257	43,650	36,061	19,000	1,507	49,289	40,788	19,000	37,431	30,803	19,000	
	Bogoslof	31,906	23,850	500	1,005	130,428	51,300	500	186	130,428	60,800	450	130,428	60,800	500	
Pacific cod	BS	390,000	255,000	238,680	231,514	284,000	239,000	223,704	206,952	238,000	201,000	188,136	201,000	170,000	159,120	
	AI	23,400	17,600	12,839	12,593	28,700	21,500	15,695	12,253	28,700	21,500	15,695	28,700	21,500	15,695	
Sablefish	BS	1,304	1,151	1,151	532	1,501	1,274	1,274	1,157	2,887	1,464	1,464	4,576	2,061	2,061	
	AI	1,766	1,557	1,557	349	2,053	1,735	1,735	590	3,917	1,988	1,988	6,209	2,798	2,798	
Yellowfin sole	BSAI	228,100	211,700	144,000	135,350	287,000	260,800	154,000	130,999	306,700	277,500	154,000	295,600	267,500	156,000	
Greenland turbot	BSAI	4,194	3,462	2,873	2,238	11,615	6,644	4,500	2,823	13,148	11,132	5,294	13,540	11,473	5,294	
	BS	n/a	2,673	2,673	2,117	n/a	5,625	4,375	2,701	n/a	9,718	5,125	n/a	10,016	5,125	
	AI	n/a	789	200	121	n/a	1,019	125	122	n/a	1,414	169	n/a	1,457	169	
Arrowtooth flounder	BSAI	94,035	80,701	14,000	11,110	76,100	65,371	14,000	6,466	76,757	65,932	13,621	75,084	64,494	14,000	
Kamchatka flounder	BSAI	11,100	9,500	5,000	4,851	10,360	8,880	5,000	4,490	11,347	9,737	5,000	12,022	10,317	5,000	
Northern rock sole	BSAI	165,900	161,000	57,100	45,101	159,700	155,100	47,100	35,258	147,300	143,100	47,100	136,000	132,000	49,100	
Flathead sole	BSAI	79,562	66,250	21,000	10,384	81,654	68,278	14,500	9,148	79,862	66,773	14,500	78,036	65,227	16,500	
Alaska plaice	BSAI	49,000	41,000	14,500	13,385	42,800	36,000	13,000	16,132	41,170	34,590	16,100	38,800	32,700	16,252	
Other flatfish	BSAI	17,414	13,061	2,500	2,847	17,591	13,193	2,500	4,129	17,591	13,193	4,000	17,591	13,193	4,000	
Pacific Ocean perch	BSAI	40,529	33,320	31,900	31,319	53,152	43,723	34,900	32,776	51,675	42,509	37,361	50,098	41,212	37,880	
	BS	n/a	8,353	8,000	8,221	n/a	12,199	11,000	9,220	n/a	11,861	11,861	n/a	11,499	11,499	
	EAI	n/a	7,916	7,900	7,444	n/a	10,307	7,900	7,803	n/a	10,021	9,000	n/a	9,715	9,715	
	CAI	n/a	7,355	7,000	6,765	n/a	8,009	7,000	6,867	n/a	7,787	7,500	n/a	7,549	7,549	
	WAI	n/a	9,696	9,000	8,888	n/a	13,208	9,000	8,886	n/a	12,840	9,000	n/a	12,449	9,117	
Northern rockfish	BSAI	14,689	11,960	4,500	4,541	16,242	13,264	5,000	4,698	15,888	12,975	6,100	15,563	12,710	6,500	
	Blackspotted/Roughie	BSAI	693	561	300	159	612	501	225	199	749	613	225	829	678	225
	EBS/EAI	n/a	179	100	72	n/a	306	100	66	n/a	374	75	n/a	414	75	
CAI/WAI	n/a	382	200	87	n/a	195	125	133	n/a	239	150	n/a	264	150		
Shorthead rockfish	BSAI	690	518	200	112	666	499	125	151	666	499	150	666	499	150	
Other rockfish	BSAI	1,667	1,250	875	789	1,816	1,362	875	823	1,816	1,362	845	1,816	1,362	845	
	BS	n/a	695	325	282	n/a	791	325	254	n/a	791	275	n/a	791	275	
	AI	n/a	555	550	507	n/a	571	550	569	n/a	571	570	n/a	571	570	
Atka mackerel	BSAI	104,749	90,340	55,000	54,485	102,700	87,200	65,000	64,387	108,600	92,000	71,000	97,200	84,400	72,500	
	EAI/BS	n/a	30,832	28,500	28,360	n/a	34,890	34,500	34,205	n/a	36,820	36,500	n/a	33,780	33,780	
	CAI	n/a	27,216	16,000	15,795	n/a	30,330	18,000	17,860	n/a	32,000	21,000	n/a	29,350	24,895	
	WAI	n/a	32,292	10,500	10,330	n/a	21,980	12,500	12,322	n/a	23,180	13,500	n/a	21,270	13,825	
Skates	BSAI	50,215	42,134	26,000	29,687	49,063	41,144	26,000	30,158	46,668	39,082	27,000	44,202	36,957	27,000	
Sculpins	BSAI	52,365	39,725	4,500	4,947	56,582	42,387	4,500	5,208	53,201	39,995	5,000	53,201	39,995	5,000	
Sharks	BSAI	1,363	1,022	125	126	689	517	125	182	689	517	180	689	517	180	
Squids	BSAI	6,912	5,184	1,500	1,378	6,912	5,184	1,342	2,101	6,912	5,184	1,200	6,912	5,184	1,200	
Octopuses	BSAI	3,452	2,589	400	627	4,769	3,576	400	223	4,769	3,576	250	4,769	3,576	200	
<b>Total</b>	<b>BSAI</b>	<b>5,324,080</b>	<b>3,236,662</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>1,953,392</b>	<b>5,110,355</b>	<b>4,004,493</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>1,931,422</b>	<b>6,235,729</b>	<b>3,779,809</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>5,942,962</b>	<b>3,578,956</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	

Sources: 2016 OFLs, ABCs, and TACs and 2017 OFLs and ABCs are from harvest specifications adopted by the Council in December 2015 and December 2016, respectively; 2016 catches through December 31, 2016 and 2017 catches through November 25, 2017 from AKR Catch Accounting.

TABLE 13—FINAL 2018 AND 2019 ABC SURPLUS, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT QUOTA (CDQ) ABC RESERVES, AND AMENDMENT 80  
 [Amounts are in metric tons]

Sector	2018 Flathead sole	2018 Rock sole	2018 Yellowfin sole	2019 Flathead sole	2019 Rock sole	2019 Yellowfin sole
ABC	66,773	143,100	277,500	65,227	132,000	267,500
TAC	14,500	47,100	154,000	16,500	49,100	156,000
ABC surplus	52,273	96,000	123,500	48,727	82,900	111,500
ABC reserve	52,273	96,000	123,500	48,727	82,900	111,500
CDQ ABC reserve	5,593	10,272	13,215	5,214	8,870	11,931
Amendment 80 ABC reserve	46,680	85,728	110,286	43,513	74,030	99,570



TABLE 12—FINAL 2018 AND 2019 PACIFIC HALIBUT DISCARD MORTALITY RATES FOR THE BSAI

Gear	Sector	Halibut discard mortality rate (percent)
Pelagic trawl	All	100
Non-pelagic trawl	Mothership and catcher/processor	84
Non-pelagic trawl	Catcher vessel	60
Hook-and-line	Catcher vessel	17
Hook-and-line	Catcher/processor	8
Pot	All	9

TABLE 14-FINAL 2018 AND 2019 APPORTIONMENT OF PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES TO NON-TRAWL GEAR, THE CDQ PROGRAM, AMENDMENT 80, AND THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTORS

PSC species and area <sup>1</sup>	Total PSC	Non-trawl PSC	CDQ PSQ reserve <sup>2</sup>	Trawl PSC remaining after CDQ PSQ	Amendment 80 sector <sup>3</sup>	BSAI trawl limited access fishery
Hanbut mortality (mt) BSAI	3,515	710	315	n/a	1,745	745
Herring (mt) BSAI	1,830	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Red king crab (animals) Zone 1	97,000	n/a	10,379	86,621	43,293	26,489
C. <u>opilio</u> (animals) COBLZ	9,120,539	n/a	975,898	8,144,641	4,003,091	2,617,688
C. <u>bairdi</u> crab (animals) Zone 1	830,000	n/a	88,810	741,190	312,115	348,285
C. <u>bairdi</u> crab (animals) Zone 2	2,520,000	n/a	269,640	2,250,360	532,660	1,053,394

<sup>1</sup>Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of zones.

<sup>2</sup>The PSQ reserve for crab species is 10.7 percent of each crab PSC limit.

<sup>3</sup>The Amendment 80 program reduced apportionment of the trawl PSC limits for crab below the total PSC limit. These reductions are not apportioned to other gear types or sectors.

Note: Sector apportionments may not total precisely due to rounding.

TABLE 15–FINAL 2018 AND 2019 HERRING AND RED KING CRAB SAVINGS  
SUBAREA PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR ALL TRAWL

Fishery Categories	Herring (mt) BSA	Red king crab(animals) Zone 1
Yellowfin sole	80	n/a
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish <sup>1/</sup>	39	n/a
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sable	5	n/a
Rockfish	5	n/a
Pacific cod	9	n/a
Midwater trawl pollock	1,662	n/a
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species <sup>2,3/</sup>	30	n/a
Red king crab savings subarea non-pelagic trawl gear <sup>4/</sup>	n/a	24,250
Total trawl PSC	1,830	97,000

<sup>1</sup> Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of areas.

<sup>2</sup> “Other flatfish” for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), flathead sole, Greenland turbot, rock sole, yellowfin sole, Kamchatka flounder, and arrowtooth flounder.

<sup>3</sup> “Other species” for PSC monitoring includes skates, sculpins, sharks, squids, and octopuses.

<sup>4</sup> In December 2016, the Council recommended that red king crab bycatch limit for non-pelagic trawl fisheries within the RKCSS be limited to 25 percent of the red king crab PSC allowance ( see § 679.21(e)(3)(ii)B(2)).

Note: Seasonal or sector apportionments may not total precisely due to rounding.

TABLE 16–FINAL 2018 AND 2019 PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTOR

BSAI trawl limited access fisheries	Prohibited species and area <sup>1</sup>				
	Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	Red king crab	<u>C. opilio</u> (animals)	<u>C. bairdi</u> (animals)	
				Zone 1	Zone 2
Yellowfin sole	150	23,338	2,467,662	293,234	1,005,879
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0	0	0
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish	0	0	0	0	0
Rockfish April 15 - December 31	4	0	4,076	0	849
Pacific cod	391	2,954	105,182	50,816	42,424
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species <sup>3</sup>	200	197	40,768	4,235	4,243
<b>Total BSAI trawl limited access PSC</b>	<b>745</b>	<b>26,489</b>	<b>2,617,688</b>	<b>348,285</b>	<b>1,053,395</b>

<sup>1</sup> Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of areas.

<sup>2</sup> “Other flatfish” for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), flathead sole, Greenland turbot, rock sole, yellowfin sole, Kamchatka flounder, and arrowtooth flounder.

<sup>3</sup> “Other species” for PSC monitoring includes skates, sculpins, sharks, squids, and octopuses.

Note: Seasonal or sector apportionments may not total precisely due to rounding.

TABLE 17–FINAL 2018 AND 2019 HALIBUT PROHIBITED SPECIES  
BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR NON-TRAWL FISHERIES

Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI				
Non-trawl fisheries	Seasons	Catcher/processor	Catcher vessel	All Non-Trawl
Pacific cod	Total Pacific cod	648	13	661
	January 1-June 10	388	9	n/a
	June 10-August 15	162	2	n/a
	31	98	2	n/a
Non-Pacific cod non-trawl- Total	May 1-December 31	n/a	n/a	49
Groundfish pot and jig	n/a	n/a	n/a	Exempt
Sablefish hook-and-line	n/a	n/a	n/a	Exempt
Total for all non-trawl PSC	n/a	n/a	n/a	710

Note: Seasonal or sector apportionments may not total precisely due to rounding.

Council recommended TACs and SSC recommended OFLs and ABCs for Groundfish in the Gulf of Alaska for 2018 and 2019  
(metric tons) -- PAGE 1

Species	Area	2017				2018			2019			
		OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch	OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	TAC	
Pollock	State GHL		5,094	0	-		4,037	0		2,664	0	
	W(61)		43,602	43,602	49,878		30,188	30,188		19,921	19,921	
	C(62)		98,652	98,652	81,565		79,495	79,495		52,459	52,459	
	C(63)		48,929	48,929	52,760		40,939	40,939		27,016	27,016	
	WYAK		7,492	7,492	40		6,833	6,833		4,509	4,509	
	Subtotal		235,807	203,769	198,675	184,243	187,059	161,492	157,455	131,170	106,568	103,904
	EYAK/SEO		13,226	9,920	9,920		11,697	8,773	8,773	11,697	8,773	8,773
Total		249,033	213,689	208,595	184,243	198,756	170,265	166,228	142,867	115,341	112,677	
Pacific Cod	W		36,291	25,404	17,239		8,082	5,657		7,633	5,343	
	C		44,180	33,135	15,823		8,118	6,089		7,667	5,750	
	E		7,871	5,903	53		1,800	1,350		1,700	1,275	
	Total		105,378	88,342	64,442	33,115	23,565	18,000	13,096	21,412	17,000	12,368
Sablefish	W		1,349	1,349	1,166		1,544	1,544		2,174	2,174	
	C		4,514	4,514	4,767		5,158	5,158		7,260	7,260	
	WYAK		1,605	1,605	1,667		1,829	1,829		2,573	2,573	
	SEO		2,606	2,606	2,786		2,974	2,974		4,187	4,187	
	Total		11,885	10,074	10,074	10,386	22,703	11,505	11,505	35,989	16,194	16,194
Shallow Water Flatfish	W		20,921	13,250	270		25,206	13,250		25,544	13,250	
	C		19,306	19,306	2,211		25,315	25,315		25,655	25,655	
	WYAK		3,188	3,188	-		2,242	2,242		2,272	2,272	
	EYAK/SEO		1,099	1,099	-		1,925	1,925		1,951	1,951	
	Total		54,583	44,514	36,843	2,481	67,240	54,688	42,732	68,114	55,422	43,128
Deep Water Flatfish	W		256	256	20		413	413		416	416	
	C		3,454	3,454	211		3,400	3,400		3,442	3,442	
	WYAK		3,017	3,017	8		3,239	3,239		3,279	3,279	
	EYAK/SEO		2,565	2,565	2		2,332	2,332		2,361	2,361	
	Total		11,182	9,292	9,292	241	11,294	9,385	9,384	11,431	9,499	9,499
Rex Sole	W		1,459	1,459	48		3,086	3,086		2,909	2,909	
	C		4,930	4,930	1,360		8,739	8,739		8,236	8,236	
	WYAK		850	850	2		1,737	1,737		1,657	1,657	
	EYAK/SEO		1,072	1,072	-		1,811	1,811		1,727	1,727	
	Total		10,860	8,311	8,311	1,410	18,706	15,373	15,373	17,692	14,529	14,529
Arrowtooth Flounder	W		28,100	14,500	269		37,253	14,500		35,844	14,500	
	C		107,934	75,000	25,692		73,480	48,000		70,700	48,000	
	WYAK		37,405	6,900	32		16,468	6,900		15,845	6,900	
	EYAK/SEO		12,654	6,900	14		23,744	6,900		22,845	6,900	
	Total		219,327	186,093	103,300	26,007	180,697	150,945	76,300	173,872	145,234	76,300
Flathead Sole	W		11,098	8,650	73		12,690	8,650		13,222	8,650	
	C		20,339	15,400	1,802		20,238	15,400		21,087	15,400	
	WYAK		2,949	2,949	-		1,932	1,932		2,013	2,013	
	EYAK/SEO		857	857	-		406	406		424	424	
	Total		43,128	35,243	27,856	1,875	43,011	35,266	26,388	44,822	36,746	26,487

Note for page 2, Northern Rockfish: The 4 t (2018) and 3 t (2019) of EGOA northern rockfish is excluded from that stock's total as it is managed as part of the EGOA "other rockfish" category.

Council recommended TACs and SSC recommended OFLs and ABCs for Groundfish in the Gulf of Alaska for 2018 and 2019  
(metric tons) -- PAGE 2

Species	Area	2017				2018			2019		
		OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch	OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	TAC
Pacific Ocean Perch	W		2,679	2,679	2,686		3,312	3,312		3,240	3,240
	C		16,671	16,671	17,476		20,112	20,112		19,678	19,678
	WYAK		2,786	2,786	2,757		3,371	3,371		3,298	3,298
	W/C/WYAK	25,753	22,136	22,136	22,919	31,860	26,795	26,795	31,170	26,216	26,216
	SEO	2,073	1,782	1,782	-	2,902	2,441	2,441	2,840	2,389	2,389
	Total	27,826	23,918	23,918	22,919	34,762	29,236	29,236	34,010	28,605	28,605
Northern Rockfish	W		432	432	232		420	420		382	382
	C		3,354	3,354	1,547		3,261	3,261		2,965	2,965
	E		4	0	-		4	0		3	0
	Total	4,522	3,790	3,786	1,779	4,380	3,685	3,681	3,984	3,350	3,347
Shorthead Rockfish	W		38	38	43		44	44		44	44
	C		301	301	229		305	305		305	305
	E		947	947	275		515	515		515	515
	Total	1,715	1,286	1,286	547	1,151	863	864	1,151	863	864
Dusky Rockfish	W		158	158	123		146	146		135	135
	C		3,786	3,786	2,437		3,502	3,502		3,246	3,246
	WYAK		251	251	22		232	232		215	215
	EYAK/SEO		83	83	5		77	77		72	72
	Total	5,233	4,278	4,278	2,587	4,841	3,957	3,957	4,488	3,668	3,668
Rougheye and Blackspotted Rockfish	W		105	105	34		176	176		174	174
	C		706	706	328		556	556		550	550
	E		516	516	174		712	712		703	703
	Total	1,594	1,327	1,327	536	1,735	1,444	1,444	1,715	1,427	1,427
Demersal Shelf Rockfish	GOA-wide	357	227	227	124	394	250	250	394	250	250
Thornyhead Rockfish	W		291	291	151		344	344		344	344
	C		988	988	612		921	921		921	921
	E		682	682	249		773	773		773	773
	Total	2,615	1,961	1,961	1,012	2,717	2,038	2,038	2,717	2,038	2,038
Other Rockfish	WC		1,534	1,534	986		1,737	1,737		1,737	1,737
	WYAK		574	574	42		368	368		368	368
	EYAK/SEO		3,665	200	31		3,489	200		3,488	200
	Total	7,424	5,773	2,308	1,059	7,356	5,594	2,305	7,356	5,593	2,305
Atka Mackerel	GOA-wide	6,200	4,700	3,000	1,048	6,200	4,700	3,000	6,200	4,700	3,000
Big Skate	W		908	908	163		504	504		504	504
	C		1,850	1,850	1,298		1,774	1,774		1,774	1,774
	E		1,056	1,056	104		570	570		570	570
	Total	5,086	3,814	3,814	1,565	3,797	2,848	2,848	3,797	2,848	2,848
Longnose Skate	W		61	61	167		149	149		149	149
	C		2,513	2,513	685		2,804	2,804		2,804	2,804
	E		632	632	267		619	619		619	619
	Total	4,274	3,206	3,206	1,119	4,763	3,572	3,572	4,763	3,572	3,572
Other Skates	GOA-wide	2,558	1,919	1,919	1,472	1,845	1,384	1,384	1,845	1,384	1,384
Sculpins	GOA-wide	7,338	5,591	5,591	1,284	6,958	5,301	5,301	6,958	5,301	5,301
Sharks	GOA-wide	6,020	4,514	4,514	1,505	6,020	4,514	4,514	6,020	4,514	4,514
Squids	GOA-wide	1,516	1,137	1,137	44	1,516	1,137	1,137	1,516	1,137	1,137
Octopuses	GOA-wide	6,504	4,878	4,878	180	1,300	975	975	1,300	975	975
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>796,158</b>	<b>667,877</b>	<b>535,863</b>	<b>298,538</b>	<b>655,707</b>	<b>536,921</b>	<b>427,512</b>	<b>604,413</b>	<b>480,187</b>	<b>376,417</b>

**Final 2018 and 2019 Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod ABCs, TACs and State Guideline Harvest Levels (GHLs) in metric tons.**

2018	Specifications	Western	Central	Eastern	Total
	ABC	8,082	8,118	1,800	18,000
	State GHL	2,245	2,030	450	4,904
	Percentage	30%	25%	25%	25%-30%
	Federal TAC	5,657	6,089	1,350	13,096

2019	Specifications	Western	Central	Eastern	Total
	ABC	7,633	7,667	1,700	17,000
	State GHL	2,290	1,917	425	4,632
	Percentage	30%	25%	25%	25%-30%
	Federal TAC	5,343	5,750	1,275	12,368

**Final 2018 and 2019 Gulf of Alaska pollock ABC and State PWS GHL in metric tons.**

2018	Specifications	ABC	GHL or TAC	Percentage
	PWS	161,492	4,037	2.5%
	Areas 610-640		157,455	97.5%
	Total		161,492	100%

2019	Specifications	ABC	GHL or TAC	Percentage
	PWS	106,568	2,664	2.5%
	Areas 610-640		103,904	97.5%
	Total		106,568	100%



Final 2018 and 2019 Pacific Halibut PSC Limits, Allowances, and Apportionments  
(Values are in metric tons)

Trawl gear			Hook-and-line gear <sup>1</sup>				
			Other than DSR			DSR	
Season	Percent	Amount <sup>2</sup>	Season	Percent	Amount	Season	Amount
January 20 - April 1	27.5	469	January 1 - June 10	86	221	January 1 - December 31	9
April 1 - July 1	20	341	June 10 - September 1	2	5		
July 1 - September 1	30	512	September 1 - December 31	12	31		
September 1 - October 1	7.5	128					
October 1 - December 31	15	256					
Total		1,706			257		9

<sup>1</sup> The Pacific halibut PSC limit for hook-and-line gear is allocated to the demersal shelf rockfish (DSR) fishery and fisheries other than DSR. The hook-and-line IFQ sablefish fishery is exempt from halibut PSC limits, as are pot and jig gear for all groundfish fisheries.

Final 2018 and 2019 Seasonal Apportionments of the Pacific Halibut PSC Limit Apportioned  
Between the Trawl Gear Shallow-Water and Deep-Water Species Fisheries  
(Values are in metric tons)

Season	Shallow-water	Deep-water <sup>1</sup>	Total
January 20 - April 1	384	85	469
April 1 - July 1	85	256	341
July 1 - September 1	171	341	512
September 1 - October 1	128	Any remainder	128
Subtotal, January 20 - October 1	768	682	1,450
October 1 - December 31 <sup>2</sup>			256
Total			1,706

<sup>1</sup> Vessels participating in cooperatives in the Rockfish Program will receive 191 mt of the third season (July 1 through September 1) deep-water species fishery halibut PSC apportionment.

<sup>2</sup> There is no apportionment between trawl shallow-water and deep-water species fisheries during the fifth season (October 1 through December 31).

Final 2018 and 2019 Apportionments of the "Other hook-and-line fisheries" Halibut PSC Allowance  
 Between the Hook-and-Line Gear Catcher Vessel and Catcher/Processor Sectors  
 (Values are in metric tons)

"Other than DSR" allowance	Hook-and-line sector	Sector annual amount	Season	Seasonal percentage	Sector seasonal amount
257	Catcher Vessel	120	January 1 - June 10	86	103
			June 10 - September 1	2	2
			September 1 - December 31	12	14
	Catcher/Processor	137	January 1 - June 10	86	118
			June 10 - September 1	2	3
			September 1 - December 31	12	16

Table 12. Final 2018 and 2019 Halibut Discard Mortality Rates for Vessels Fishing in the Gulf of Alaska.  
 (Values are percent of halibut assumed to be dead.)

Gear	Sector	Groundfish fishery	Halibut discard mortality rate (percent)
Pelagic trawl	Catcher vessel	All	100
	Catcher/processor	All	100
Non-pelagic trawl	Catcher vessel	Rockfish Program	62
	Catcher vessel	All others	67
	Mothership and catcher/processor	All	84
Hook-and-line	Catcher/processor	All	10
	Catcher vessel	All	17
Pot	Catcher vessel and catcher/processor	All	7

**TIME LOG**  
**North Pacific Fishery Management Council**  
**Meeting held in Anchorage, Alaska**  
**Hilton Hotel**  
**December 6 – 11, 2017**

**WEDNESDAY December 6, 2017**

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12/06/2017 08:06:40 AM Call to Order  
12/06/2017 08:06:40 AM Motion – Approval of the Agenda

**B1 REPORTS**

12/06/2017 08:09:59 AM **B1 Executive Director’s Report** – David Witherell  
12/06/2017 08:12:06 AM Farron Wallace Farewell  
12/06/2017 08:31:49 AM Presentation by Dr. Craig George  
12/06/2017 08:54:11 AM AM 80 Coop Sector Report – Mark Fina & Beth Concepcion  
12/06/2017 10:18:39 AM **B2 – Addressed under B1**  
12/06/2017 09:18:39 AM **B3 NMFS Report** – Glenn Merrill  
12/06/2017 09:57:20 AM Ms. Rachel Baker Farewell  
12/06/2017 10:00:59 AM Break  
12/06/2017 10:17:38 AM In season Management Report – Mary Furuness  
12/06/2017 11:56:52 AM Break for Lunch  
12/06/2017 01:25:05 PM **B4 NOAA GC Report** – Maura Sullivan  
12/06/2017 01:30:24 PM **B5 NOAA Enforcement Report** – Will Ellis & Nathan Lagerwey  
12/06/2017 02:00:50 PM **B6 ADF&G Report** – Trent Hartill & Jim Fall  
12/06/2017 02:22:41 PM **B7 USCG Report** – Corrie Sergent  
10/04/2017 03:47:42 PM **B8 USFWS Report** – Karen Clark  
12/06/2017 02:32:12 PM B8 USFWS Seabird Die Off Report – Rob Kaler  
12/06/2017 02:47:21 PM **B9 Protected Species Report** – Steve MacLean  
12/06/2017 03:00:19 PM Break  
12/06/2017 03:24:16 PM **B10 IPHC Interim Report** – Dave Wilson and Ian Stewart  
12/06/2017 04:10:39 PM **B Public Testimony**  
12/06/2017 04:11:27 PM Frank Kelty  
12/06/2017 04:15:59 PM Molly Zeleski  
12/06/2017 04:19:41 PM Ilia Kuzmin  
12/06/2017 04:24:29 PM Abby Turner-Franke, Linda Behnken, Nicole Kimball  
12/06/2017 04:41:01 PM Dustan Dickerson – Out of Order  
12/06/2017 04:46:08 PM Rebecca Skinner  
12/06/2017 04:59:25 PM Recess

**THURSDAY December 7, 2017**

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12/07/2017 08:04:19 AM Call to Order

**C1 2018 CHARTER HALIBUT MANAGEMENT MEASURES**

12/07/2017 08:35:06 AM **C1 Presentation** – Scott Meyer  
12/07/2017 09:01:09 AM Charter Halibut Committee Report – Steve MacLean  
12/07/2017 09:03:42 AM **AP Report** – Angel Drobinca  
12/07/2017 09:11:23 AM **C1 Public Testimony**  
12/07/2017 09:11:32 AM Jim Martin  
12/07/2017 09:12:22 AM Leslie Pemberton  
12/07/2017 09:18:52 AM Denise May  
12/07/2017 09:27:57 AM Tom Gemmell  
12/07/2017 09:31:18 AM Joshua Hughes  
12/07/2017 09:35:30 AM Marquis Bass  
12/07/2017 09:40:31 AM Benjamin Lehto  
12/07/2017 09:44:07 AM Mark Clemens  
12/07/2017 09:46:54 AM Matt Kopec  
12/07/2017 09:51:47 AM Tim Cashman  
12/07/2017 09:54:54 AM Ben Martin  
12/07/2017 10:04:19 AM Natasha Hayden  
12/07/2017 10:16:15 AM Mel Grove  
12/07/2017 10:23:24 AM Break  
12/07/2017 10:49:03 AM **C1 Mr. Mezirow Motion**

**C2 CHARTER HALIBUT PERMITS: Latent Capacity, RQE Ownership Caps**

10/05/2017 11:20:15 AM **C2 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Sarah Murrinan  
12/07/2017 11:52:16 AM Lunch  
12/07/2017 01:07:52 PM C2 Presentation continued  
12/07/2017 01:40:38 PM **AP Report** – Matt Upton  
12/07/2017 01:48:20 PM C2 Public Testimony  
12/07/2017 01:48:30 PM Bruce Gabrys  
12/07/2017 02:04:16 PM Tim Cashman  
12/07/2017 02:14:44 PM Samantha Weinstein  
12/07/2017 02:24:39 PM Ben Martin  
12/07/2017 02:35:53 PM Denise May  
12/07/2017 02:39:09 PM Wesley Jones  
12/07/2017 02:41:07 PM Mel Grove  
12/07/2017 02:47:12 PM Natasha Hayden  
12/07/2017 02:51:26 PM Malcolm Milne  
12/07/2017 02:54:02 PM Break  
12/07/2017 03:18:33 PM **C2 Mr. Mezirow Motion**

### **C3 SELF-GUIDED HALIBUT RENTAL BOATS**

12/07/2017 03:39:11 PM	<b>C3 Presentation</b> – NPFMC staff, Steve MacLean
12/07/2017 04:06:15 PM	<b>AP Report</b> – Angel Drobnica
12/07/2017 04:13:21 PM	<b>C3 Public Testimony</b>
12/07/2017 04:13:41 PM	Tim Comer
12/07/2017 04:21:20 PM	Matt Kopec
12/07/2017 04:28:34 PM	Samantha Weinstein
12/07/2017 04:35:15 PM	Tom Gemmell
12/07/2017 04:57:31 PM	<b>C3 Mr. Mezirow Motion</b>
12/07/2017 05:10:54 PM	Recess

### **FRIDAY December 8, 2017**

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### **C4 BSAI GROUND FISH SAFE REPORT AND 2018/2019 SPECIFICATIONS**

12/08/2017 08:09:23 AM	Call to Order
12/08/2017 08:10:09 AM	Young Fishermen Introduction
12/08/2017 08:12:03 AM	Ecosystem Considerations – Stephanie Zador
12/08/2017 09:20:44 AM	Joint Plan Team Report – Dr. Diana Stram
12/08/2017 09:32:35 AM	BSAI Plan Team Report - Dana Hanselman
12/08/2017 09:54:35 AM	Break
12/08/2017 10:10:51 AM	BSAI Plan Team Report Continued
12/08/2017 10:55:14 AM	SSC Report – Farron Wallace
12/08/2017 11:42:19 AM	<b>AP Report</b> – Matt Upton
12/08/2017 11:44:55 AM	<b>C4 Public Testimony</b>
12/08/2017 11:47:37 AM	Industry Group APA, GFF, UCB, FLC, PLPA, EMTC
12/08/2017 11:59:16 AM	Gerry Merrigan
12/08/2017 12:00:23 PM	<b>C4 Mr. Cross Motion</b>
12/08/2017 12:20:35 PM	Lunch Break

### **C5 GOA GROUND FISH SAFE REPORT AND 2018/2019 HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS**

12/08/2017 01:17:16 PM	<b>C5 Presentation– Steve Barbeaux</b>
12/08/2017 02:28:22 PM	C5 NPFMC Staff Presentations – Jim Ianelli and Jim Armstrong
12/08/2017 02:30:57 PM	SSC Report – Farron Wallace
12/08/2017 02:43:01 PM	<b>AP Report</b> – Matt Upton
12/08/2017 02:51:20 PM	Mary Furuness speaks to Management Measures
12/08/2017 03:15:50 PM	Break
12/08/2017 03:35:39 PM	<b>C5 Public Testimony</b>
12/08/2017 03:35:49 PM	Malcolm Milne
12/08/2017 03:43:33 PM	Julie Bonney
12/08/2017 03:56:22 PM	Paddy O’Donnell
12/08/2017 04:01:32 PM	Todd Hoppe

12/08/2017 04:10:00 PM Bernie Burkholder  
12/08/2017 04:16:12 PM Gerry Merrigan  
12/08/2017 04:21:56 PM Recess

## **SATURDAY December 9, 2017**

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### **C5 GOA GROUND FISH SAFE REPORT AND 2018/2019 HARVEST SPECIFICATIONS**

12/09/2017 09:05:26 AM Call to Order  
12/09/2017 09:07:28 AM **C5 Mr. Laukitis Motion**

### **C6 SMALL SIDEBOARDS**

12/09/2017 09:37:25 AM **C6 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Jon McCracken  
12/09/2017 10:00:54 AM SSC Report – Farron Wallace  
12/09/2017 10:13:26 AM **AP Report** – Angel Drobnica  
12/09/2017 10:16:11 AM **C6 Mr. Balsiger Motion**

### **C7 BERING SEA COD TRAWL CV PARTICIPATION**

12/09/2017 10:20:43 AM **C7 Presentation** – Darrell Brannan and Jon McCracken  
12/09/2017 11:32:55 AM **AP Report** – Angel Drobnica  
12/09/2017 11:41:20 AM Lunch Break  
12/09/2017 01:31:49 PM **C7 Public Testimony**  
12/09/2017 01:31:56 PM Jim Stone  
12/09/2017 01:37:59 PM Brent Paine  
12/09/2017 01:57:39 PM Steve Beard  
12/09/2017 02:09:35 PM Mark Cooper  
12/09/2017 02:13:06 PM Chris Cooper  
12/09/2017 02:26:26 PM Frank Kelty  
12/09/2017 02:37:01 PM Dan Martin  
12/09/2017 02:51:46 PM Justin Johnson  
12/09/2017 02:56:41 PM Paddy O'Donnell  
12/09/2017 03:01:13 PM Ernie Weiss  
12/09/2017 03:03:51 PM Jim Seavers  
12/09/2017 03:06:51 PM Dave Fraser  
12/09/2017 03:14:40 PM Nicole Kimball, Heather Mann, Joel Zarate, Joe Plesha  
Sinclair Wilt, Matt Upton  
12/09/2017 03:34:59 PM Annika Saltman and Mike Guy  
12/09/2017 03:47:58 PM Break  
12/09/2017 04:35:02 PM **C7 Mr. Cotton Motion**  
12/09/2017 04:58:29 PM Recess

**SUNDAY December 10, 2017**

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**D1 WESTERN GOA PACIFIC COD A SEASON HALIBUT PSC RATES**

12/10/2017 09:38:04 AM Call to Order  
12/10/2017 09:38:38 AM **D1 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Jim Armstrong and Sam Cunningham  
12/10/2017 10:49:27 AM **AP Report** – Matt Upton  
12/10/2017 10:50:32 AM **D1 Public Testimony**  
12/10/2017 10:50:32 AM Kiley Thompson  
12/10/2017 10:57:37 AM Rebecca Skinner and Paddy O’Donnell  
12/10/2017 11:02:30 AM Julie Bonney  
12/10/2017 11:09:19 AM Mike Alfieri  
12/10/2017 11:13:24 AM Break

**D2 WESTERN GOA POLLOCK C/D SEASON TIMING CHINOOK PSC**

12/10/2017 11:32:10 AM **D2 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Jim Armstrong and Sam Cunningham  
12/10/2017 12:00:49 PM **AP Report** – Matt Upton  
12/10/2017 12:05:13 PM Lunch Break  
12/10/2017 01:16:39 PM **D2 Public Testimony**  
12/10/2017 01:16:27 PM Beth Stewart  
12/10/2017 01:28:50 PM Julie Bonney  
12/10/2017 01:35:51 PM Rebecca Skinner and Paddy O’Donnell  
12/10/2017 01:40:13 PM Mike Alfieri

**D3 WESTERN GOA POLLOCK TRIP LIMITS**

12/10/2017 01:44:20 PM **D3 Presentation** – NPFMC staff, Sam Cunningham  
12/10/2017 02:26:22 PM **AP Report** – Matt Upton  
12/10/2017 02:27:00 PM **D3 Public Testimony**  
12/10/2017 02:27:36 PM Ernie Weiss and Alvin Osterback  
12/10/2017 02:45:11 PM Brent Paine  
12/10/2017 03:06:00 PM Break  
12/10/2017 03:23:52 PM Mike Alfieri  
12/10/2017 03:32:16 PM Kiley Thompson  
12/10/2017 03:44:38 PM Paul Gronholdt  
12/10/2017 03:48:44 PM Danny Cumberlidge  
12/10/2017 03:50:47 PM Rebecca Skinner and Paddy O’Donnell  
12/10/2017 04:02:57 PM Julie Bonney



## **D4 STRANDED COD IN GOA TRAWL B SEASON**

12/10/2017 04:14:38 PM	<b>D4 Staff Presentation</b> – NPFMC staff, Sam Cunningham
12/10/2017 04:33:37 PM	<b>AP Report</b> – Matt Upton
12/10/2017 04:37:35 PM	<b>D4 Public Testimony</b>
12/10/2017 04:38:07 PM	Beth Stewart and Kiley Thompson
12/10/2017 04:40:36 PM	Julie Bonney, Rebeca Skinner, Paddy O'Donnell
12/10/2017 04:54:35 PM	<b>D1-D4 Mr. Cotten Motion #1</b>
12/10/2017 05:08:33 PM	<b>D1-D4 Mr. Cotten Motion #2</b>
12/10/2017 05:44:01 PM	Recess

**MONDAY December 11, 2017**

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## **D5 FIXED GEAR CV ROCKFISH RETENTION**

12/11/2017 08:29:26 AM	<b>Call to Order</b>
12/11/2017 08:29:39 AM	<b>D5 Presentation</b> – NPFMC Staff, Jon McCracken
12/11/2017 09:08:06 AM	AP Report
12/11/2017 09:09:18 AM	<b>D5 Public Testimony</b>
12/11/2017 09:09:26 AM	Clem Tillion
12/11/2017 09:18:47 AM	<b>D5 Mr. Merrill Motion</b>

## **D6 CHINOOK SALMON EXCLUDER EFP**

12/11/2017 09:30:54 AM	<b>D6 Presentation</b> – John Guavin
12/11/2017 10:04:24 AM	AP Report – Angel Drobnica
12/11/2017 10:06:20 AM	<b>D6 Mr. Merrill Motion</b>
12/11/2017 10:15:06 AM	Break

NO PUBLIC TESTIMONY TAKEN ON THIS AGENDA ITEM

## **E1 STAFF TASKING**

12/11/2017 10:34:17 AM	David Witherell Overview
12/11/2017 10:57:40 AM	Dr. Diana Stram Presentation on NPRB Proposal
12/11/2017 11:04:09 AM	Staff Tasking – Three Meeting Outlook Continued
12/11/2017 11:08:40 AM	<b>E Public Comment</b>
12/11/2017 11:09:19 AM	Simeon Swetozof and Mateo Paz-Soldan
12/11/2017 11:25:45 AM	Chad See
12/11/2017 11:29:36 AM	Julie Bonney
12/11/2017 11:53:06 AM	Lunch Break
12/11/2017 02:03:46 PM	Appointments
12/11/2017 02:03:52 PM	Meeting Adjourned

# December 2017 Newsletter

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## SSC, AP, Committee Appointments

### Scientific and Statistical Committee

The Council approved the following reappointments for a one-year term to the SSC: Dr. Chris Anderson, Dr. Amanda Bishop, Dr. Jennifer Burns, Robert Clark, Dr. Sherri Dressel, Dr. Jason Gasper, Dr. Brad Harris, Dr. Anne Hollowed, Dr. George Hunt, Jr., Dr. Gordon Kruse, Dr. Dayv Lowry, Dr. Ian Stewart, Dr. Franz Mueter, Dr. Terry Quinn, Dr. Katherine Reedy, Alison Whitman, and Dr. Matthew Reimer. The Council also approved the one-year appointments of Ms. Heather Renner (USFWS), Dr. Dana Hanselman (NMFS AFSC), and Dr. Mike Downs (independent). Ms. Renner is based at the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge in Homer where she leads the biological research program for the refuge, and is currently a member of the Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan team. Dr. Hanselman is a leading stock assessment scientist at the AFSC's Auke Bay Laboratory in Juneau and currently co-chairs the BSAI Groundfish Plan team. Dr. Downs' expertise is in sociology and anthropology, and he has prepared many social impact assessments for Council analyses over the past 25 years.

### Advisory Panel

The Council reappointed Shannon Carroll, Carina Nichols, Ernie Weiss, and Matt Upton to the Advisory Panel for three-year terms. Additionally, three new AP members were appointed for a three-year term: Natasha Hayden of Kodiak; Jim Johnson of Washington; and Anne Vanderhoeven of Washington. The Council also appointed Samantha Weinstein of Juneau to serve for the remaining year of the term vacated by Art Nelson.

### Plan Teams

The Council appointed Dr. Kresimir Williams (AFSC) to the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Plan Team. Dr. Williams has worked in the Midwater Assessment and Conservation Engineering Program for 15 years and participated in all aspects of the MACE acoustic-trawl survey effort. The Council made two new appointments to the BSAI Crab Plan Team: Ms. Katie Palof (ADF&G) replaces Ms. Karla Bush; and Mr. Bill Gaeuman (ADF&G) replaces Ms. Laura Slater. Ms. Palof is a Biometrician in Juneau and oversees shellfish survey design, Southeast Alaska crab stock assessments, and is a lead reviewer of the Crab SAFE. Mr. Gaeuman is a Biometrician in Kodiak focusing on BSAI shellfish stocks and statewide scallop biometrics, and is responsible for the Pribilof Island golden king crab stock assessment.

### Committees

Dave Fraser was appointed to the **IFQ Committee** to represent the community quota entities. Buck Laukitis was appointed to the **Joint Protocol Committee** which includes members from the Council and State of Alaska Board of Fisheries.

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## Solicitation for Charter Halibut Management Committee

The Council is seeking nominations for representatives from Area 2C and Area 3A from smaller communities off the road system to complement representation from larger, road system communities. Nominations are open until February 2, 2018. Please send a letter of interest and brief resume to [steve.maclean@noaa.gov](mailto:steve.maclean@noaa.gov).

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## Charter Halibut Management Measures

The Council reviewed the ADF&G analysis of proposed management measures for charter halibut fisheries in Areas 2C and 3A, and recommended the following management measures for application in 2018:

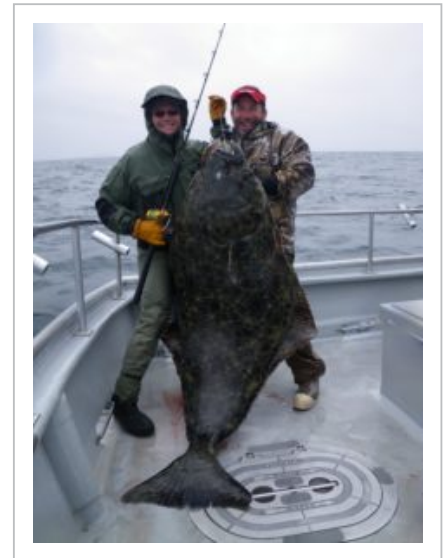
### Area 2C

- If the allocation is 0.69 million pounds: one fish per day with a reverse slot limit U35:O80. No annual limit.
- If the allocation is below 0.69 million pounds: one fish per day with a reverse slot limit U35:O80. Four-fish annual limit, or if necessary to remain within the allocation, a three-fish annual limit.
- If the allocation is above 0.69 million pounds: one fish per day with a reverse slot limit. Adjust the lower slot limit as allowed to remain within the allocation, upper slot limit remains O80. No annual limit.

### Area 3A

- Status quo measures: two-fish daily bag limit, including one fish of any size and 28-inch maximum size limit on one fish. Four-fish annual limit, one trip per Charter Halibut Permit per day, one trip per vessel per day, Wednesdays closed all year, three Tuesdays closed between July 24 and August 7.
- If the allocation is 1.70 million pounds: Status quo measures plus close seven additional Tuesdays as outlined in Table 11 of the ADF&G analysis (June 19 – August 21).
- If the allocation is higher or lower than 1.70 million pounds: increase or decrease Tuesday closures to remain within the allocation, as described in Table 11 in the ADF&G analysis.

These management measures will be proposed to the IPHC at their annual meeting in January 2018. Staff contact is Steve MacLean.



**Charter halibut catch. Courtesy  
Capt. Andy Mezirow**

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## Annual CHP Trip Limits

The Council chose to take no action at this time on a proposal to establish annual charter halibut permit (CHP) trip limit categories. The proposal was suggested because the amount of effort expended in the fishery is one of the contributing factors to the overall charter halibut harvest, and increased effort can contribute to increasingly restrictive management measures. The proposal was an attempt to reduce the level of unused and underutilized (latent) capacity in the halibut charter sector, in order to have more control over the level of effort (in terms of trips or angler-trips taken).



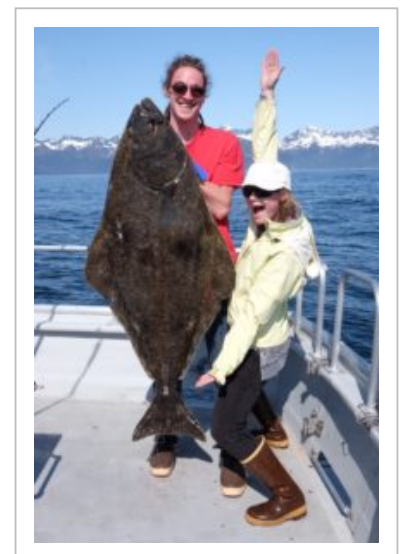
Courtesy Tim Evers

The analysis, public testimony, and further discussion highlighted that the extent of unused and underutilized CHPs makes it difficult to project and ultimately control the level of effort in the fishery. Most of the other factors that influence the amount of effort in the charter halibut sector (e.g., seasonal tourism trends, ocean and weather days, angler demand, etc.) are outside of the Council's control (except for annual management measures), and this may impede the use of CHP trip limits as an effective input control.

Although concerns were expressed about increasingly restrictive charter halibut management measures, and charter businesses' desire for more stability and personalized choice in responding to the factors influencing management measures, Council members noted that this proposed tool might not be responsive to these concerns, and management measures could continue to be restrictive. Particularly at low levels of halibut biomass, even if the action was successful at "freezing" the level of effort in the fishery. Council members stated that they believed the potential benefits would not outweigh the risks and potential inequities that this action would cause. Staff contact is Sarah Marrinan.

## RQE Ownership Caps

The Council chose to postpone an action that considered increasing the CHP ownership caps for a future recreational quota entity (an RQE). Current Federal regulations limit individuals and entities from holding more than five CHPs (with some exceptions). The proposed action would allow an RQE to purchase and hold up to 30 percent of the CHPs in each Area 2C and Area 3A. The intent behind this action is to allow the RQE to influence effort in the charter halibut fishery by temporarily removing capacity from the charter fleet (through the purchase of CHPs) and selling it back into use in times of high halibut abundance. The Council chose to postpone this action, stating that the creation of RQEs has not yet been approved by the Secretary of Commerce, let alone having an RQE established or funded in either area. One Council member stated that while some support was expressed for this capability, he felt it unwise to dedicate resources to pursuing this change until it was clear that an RQE would be functional. Staff contact is Sarah Marrinan.



Courtesy Andy Mezirow

## Self-Guided Halibut Rental Boats

At this meeting, the Council identified a purpose and need statement and directed staff to develop an expanded discussion paper further exploring an unguided rental boat registration requirement. The Council took this action in response to a preliminary discussion paper that identified concerns that the Council would need to address in order to move forward on consideration of a registry for self-guided halibut rental boats in Alaska. The purpose and need statement identifies that the Council is concerned that differences in regulations between the charter and non-charter sectors may result in increased halibut harvest in the non-charter sector, which may negatively impact other sectors.

To address this, the Council intends to establish a registration requirement for vessels affiliated with charter operations, remote lodges, or businesses that require annual saltwater fishing guide licenses, and to estimate halibut catch from this segment of the sector. The discussion paper will provide focused consideration of several components of how to design and establish a selective registry, and to whom a registration requirement would apply. Information collected from a registration program may help the Council determine whether additional management measures are necessary for this segment of the fishery. Staff contact is Steve MacLean.



Courtesy Daniel Donich

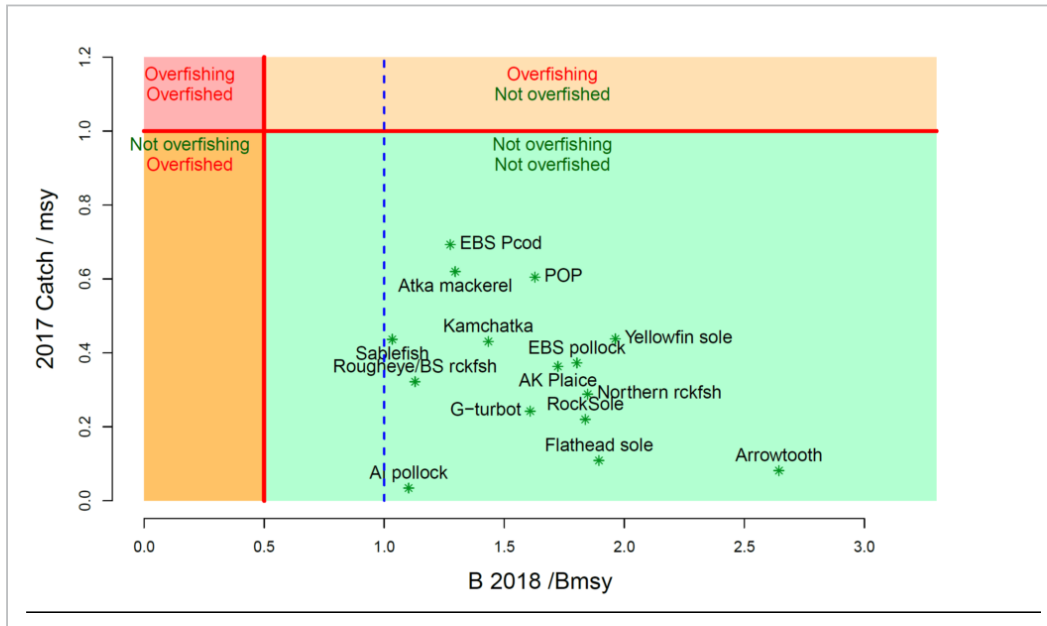
## BSAI Groundfish Harvest Specifications for 2018 and 2019

The Council approved the BSAI Groundfish SAFE report and annual catch limits after recommendations from its advisory committees. The SAFE report provides an overview of the assessed stocks as well as a timeline for the assessment frequency for all stocks. Based on consideration of stock prioritization, including assessment methods and data availability, some stocks are assessed on an annual basis while others are assessed less frequently.

The Council also received a report on the Ecosystem Status Report in the Bering Sea as well as results from a survey conducted in the Northern Bering Sea (NBS). Results from the 2017 NBS survey showed a large increase in the biomasses of pollock (1.3 million t) and Pacific cod (288,000 t) as compared with the previous survey in 2010. Length frequencies from the pollock and Pacific cod in the NBS area were comparable with the fish from the Eastern Bering Sea survey in 2017 and raise questions regarding the potential within year population movement of these stocks between the two surveyed areas.

The sum of the biomasses for 2018 represents a 16% decrease from 2017. This is primarily due to declines in EBS pollock and Pacific cod. Nonetheless, the status of the groundfish stocks continues to appear favorable. The abundances of EBS pollock, EBS Pacific cod, sablefish, all rockfishes managed under Tier 3, and all

flatfishes managed under Tiers 1 or 3 are projected to be above their target ( $B_{MSY}$  or the  $B_{MSY}$  proxy of  $B_{35\%}$ ) in 2018.

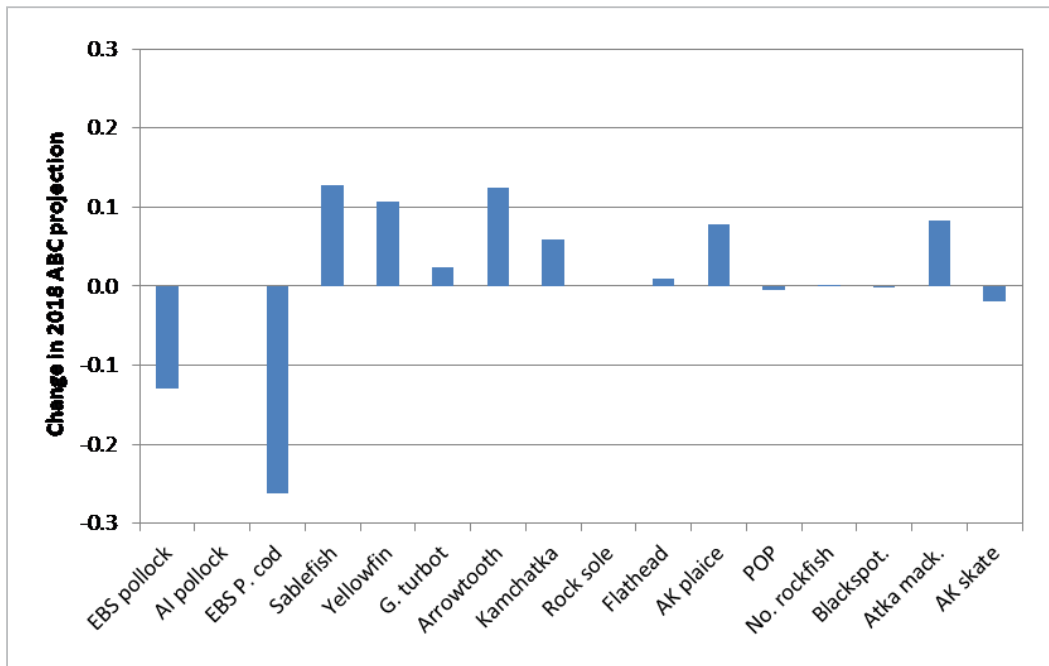


**Summary of Bering Sea stock status next year (spawning biomass relative to  $B_{msy}$ ; horizontal axis) and current year catch relative to fishing at  $F_{msy}$  (vertical axis).**

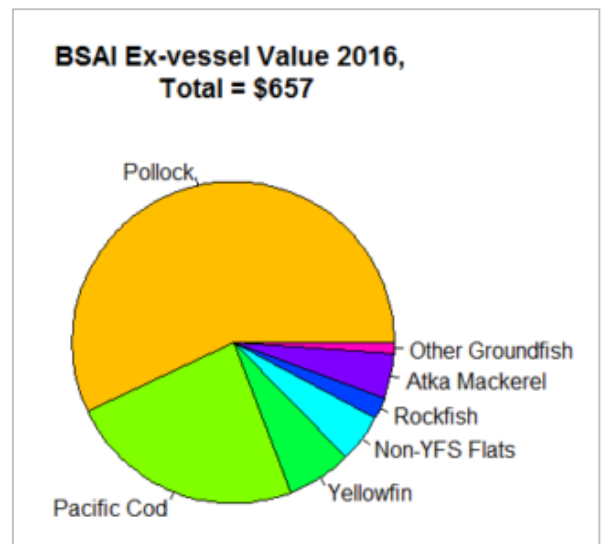
The sum of the total allowable catches (TACs) for all BSAI groundfish is 2 million t for 2018 and 2019. The TACs were set below the sum of the recommended ABCs. The sum of the recommended ABCs for 2018 and 2019 are 3,766,809 t and 3,578,956 t, respectively. The Council established the annual ABC reserve for three flatfish species, northern rock sole, flathead sole and yellowfin sole. The Council established the entire ABC surplus (the difference between ABC and TAC, by species) as the ABC reserve, which is used to allow for more efficiency inseason in the harvest of these flatfish species. The Council also adopted revised PSC limits for crab stocks, Pacific halibut, and herring, including apportionments where applicable. The herring abundance estimate declined and thus the overall PSC limit (established as 1% of the biomass) for herring declined in 2018 from previous years. The Council also confirmed halibut discard mortality rates (DMRs) for use by in-season management in 2018 and 2019.

The Council also received economic information on the ex-vessel value of the BSAI groundfish fisheries in comparison with previous years. Due to the lagged availability of this information, ex-vessel value is available for 2016. The ex-vessel value in 2016 was \$657 million. The 2016 total groundfish catch decreased by 2%, and the total first-wholesale value of groundfish catch increased by 4%, relative to 2015. The Groundfish Economic SAFE report will be reviewed at the February 2018 Council meeting.

The final BSAI groundfish harvest specifications will be published as a final rule in the Federal Register by late February/early March 2018. They will replace the current 2017 harvest specifications that were adopted by the Council in December 2016. Groundfish specifications for 2018-2019 are available on the [Council's website](#). Staff Contact is Diana Stram.



Changes in the ABC projection for 2018 in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands.



## GOA Groundfish Harvest Specifications for 2018 and 2019

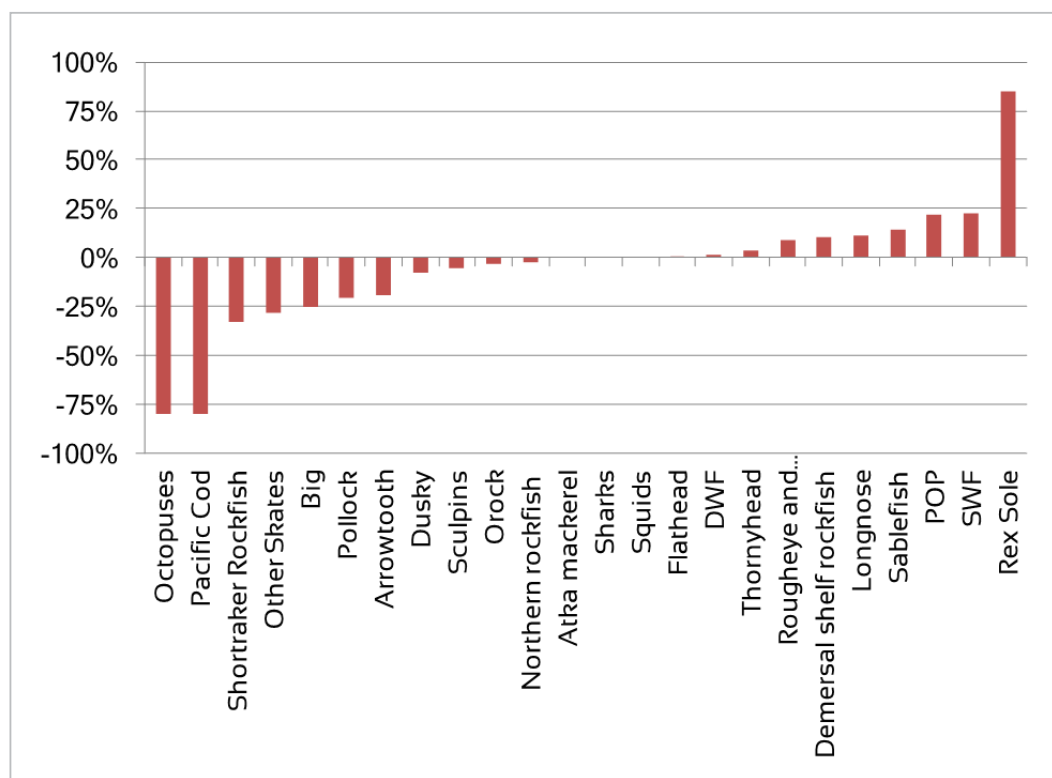
The Council approved the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Groundfish Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) and recommended final harvest specifications for the 2018 and 2019 GOA groundfish fisheries. The 2017 GOA Groundfish SAFE includes stock status updates for all 24 stocks or stock complexes managed through the GOA Groundfish FMP. The Council also reviewed the Ecosystem Considerations chapter of the GOA SAFE which highlighted a return to more typical ocean temperatures in the Gulf in 2017, compared to the previous three years.

Important changes in the Gulf this year included a very large decrease in the abundance of Pacific cod. According to the Pacific cod stock assessment, the strong 2012 year class of cod that was expected to support the fishery for several years was reduced by unusually high natural mortality caused by a variety of ecosystem

stressors during the recent (2014-2016) warm period. As a result, the 2018 allowable biological catch (ABC) for Pacific cod (18,000 mt) is reduced by 80% compared to the 2017 ABC (88,342 mt). **A one-page flyer showing the TAC amounts by area, fishery, and season is [attached here](#) and posted to the Agenda.** Additionally, a 20% decrease in pollock ABC was specified for the Gulf in 2018 based on integration of trawl and acoustic survey data in the updated assessment. (Sablefish, which is assessed for the BSAI and GOA combined is reported on in the BSAI groundfish specifications newsletter item).

The sum of the ABCs for all Gulf groundfish stocks in 2018 is 536,921 mt, which is a reduction of 21% compared to the 2017 (667,877 mt) aggregate ABC. The Council approved maximum permissible ABCs for all stocks in the Gulf in 2018, except for Pacific cod, sablefish, and demersal shelf rockfish. ABC less than the maximum permissible is recommended when a stock needs additional conservation considerations. Differences in the 2018 ABCs compared to 2017 vary among GOA stocks with reductions for eleven stocks, increases for ten stocks, and no change for three stocks (percent change in ABC figure).

### Percentage change in ABC, 2017-2018

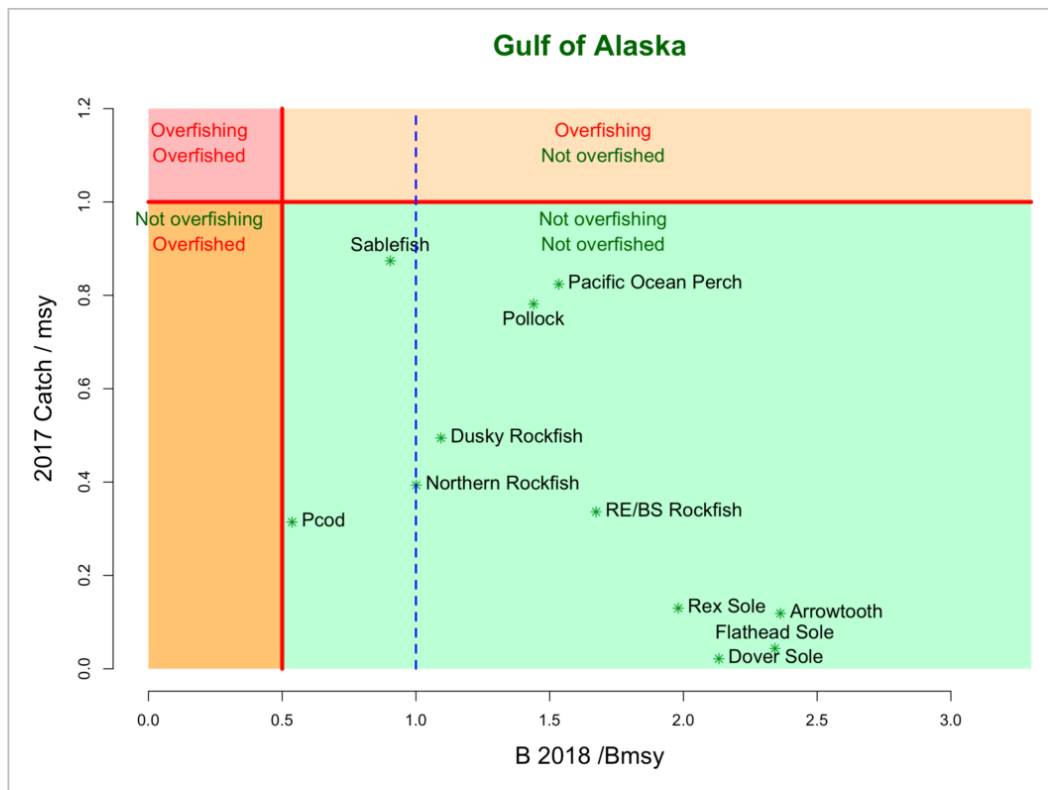


For most stocks, the Council established TACs equal to ABCs. Exceptions, where the TAC is set below ABC, include fisheries where bycatch may be a concern: specifically, shallow water flatfish and flathead sole in Western and Central GOA, arrowtooth flounder (GOA wide), and other rockfish (East Yakutat and Southeast Outside). For Pacific cod, ABC is reduced by 25% in Eastern and Central GOA and by 30% in Western GOA to accommodate State-managed fisheries; and for pollock, ABC is reduced by 2.5% for the State's Prince William Sound fishery.

### Stock Status Summary from the 2017 GOA SAFE report



None of the GOA groundfish stocks are overfished or experiencing overfishing (stock status summary figure). Other than Pacific cod and sablefish, all stocks are projected to be above their biomass targets ( $B_{MSY}$  or the  $B_{MSY}$  proxy,  $B_{35\%}$ ) in 2018. Estimated female spawning stock biomass (SSB) of Pacific cod (36,209 mt) is 46% below target stock size (67,433 mt) and sablefish SSB (88,928 mt) is 4% below target stock size (98,809 mt). The summed biomass estimates for GOA groundfish in 2018 (5,053,276 mt) represent a 16% decrease from the 2017 aggregate biomass (6,036,346 mt).



### Prohibited Species Catch Limits

The Council approved halibut prohibited species catch (PSC) limits, by season and gear sector for 2018 and 2019 and specified apportionments of the hook and line halibut PSC allowance between the hook and line catcher vessel and catcher/processor sectors according to the Pacific cod sector split allocation. The Council also confirmed halibut discard mortality rates (DMRs) for use by in-season management in 2018 and 2019. DMRs were unchanged or decreased for most GOA fisheries, but increased slightly for hook and line catcher vessels and non-pollock, non-rockfish trawl vessels.

Harvest and PSC specifications for the 2018 and 2019 fishing years are posted on the Council’s website [here](#). Staff contact is Jim Armstrong.

## Small Sideboards

At this meeting, the Council reviewed an initial review draft that analyzed a proposed action to revise federal regulations prohibiting directed fishing for species with sideboard limits insufficient to support directed fishing by non-exempt AFA vessels and crab vessels. NMFS would no longer publish these AFA and Crab

Rationalization Program sideboard limits in the annual harvest specifications. The proposed action would also remove the sideboard limit on AFA catcher/processors for Central Aleutian Islands Atka mackerel because the sideboard limit under the AFA (11.5%) exceeds the allocation to the trawl limited access sector (10%) that was established by the Amendment 80 Program.

After reviewing the initial draft, the Council released the analysis for public review, once staff incorporates the SSC's comments to the extent practical. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.



**Gun-Mar AFA trawl catcher vessel**

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## Bering Sea Pacific cod Trawl CV Participation

The Council reviewed a discussion paper that examined participation and effort in the Bering Sea trawl catcher vessel Pacific cod fishery, in response to a potential need to limit entry and participation in the trawl catcher vessel sector and the sector's delivery of Bering Sea Pacific cod to Amendment 80 catcher/processor vessels acting as motherships. After reviewing the discussion paper, the Council adopted a purpose and need statement and initiated an analysis. The Council is concerned about the recent increases and potential future growth in offshore deliveries of Pacific cod to Amendment 80 vessels or other vessels operating as motherships, and the impacts on shoreside processors, communities, and participating catcher vessels. The Council is also concerned about the high level of latency for the AFA trawl catcher vessel fleet, and the shortening duration of the BSAI trawl catcher vessel Pacific cod fishery, which makes it more difficult to maximize the value of the fishery and is negatively impacting fishery participants.

To address these concerns, the Council has proposed an alternative that would limit Amendment 80 and non-Amendment 80 catcher/processors from acting as a mothership to receive BSAI non-CDQ Pacific cod deliveries from trawl catcher vessels unless they have a recent history of such activity, and an alternative that would limit the amount of the BSAI non-CDQ Pacific cod trawl catcher vessel allocation that can be delivered to Amendment 80 catcher/processors. The Council also included a control date of December 31, 2017 that may be used as a reference date for a future management action to limit catcher/processor vessels acting as motherships in the BSAI trawl catcher vessel Pacific cod fishery.

To address the concerns of vessel latency in the BSAI trawl catcher vessel Pacific cod fishery, the Council has proposed an alternative that would prohibit the use of any License Limitation Program licenses in the BSAI trawl cod fishery unless they have been attributed a directed BSAI trawl Pacific cod landing within a set time period. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

## GOA Pollock and Pacific Cod Management

The Council reviewed four discussion papers on the GOA groundfish fisheries. Two papers assessed trends in the timing of Chinook salmon and halibut bycatch in the Western GOA pollock and Pacific cod trawl fisheries, respectively. Another paper considered the efficacy and indirect effects of reducing the 300,000 lb. trawl trip limit for Western GOA pollock as a bycatch reduction strategy. Yet another paper outlined tools



and options available to reduce the amount of GOA Pacific cod B season TAC that is going unharvested. After reviewing these four papers, the Council tasked staff to develop two subsequent discussion papers.

The first paper will evaluate changing the seasonal allocation of pollock TAC across areas 610/620/630/640 (Western GOA to West Yakutat), and Pacific cod TAC across seasons. Options are intended to increase the amount of annual TAC that gets harvested, while providing the fleet with additional flexibility to fish when encounters with prohibited species (Chinook salmon and halibut) are expected to be lower. The NMFS Alaska Region Office will track the development of proposed changes in regard to their potential effect on ESA-listed Steller sea lion stocks.

- TAC for the pollock trawl fishery is currently apportioned equally across four seasons (ABCD), and then apportioned across areas within each season according to estimated biomass distribution. The Council's options would not change season start/end dates or the process to apportion a season's TAC across areas. The options include shifting more of the annual TAC to the earlier part of the calendar year (A/B seasons), and/or combining the A/B seasons and the C/D seasons so that the year consists of only two seasonal allocations (Jan. 20 to May 31, and Aug. 25 to Nov. 1). The most dramatic shift under consideration would allocate 60% of the GOA pollock TAC to the A/B season(s) and 40% to the C/D season(s). The Council will also consider increasing the limit on the amount of uncaught TAC that can be rolled over from one season to another (either within the same GOA area or to another area). That limit is currently set at 20% of the seasonal TAC in the area receiving the rollover, but could be increased to 25% or 30%.
- Pacific cod TAC is allocated to A and B seasons at a 60/40 ratio. The TAC for each season is divided among five gear/operational-type sectors in the WGOA and six sectors in the CGOA. The Council will consider shifting B season TAC to the A season, up to a maximum change of 75% for the A season and 25% for the B season. This change would apply to all gear/operational-type sectors in the WGOA and CGOA, but would not change sector-specific allocations.

The second paper will explore options for vessel length-based limits on participation in the Western GOA (Area 610) pollock trawl fishery. Options include a size limit of 58' LOA, or a sideboard that caps the participation of vessels greater than 58' at a maximum percentage of the area's annual TAC. The Council directed staff to provide information that will help define a reasonable range of options for sideboard criteria, including but not limited to historical harvest during a set of years. The paper will address how such an action might impact processors, communities, and vessel-size classes that participate in the 610 pollock fishery. Staff contact is Sam Cunningham.

## Fixed Gear CV Rockfish Retention

After reviewing a discussion paper to consider requiring fixed-gear catcher vessels to retain all rockfish species, the Council adopted a purpose and need statement and initiated an analysis. As noted in the purpose and need statement, requiring full retention of rockfish could improve the identification of species when catcher vessels are subject to electronic monitoring, improve data collection by providing more accurate estimates of catch, and reduce incentives to discard rockfish, reduce waste, reduce overall



Rockfish catch

enforcement burden, and promote more consistent management between State of Alaska and Federal fisheries. The proposed action includes an alternative requiring full retention of rockfish species by all fixed-gear catcher vessels (hook-and-line, pot, and jig) in the BSAI and GOA, and an alternative that would only require full retention of rockfish species by hook-and-line catcher vessels in the GOA. The analysis will also evaluate an option requiring full retention of rockfish even if the species is on PSC status, but would prohibit these retained rockfish from entering commerce. The Council requested that staff consider the following issues as part of the analysis:

- Whether increasing the maximum retainable allowances for rockfish species would reduce the amount of catch that would need to be monitored to ensure that it does not commerce
- The costs and feasibility of processing, handling, and donating rockfish that are retained in excess of an MRA and which cannot enter commerce
- Potential inconsistencies between State and Federal management.

Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

## Chinook Salmon EFP

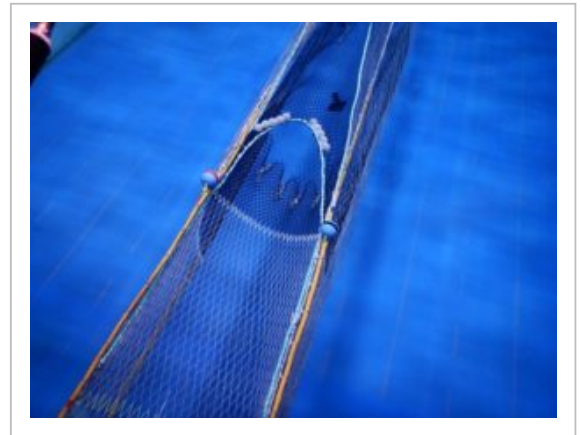
NMFS consulted with the Council on an exempted fishing permit (EFP) application to test salmon excluder devices presented by Mr. John Gauvin. This EFP will continue the development and testing of Chinook salmon excluder devices in the Bering Sea pollock trawl fishery. Setting up the experiment under an EFP allows for more rigorous scientific design through systematic gear trials. Small observed increases in Chinook bycatch rates in the fishery, combined with comparably lower mean escapement rates for Chinook in the Bering Sea (7% to 18%) than in the Gulf (35% to 55%), demonstrated the need for improved excluder devices designed specifically for the Bering Sea fleet. This EFP will:

- Exempt three participating vessels from selected observer requirements;
- Allow an exemption to fish in areas otherwise closed to fishing with trawl gear; and
- Allow groundfish and prohibited species taken during the experiment to not be counted against the annual TAC and PSC limits.

The Council voiced its support for this continued research on development of excluder devices to reduce salmon bycatch, and recommended the motion that NMFS grant the EFP. The SSC and AP provided specific recommendations for excluder testing and evaluation, and noted that the EFP will result in gear modifications that are more effective and reflective of the fleets' power capabilities. Council members encourage the collaborative effort of the industry as well as the level of fleet engagement in the project. Upon receipt of the permit, device testing is planned to begin in late winter/early spring of 2018 and will continue through the 2020 season. Staff contact is Sara Cleaver.



**Dropping trawl net with excluder device into flume tank, courtesy John Gauvin**



**Excluder device in flume tank, courtesy John Gauvin**

## Final 2018 Annual Deployment Plan

NMFS reported on the Final 2018 Observer Annual Deployment Plan (ADP), which was released in early December. Although NMFS did not ultimately accept the Council's ADP recommendations from October where they differed from those of the agency, the outcome is similar to the Council's intent to allocate more coverage in the hook and line and trawl strata, because of changes between October and December in projected 2018 effort resulting from low GOA cod TACs, and accommodating 141 vessels in the EM strata. In 2018, selection rates will be: 20% for trawl vessels (or 17% for trawl vessels delivering to a tender); 17% for hook-and-line vessels; and 16% for pot vessels (or 17% for pot vessels delivering to a tender). Vessels

participating in the EM selection pool will have a 30% selection rate in 2018. The Council remains interested in the development, in 2018, of an observer deployment allocation scheme which provides for minimum selection rates that are specific to gear-type (sometimes referred to as a “gear-specific hurdle approach”). Staff contact is Diana Evans.

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## Staff Tasking

In addition to discussing the relative priority and scheduling of previously tasked projects, the Council took the following actions and clarified direction and tasking for its committees:

- Approved a process for regulatory reform review whereby NMFS and Council staff will conduct a preliminary review and report back to the Council in April 2018.
- Discussed the Steller Sea Lion 5 year review, but declined to provide comments during the current public comment period. The Council intends, however, to remain involved as the review proceeds.
- Encouraged further review of the LEO network and citizen science opportunities by authors of the Ecosystem Considerations report, taking into account the SSC comments, and anticipates hearing back on the utility of these opportunities at a future meeting.
- Requested that NOAA Office of Law Enforcement provide finer-scale information on pollock trip limit overages in 2017 at a future meeting.
- Approved the Plan Teams’ intention to hold a public workshop to consider, among other things, appropriate protocols for determining when to set ABC below the maximum permissible. The Council requested a report back on this topic at a future meeting, noting that it may result in changes to the Plan Teams’ Terms of Reference.
- Agreed to report to the IPHC the Council’s action on self-guided halibut rental boats, which is directly responsive to an IPHC proposal that was submitted for the 2018 IPHC annual meeting.
- Directed staff to send letters:
  - to the AFSC regarding support for Northern Bering Sea Pacific cod genetic and tagging studies, especially to the extent that this work can affect the 2018 Pacific cod stock assessment;
  - to the AFSC supporting additional Northern Bering Sea surveys;
  - to the State Department expressing support for the Central Arctic Ocean agreement, and noting how it aligns with the Council’s Arctic FMP; and
  - to Sea Grant with feedback on the Council’s interaction with the Young Fishermen’s Summit and further opportunities.

Additionally, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game notified the Council that they intend to investigate an issue raised in a public comment letter relating to latency issues in the scallop fishery, and would report back to the Council, plan team, or Joint Protocol Committee at a future date.

Here is a revised [Three-Meeting Outlook](#) resulting from this Council meeting. Motions are posted on the Council website through the [Agenda](#). Staff contact is Diana Evans.

## Baker and Wallace Depart

The Council recognized two long-time NMFS participants in the Council process. Farron Wallace is retiring from the SSC, where he has been a member since 2003, including Chair of the SSC for the last three years. Mr. Wallace has led the SSC through some difficult scientific issues and has provided expertise to the SSC on issues ranging from the Observer Program to stock assessments. He will be continuing his work at NMFS on electronic monitoring research and innovation. Rachel Baker has been working in the Council process since 2003, first with the ADFG extended jurisdiction division, and since 2008 with NMFS Sustainable Fisheries. At NMFS, she has been staff expert on allocation management actions, especially for halibut issues including the IFQ program, Charter management, the IPHC process, and most recently the halibut abundance-based management initiative. She is moving to NMFS headquarters, where she will be taking over the Sustainable Fisheries Management and Coordination branch that leads national-level efforts on a range of allocation policies and other management issues. The Council presented both Mr. Wallace and Ms. Baker with plaques thanking them for their service and dedication to the conservation and management of fisheries in the North Pacific.



Rachel Baker with Chairman Dan Hull

## Young Fishermen's Summit

The Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program hosted its seventh Alaska Young Fishermen's Summit December 6–8 in Anchorage, which overlapped with the Council meeting. The Summit is designed to provide training, information and networking opportunities for commercial fishermen early in their careers, and focuses on building leadership and networking capacity in



## the Alaska commercial **Young Fishermen's Summit participation at December 2017 Council meeting**

fishing industry. As part

of the training, the Summit participants came over and watched the last hour of the Advisory Panel and Council meetings on Thursday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, followed by a debrief session with Council members and staff, and then a jointly hosted reception which gave further opportunity for participants to interact with staff, members of the Council and Advisory Panel, and industry participants. Additionally, three Summit participants were able to shadow a Council member on Friday morning, to get a perspective of what it is like to be a Council member, and to sit at the table for the morning session. The Council appreciated the enthusiasm and sincerity of the participants, and continues to be interested in encouraging young fishermen to engage in the management process. Staff will explore opportunities with Sea Grant for extending this type of program to other stakeholders in the future, perhaps also through shadowing opportunities with the Advisory Panel.

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## Council Developing eComment Application

In an effort to streamline the administrative side of the commenting process, Council staff have been working on developing an online eCommenting portal. Instead of emailing the Council with comments, this process will allow the public to submit them through an online form accessible through our website. The commenter can choose an agenda item from a drop-down menu, and either comment directly on the online form, or upload an attachment. Once the comment deadline is closed, comments will be made visible through a permanent link on our website. This process will allow more flexibility to adjust the due date for comments prior to a Council meeting. Watch for the possible debut prior to the February 2018 Council meeting at [comments.npfmc.org](http://comments.npfmc.org)!

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## Upcoming Meetings

Meetings that are part of the February Council meeting in Seattle, WA:

- February 5, 2018: IFQ Committee and Legislative Committee
- February 6, 2018: Ecosystem Committee
- February 7, 2018: Ecosystem research workshop

Other meetings:

- April 3, 2018 (T): Ecosystem Committee
- May 15, 2018: EM Workgroup or OAC workgroup meeting, AFSC, Seattle, WA
- May 16-17, 2018: OAC meeting, AFSC, Seattle, WA
- Scallop Plan Team (TBD)



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