

North Pacific Fishery Management Council
C-7 Bering Sea Pacific cod Trawl Participation Motion
December 9, 2017

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 BSAI 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.