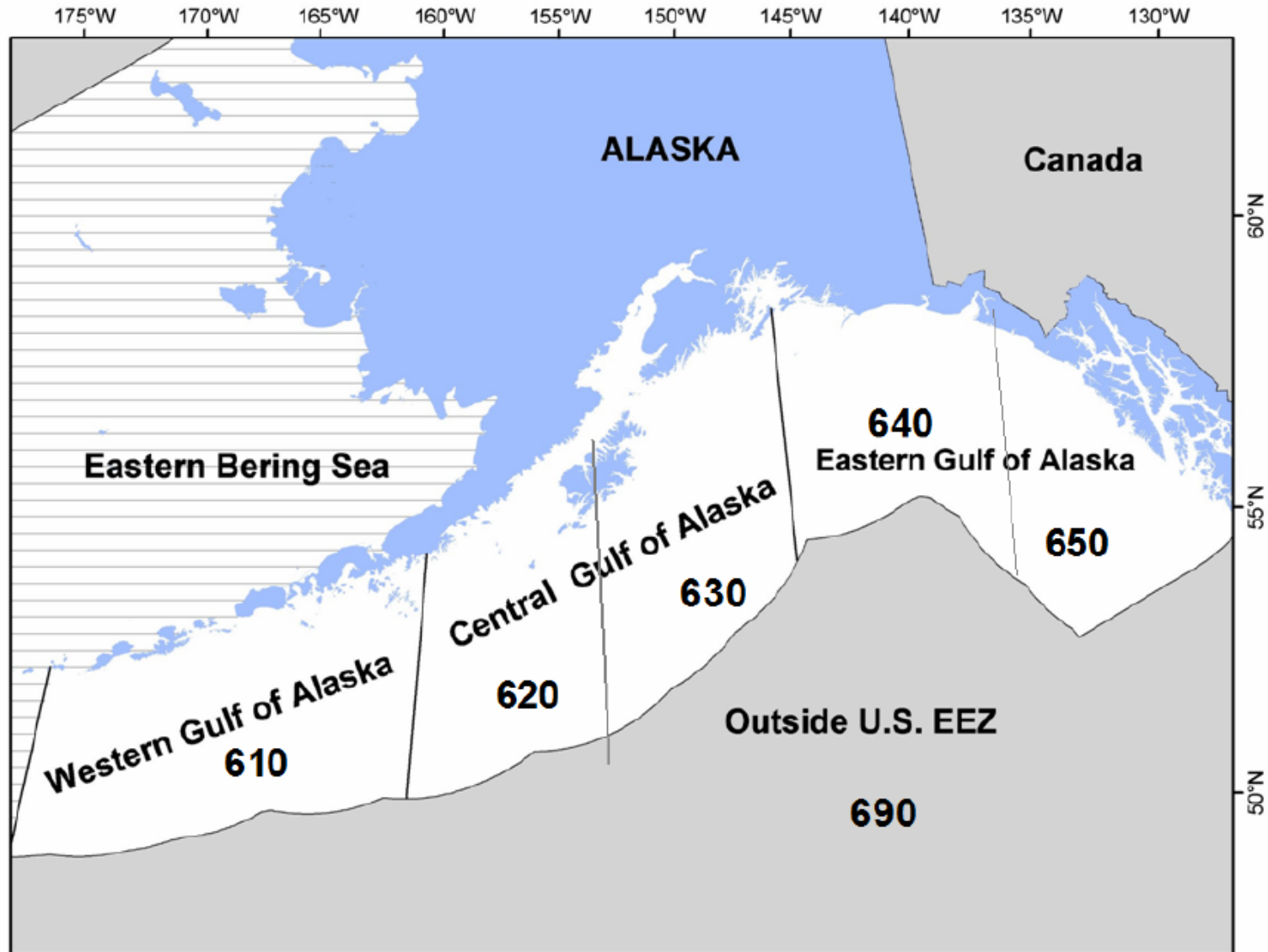


SSC Draft Report December 2017



B-1 Plan Team Nominations

The SSC reviewed the Plan Team nomination of **Kresimir Williams (NMFS-AFSC)** to the GOA Groundfish Plan Team, and **Katie Palof (ADFG)** and **Bill Gaeuman (ADFG)** to the Crab Plan Team.

The SSC finds these nominees to be well qualified, with appropriate expertise that will assist the Plan Teams. The SSC recommends that the Council approve these nominations.

The SSC is looking forward to **Heather Renner (USFW)** joining the **SSC** at our February 2018 meeting replacing Lew Coggins. Her expertise in seabirds and ecology will make her an excellent addition.

General stock assessment discussion

Joint Plan Teams Request for Clarification on Stock Prioritization effort, (NMFS changed the assessment frequency for some stocks in 2017).

- SSC clarifies that our comments were intended to encourage the development of an evaluation framework that can be used for a cost-benefit analysis after a full 4-year assessment cycle is completed

C-6 Small Sideboards

- The purpose of this issue is to reduce the administrative burden of annually closing small sideboard fisheries that are unlikely to open.
- The analysis identifies the benefits of prohibiting directed fishing in small sideboard fisheries under Alternative 2 as reducing the annual costs associated with developing and publishing the annual harvest specifications in the Federal Register.
- The SSC commends the analyst for constructing a concise and comprehensible document. The SSC notes, however, that there is one deficiency with the analysis that must be corrected before being released for public review.

C-6 Small Sideboards

- The analyst states that there would be no adverse impact on any current sideboard-restricted participants under Alternative 2, relative to opportunities available to them currently, because directed fishing for these sideboard species has been closed historically.
- However, the benefits associated with prohibiting directed fishing in small sideboard fisheries also need to be compared to the expected cost of reopening these sideboard fisheries through regulatory action should conditions allow for directed fishing in the future.

C-6 Small Sideboards

- If the probability of reopening these small sideboard fisheries in the future is sufficiently low such that the expected cost is negligible, the analysis should state this explicitly. **The SSC recommends that the RIR/IRFA be released for public review once this correction is made.**

D-6 Salmon Excluder EFP

- The permit would provide coverage for three vessels includes both “small” and “large” CV because prior experience has shown that net shape, tow speed, and excluder performance vary substantial with vessel horsepower.
- The selected vessels would be allowed to fish inside closed areas, including the Steller Sea Lion Conservation Area, where Chinook salmon encounter rates are high.
- Additionally, they would be allowed to fish without observer coverage (during EFP-covered fishing), and catch would not count against TAC or PSC totals for the year. Catch would be sold to defray the costs of fishing efforts.

D-6 Salmon Excluder EFP

- The SSC supports the collaborative nature of the proposed experimental design, appreciates the dedicated effort to reduce PSC of salmon, and supports approval of the proposed EFP.

