

Regulatory Amendment for Tender Activity under the Observer Program

I move that the Council initiate an analysis to change the regulations in the Observer Program that affect how observers monitor and are deployed on groundfish vessels delivering to tenders.

Draft Purpose and Need Statement

The Council is concerned that under the new Observer Program the definition of a fishing trip and the ability of catcher vessels to deliver to tenders introduces a potential bias that affects data quality due to observed fishing activity being unrepresentative of unobserved operations. In addition, genetic sampling of Chinook salmon caught as bycatch in the GOA catcher vessel pollock trawl fishery is not occurring when these vessels deliver to tenders, thereby undermining the Council's objective to determine the stock of origin of these Chinook salmon. The Council seeks to correct these unintended consequences by changing how observers monitor and are deployed on groundfish vessels delivering to tenders.

Alternative 1. Status Quo

Alternative 2. Revise the Observer Program regulations that affect how observers are deployed on catcher vessels delivering to tenders.

Option 1. Deploy observers for catcher vessels from tenders.

Option 2. Allow catcher vessel observers to monitor deliveries on tenders.