



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME REPORT TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Fisheries managed by the State of Alaska since the last Council report includes those for salmon, scallops, crab and Pacific cod.

Salmon Troll Fishery

The Southeast Alaska general summer troll fishery opened on July 1, 2016. The summer fishery targets the majority of the annual Treaty Chinook salmon quota in one or more open periods during the July 1 – September 30 timeframe. During the summer season, most waters of the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat area are open to commercial trolling, including outer coastal waters in the EEZ, excluding those waters described in 5 AAC 29.150.

Total catch from the first retention period was 106,662 Chinook salmon and 105,344 of those fish were estimated to be Treaty Chinook salmon. Harvest from the second retention period was 74,672 Chinook salmon and 73,643 of those fish were estimated to be Treaty Chinook salmon.

Fish ticket reports indicate that 16% of the summer Chinook salmon harvest occurred in the EEZ.

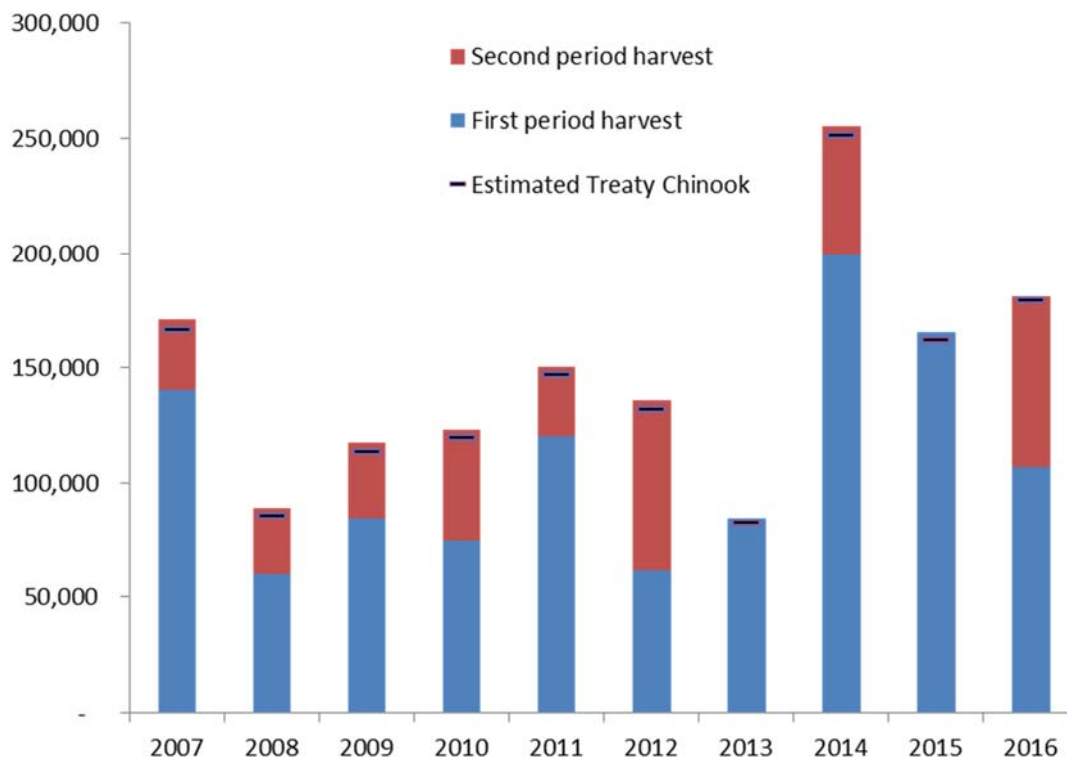


Figure 1. Chinook salmon harvest in the Southeast Alaska summer troll fishery, 2007 – 2016.

Scallops

Weathervane scallop fisheries in Yakutat, Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Alaska Peninsula, Dutch Harbor, and the Bering Sea registration areas opened on July 1, 2016. The cumulative guideline harvest level (GHL) for the 2016/17 season is 286,300 pounds of shucked meats, an 18% decrease from the 2015/16 cumulative GHL.

| Registration Area | | GHL (pounds of shucked meat) | Bycatch Limits (number of crab) | |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|-----------|
| | | | Tanner Crab | King Crab |
| YAKUTAT | Area D | 120,000 | N/A | N/A |
| | District 16 | 25,000 | N/A | N/A |
| PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND | | | | |
| | East Kayak | Closed for the 2016/17 season | | |
| | West Kayak | 6,300 | 1,561 | N/A |
| COOK INLET | | 10,000 | 3,933 | 30 |
| KODIAK | Northeast District | 55,000 | 20,816 | 25 |
| | Shelikof District | 75,000 | 43,477 | 50 |
| | Southwest District ¹ | 25,000 | 12,000 | 50 |
| | Semidi District ¹ | Exploratory Area (Commissioner's Permit) | | |
| ALASKA | 160° to 161° W. long | 7,500 | monitored inseason | |
| PENINSULA | Unimak Bight ¹ | 15,000 | 12,000 | 50 |
| DUTCH HARBOR | Bering Sea waters | 5,000 | 5,000 | 10 |
| | Pacific Ocean waters | 5,000 | 5,000 | 10 |
| BERING SEA | | 7,500 | 260,000 | 500 |
| | | | C.opilio & hybrids | |
| | | | 300,000 | |

¹ Commissioner's Permit required to harvest scallops in these areas.

Table 1. Weathervane scallop guideline harvest level and bycatch limits, by area for 2016/17.

Total harvest to date is approximately 170,000 pounds. Scallop fishing has closed in the Shelikof and Southwest Districts of the Kodiak management area, the Unimak Bight District of the South Alaska Peninsula management area, the Bering Sea side of the Dutch Harbor management area, and in the Bering Sea management area.

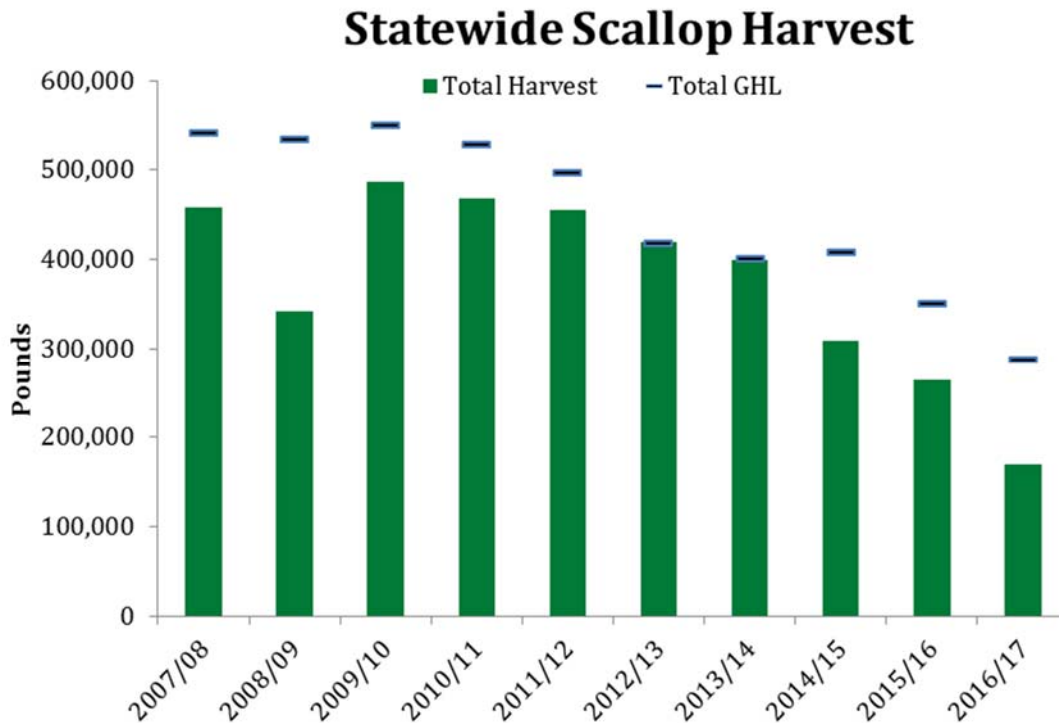


Figure 2. Statewide weathervane scallop harvest, 2007/08 – 2016/17.

Norton Sound red king crab

The 2016 Norton Sound red king crab summer open access fishery opened on June 27, 2016 with a total GHL of 440,137 pounds. Catch rates were high and average catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 18 crabs per pot. The Norton Sound season lasted 25 days (compared to 26 in 2015), closing on July 21, 2016. This was the shortest season since the area became superexclusive in 1994. Thirty-seven permit holders harvested 95% (416,576 pounds) of the open access quota. The average price paid was \$6.50 per pound, the highest amount ever paid. The exvessel value of the fishery was \$2.7 million, the highest fishery value ever for Norton Sound.

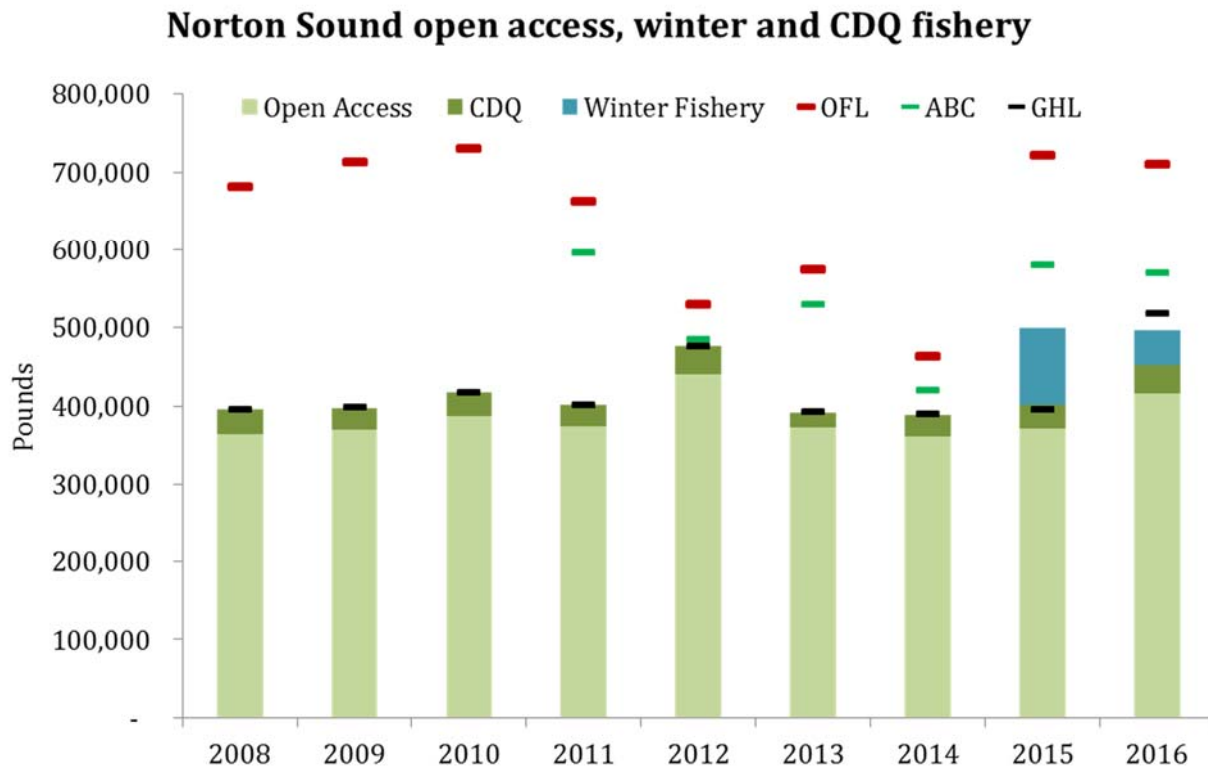


Figure 3. Norton Sound red king crab harvest, TAC, OFL, and ABC, 2008 – 2016.

Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab

The 2016/17 Aleutian Islands commercial golden king crab fishery opened August 1, 2016. The total allowable catch (TAC) is set at 6.29 million pounds by regulation and is apportioned east and west of 174° W long; the eastern TAC is 3.31 million pounds and the western TAC is 2.98 million pounds. Ten percent of each TAC is allocated to the CDQ (eastern) and Adak Community Allocation (ACA-western) fisheries. Three vessels are currently participating in the eastern area and harvest to date is 1.5 million pounds. Two vessels are fishing in the western area and harvest remains confidential.

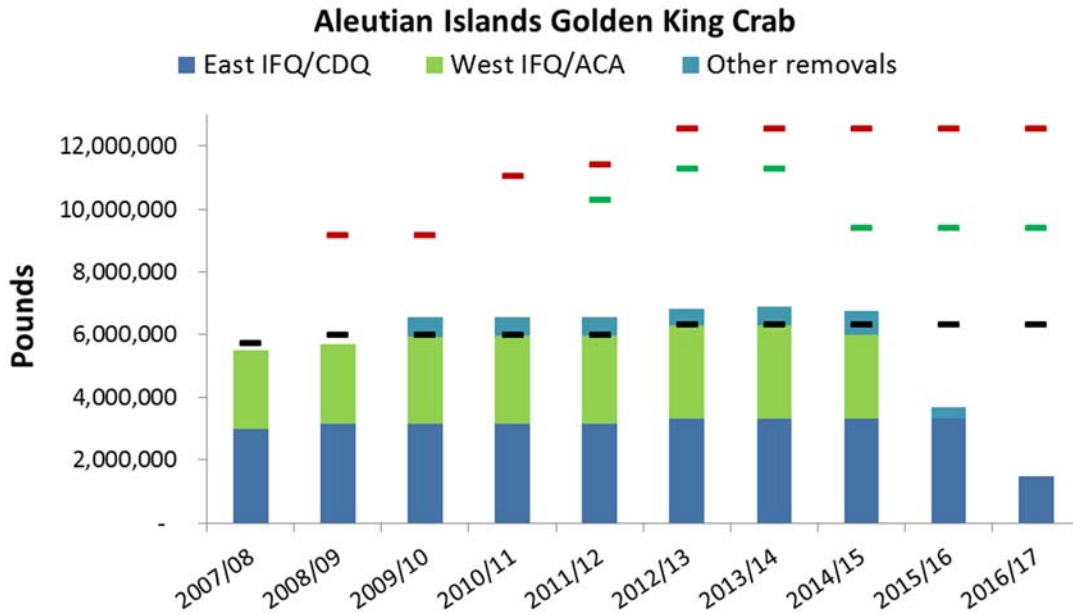


Figure 4. Aleutian Islands golden king crab harvest by area, TAC, OFL, and ABC, 2007/08 – 2016/17.

Westward Region Pacific Cod

Kodiak Pacific Cod

The state-waters jig fishery opened on March 03, 2016 concurrent with the federal jig sector fishery in federal waters and remains open. Total jig harvest to date is 3.3 million pounds (49% of GHL) by 106 vessels.

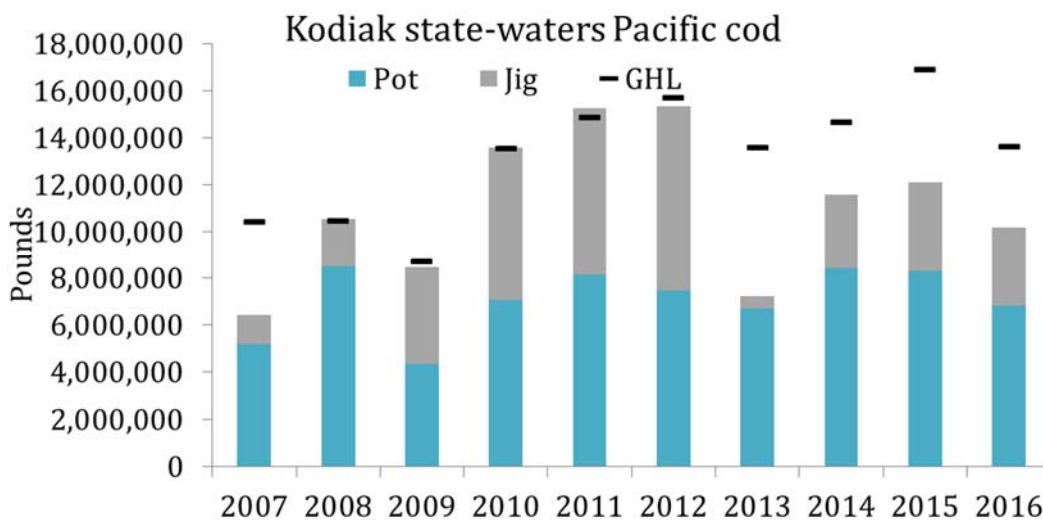


Figure 5. Kodiak state-waters Pacific cod harvest by gear, 2007-2016.

South Alaska Peninsula Pacific cod

The state-waters jig fishery opened by regulation on March 15, 2016 and remains open. Total jig harvest to date is 0.43 million pounds (10% of GHL) by seventeen vessels.

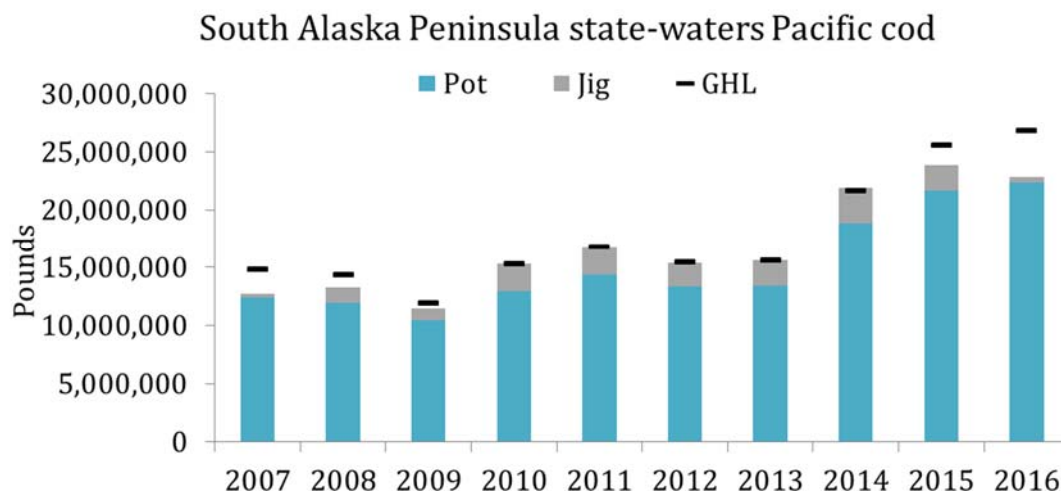


Figure 6. South Alaska Peninsula state-waters Pacific cod harvest by gear, 2007-2016.

Alaska Board of Fisheries

The Board may consider out-of-cycle proposals through an Agenda Change Request (ACR) and state regulations (5 AAC 39.999) define the guidelines by which an ACR may be accepted. The Board considers ACRs at its first meeting in the fall (Work Session: October 18 - 20, in Kenai). The only action for the Board is to determine whether to accept an ACR and to determine which future meeting it will be deliberated. The Board received an ACR for the Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery requesting to change the season closure date from May 1 to May 15 (ACR 8).

The following comprise the king and Tanner crab proposals that the Board will review at its March meeting (March 20–24, 2016, in Anchorage). **The comment deadline is October 4, 2016.** Comments can also be submitted at the meeting.

| Mgmt Area | Proposal number | Description | FMP category |
|------------------|-----------------|--|--|
| Bering Sea | 242 | St. Matthew Island blue king crab harvest strategy. Correct regulations to accurately specify the percentage of mature male blue king crab used in setting TAC. | 2 - TAC/GHL |
| | 250 | Allow full retention of incidentally taken legal male <i>C.opilio</i> when targeting <i>C.bairdi</i> in the Bering Sea west of 166° W long. | 3 - Bycatch Limits |
| | 251 | Change season closure date from March 31 to April 15 for <i>C.bairdi</i> Tanner crab in waters west of 166° W long. | 2 - Fishing Seasons |
| | 252 | Allow vessel carrying an onboard observer to rig, bait, and set gear for new crab fishery before fully exiting the crab fishery for which the observer was briefed. | 3 - Observers Gear Placement and Removal |
| | 253 | Allow vessels participating in rationalized crab fishery to rig, bait, and set pot gear for a new crab fishery prior to fully exiting the crab fishery for which the vessel is validly registered. | 3 - Other |
| | 254 | Amend the description of hybrid Tanner crab so that hybrid designation is dependent upon the vessel's target Tanner crab fishery. | 3 - Other |
| | 255 | Allow full retention of incidentally taken legal male <i>C.opilio</i> when targeting <i>C.bairdi</i> in the Bering Sea east of 166° W long. | 3 - Bycatch Limits |
| | 256 | Allow full retention of incidentally taken legal male <i>C.bairdi</i> when targeting Bristol Bay red king crab. | 3 - Bycatch Limits |
| | 257 | Extend the Bering Sea District eastern boundary for <i>C.opilio</i> from 166° W long. to 165° W long. | 2 - Districts, Subdistricts, and Section Boundaries |
| | 258 | Extend the Bering Sea District eastern boundary for <i>C.bairdi</i> from 163° W long. to 162° W long. | 2 - Districts, Subdistricts, and Section Boundaries |
| | 259 | Specify placement of escape rings and mesh on pot in St. Matthew Island blue king crab fishery. | 3 - Gear Modifications |
| | 260 | Adopt ADF&G reference guide for <i>C.bairdi</i> and <i>C.opilio</i> to identify hybrid Tanner crab. | 3 - Other |
| Aleutian Islands | 261 | Allow <i>C.opilio</i> bycatch retention up to 5% in the Bering Sea <i>C.bairdi</i> fishery east of 166° W long. | 3 - Bycatch Limits |
| | 263 | Reduce onboard observer coverage rates and deployment periods for the Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery | 3 - Observers |
| | 264 | Repeal provisions allowing concurrent harvest of red and golden king crab in the Aleutian Islands. | 3 - Other |
| | ACR | Change Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery season closure date from May 1 to May 15 (5 AAC 34.610). | 2 - Fishing Seasons |

Table 2. Alaska Board of Fisheries proposals, and descriptions for the March 2017 king and Tanner crab meeting.