



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

April 2, 2018

Agenda B-2: NMFS Management Report

Status of Actions

Updated daily at: <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/reports/amendments.pdf>

Highlights on progress since the last Council meeting include:

Final Rules

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands 2018 and 2019 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish.
Effective: February 27, 2018

Gulf of Alaska 2018 and 2019 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish
Effective: March 1, 2018

2018 Halibut Annual Management Measures
Effective: March 9, 2018

2018 Interim Final Rule for Area 2C through 4 catch limits and charter management measures in Areas 2C and 3A
Effective: March 20, 2018

Notices of Availability and Proposed Rules

Notice of Availability: Amendments 115 (BSAI), 105 (GOA), 49 (KTC), 13 (Salmon), 2 (Arctic) -- EFH Omnibus
End of Comment Period: May 4, 2018

Notice of Availability: Amendment 117 (BSAI) 106 (GOA) -- Reclassifying squid to ecosystem component
End of Comment Period: May 29, 2018

Proposed Rule: Authorizing Area 4 IFQ transfer (leasing) to CDQ groups.
End of Comment Period: March 26, 2018

- See Attachment 1 for additional detail.



eCFR

Sustainable Fisheries has been maintaining a version of its regulations (Title 50 of the Code of Federal Regulations, parts 679 and 680) on its website for over two decades. We have maintained this version as a courtesy to the public. The Government Publishing Office (GPO) has been maintaining an electronic version of all regulations online, updated daily, known as the eCFR. The eCFR provides a more accurate record of our regulations. **Effective March 31, 2018 we will no longer be supporting a separate version on our website.** Our decision was guided by the additional workload associated with maintaining a duplicative version of the regulations, and the potential for inconsistency.

Our website will provide the link to the eCFR, in place of our current version of the regulations.

Staff Changes

In March, 2018 **Gretchen Harrington** became the Assistant Regional Administrator for the Habitat Conservation Division. Gretchen will bring superb organizational skills and extensive background to the position, but it will be a big change for those of us in Sustainable Fisheries and at the Council. Gretchen was the Alaska Region NEPA Coordinator since 2012, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator from 2003 to 2011, and a Fishery Regulation Specialist for Sustainable Fisheries from 1998 to 2003.

As many of you know, Gretchen has been instrumental in the successful completion of many of our most complicated and controversial actions over the past two decades. Little things like the Salmon FMP, Bering Sea Chinook salmon bycatch limits, something to do with crab, maybe some analytic support from time to time ☺. We will miss her tremendously valuable analytical skills and her extensive knowledge.

For the past year, Gretchen had been on detail to the Habitat Conservation Division as well as doing some “double duty” for Sustainable Fisheries. We anticipate that Gretchen will continue working with us for a while on the Salmon FMP, and various NEPA duties, before fully transitioning to the Habitat Conservation Division. We plan to advertise for a new NEPA Coordinator later this year.

Congratulations Gretchen !

Attachment 1 -- Status of Regulatory Actions

Changes since October 2017 are noted in **Bold Red**
EOC = End of Comment Period

Action Status	Lead Council, SF, and GCAK Staff	Date of Council Final Action	Start Regional Review	Received by GCAK	Transmittal Date of Action to NMFS HQ for Review	Notice of Availability (FMP) Published in <i>Federal Register</i>	Proposed Rule Published in <i>Federal Register</i>	Final Rule or Notice of Approval Published in <i>Federal Register</i>
FMP Amendments								
Amendments 115 (BSAI), 105 (GOA), 49 (KTC), 13 (Salmon), 2 (Arctic) EFH Omnibus (FMP Amendment only)	MacLean Mackey Meyer	April 2017	PR: 12/1/17	PR: 12/5/17	PR: 2/23/18	Mar. 5, 2018 83 FR 9257 EOC: 5/4/18	N/A	
Amendment 116 (BSAI) LLP endorsement for BSAI trawl limited access yellowfin sole directed fishery	McCracken Mansfield Smoker	June 2017	PR: 9/29/17	PR: 10/4/17				
Amendment 117 (BSAI) 106 (GOA) Reclassifying squid to ecosystem component	Stram Mackey Sullivan	June 2017	PR: 11/21/17	PR: 11/21/17	PR: 3/21/18	Mar 27, 2018 83 FR 13117 EOC: 5/29/18		

Regulatory Amendments								
Authorizing a Recreational Quota Entity (RQE) to hold halibut QS	Marrinan Iverson Lepore	October 2016	PR: 5/16/17 FR: 1/28/18	PR: 5/23/17 FR: 2/5/18	PR: 9/6/17	N/A	Oct. 3 2017 82 FR 46016 EOC: 11/17/17	
Authorizing Area 4 IFQ transfer (leasing) to CDQ groups	Marrinan Warpinski Smoker	June 2017	PR: 10/2/17 FR: 3/30/18	PR: 10/19/17	PR: 1/30/18	N/A	Feb 23, 2018 83 FR 8028 EOC: 3/26/18	
Modify Nontrawl Lead Level 2 observer requirements	Evans Miller Meyer	June 2017	PR: 9/11/17 FR: 3/22/18	PR: 9/13/17 FR: 3/26/18	PR: 11/29/17	N/A	Dec 27, 2017 82 FR 61243 EOC: 1/26/18	
Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands 2018 and 2019 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish	Stram Whitney M. Watson	- NMFS -	PR: 10/17/17 FR: 12/15/17	PR: 10/20/17 FR: 1/3/18	PR: 11/20/17 FR: 2/7/18	N/A	Dec 8, 2017 82 FR 57906 EOC: 1/8/18	Feb 27, 2018 83 FR 8365 Effective: 2/27/18
Gulf of Alaska 2018 and 2019 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish	Armstrong Davis M. Watson	- NMFS -	PR: 10/13/17 FR: 12/19/17	PR: 10/15/17 FR: 12/20/17	PR: 11/20/17 FR: 2/5/18	N/A	Dec 8, 2017 82 FR 57924 EOC: 1/8/18	Mar 1, 2018 83 FR 8786 Effective: 3/1/18
2018 Halibut Annual Management Measures	Iverson Lepore	- IPHC -	FR: 2/16/18	FR: 2/20/18	FR: 2/23/18	N/A		Mar. 9. 2018 83 FR 10390 Effective: 3/8/18
2018 Interim Final Rule for Area 2C through 4 catch limits and charter management measures in Areas 2C and 3A	Merrill Lepore	- NMFS -	FR: 2/20/18	FR: 2/20/18	FR: 3/1/18	N/A		Mar 20, 2018 83 FR 12133 Effective: 3/19/18 EOC: 4/19/18
Close directed fishing for AFA and CR Program sideboard limits that are not large enough to support a directed fishery in the BSAI or GOA	Armstrong Davis M. Watson	February 2018				N/A		

Inseason Management Report

Catch during 2018 is through March 24, 2018 and is compared to catch during 2017 through March 25, 2017. All catch amounts are in metric tons. Additional information from daily catch reports and information bulletins are available at:

<https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries-catch-landings>

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands

Bering Sea Pollock

The 2018 Bering Sea pollock TAC is 1,364,341 mt compared to 1,345,000 mt in 2017. NMFS reallocated 1,900 mt of CDQ and 12,200 mt of Aleut Corporation pollock TAC from the Aleutian Islands to the CDQ and non-CDQ Bering Sea TACs. In 2017, fishing in the A season continued through the last week of April.

Bering Sea	2018 A season allocation	2018 A season catch	Percent taken
Inshore	268,249	197,232	74%
C/P	214,599	194,046	90%
Mothership	53,650	47,749	89%
CDQ	62,250	61,152	98%
Total	598,748	500,179	84%

Salmon in the Bering Sea Pollock Fisheries

Both PSC and rates are lower in 2018 relative to 2017.

Species	Chinook				Non-Chinook			
	2018		2017		2018		2017	
Year								
Amount	#	Rate ¹	#	Rate ¹	#	Rate ¹	#	Rate ¹
CDQ	905	1.47%	2,113	3.45%	55	0.09%	237	0.39%
Non-CDQ	6,038	1.36%	18,209	4.15%	253	0.06%	1,547	0.35%
Total	6,943	1.37%	20,322	4.06%	308	0.06%	1,784	0.36%

¹Rate is number of salmon per metric tons of groundfish.

Aleutian Islands Pollock

NMFS approved five catcher vessels and one shoreside processor to participate in the Aleut Corporations allocation of pollock in the Aleutian Islands. Some directed fishing of the current 2,500 mt allocation has occurred.

Aleutian Islands (AI) Pacific cod

In 2018, current fishing effort in the Aleutian Islands is low, and no AI or Western AI closures are projected at this time. Fourteen processors (catcher/processors and shoreplants) have reported 5,290 mt of Pacific cod in all targets, with three processors reporting in the Pacific cod target. In 2017, directed fishing in the AI remained open all year for sectors open for directed fishing. For the Western AI limit, directed fishing closed July 29, 2017.

Aleutian Islands Pacific cod set-aside

Catch for the AI shoreplant set-aside reached 1,000 mt by February 28, 2018. The set-aside was in place until March 15, 2018.

BSAI Pacific cod by Sector

BSAI Sector	2018				2017			
	A Season allocation	Catch Mar 24	A season closed	# of vessels Mar 24	A Season allocation	Catch Mar 25	A season closed	# of vessels Mar 25
CDQ	13,086	9,721	n/a	36	15,369	13,298	n/a	35
Hook-and-line C/P	45,045	34,371	n/a	24	52,893	39,112	n/a	28
Pot C/P	1,387	1,407	Jan 20	5	1,629	1,626	Jan 25	4
Pot CV >= 60 ft	7,770	7,709	Jan 19	31	9,123	9,378	Jan 25	30
Hook-and-line/Pot CVs < 60 ft	5,027	4,937	Jan 23	23	5,959	6,396	Jan 29	22
Jig	129	0	n/a	0	96	0	n/a	0
Trawl CV ²	29,768	28,938	Feb 11/ Mar 4	97	34,962	37,209	Feb 23	95
AFA C/P	3,140	2,571	n/a	16	3,688	3,139	n/a	16
Amendment 80 C/P	18,293	5,903	n/a	19	21,485	8,200	n/a	17
Total	123,645	95,557		251	145,204	24,174	118,357	247

¹ NMFS reallocated 1,400 mt in 2018 and 1,700 mt in 2017 of the A season jig allocation to the hook-and-line or pot gear less than 60 ft length annual allocation.

² For the trawl CV sector in 2018, directed fishing for the Bering Sea Pacific cod A season limitation closed on February 11, and directed fishing for the total BSAI A season on March 4, 2018.

Pacific cod target - trawl catcher vessels

In 2018, 61 trawl CVs targeting Pacific cod reported 27,745 mt relative to 57 trawl CVs targeting Pacific cod reporting 34,853 mt in 2017. The 4,425 mt B season allocation becomes available April 1 for 48 hours. NMFS closed directed fishing on April 3, 2018.

BSAI Flatfish (includes CDQ)

The 2018 flatfish total catch is lower relative to 2017. The largest decrease in catch is for rock sole of 4,887 mt.

Species	2018			2017		
	Catch	TAC	% Taken	Catch	TAC	% Taken
Alaska plaice	4,266	16,100	26%	4,037	13,000	31%
Arrowtooth flounder	366	13,621	3%	237	14,000	2%
Flathead sole	1,987	14,500	14%	2,250	14,500	16%
Greenland turbot	10	4,356	0.2%	15	3,719	0.4%
Kamchatka flounder	47	5,000	1%	31	5,000	1%
Other flatfish	324	4,000	8%	412	2,500	16%
Rock sole	9,977	47,100	21%	14,864	47,100	32%
Yellowfin sole	28,369	154,000	18%	28,358	154,000	18%
Total	45,346	258,677	18%	50,204	253,819	20%

BSAI Atka mackerel and Pacific ocean perch (includes CDQ)

The 2018 total catch is higher relative to 2017.

Species	2018			2017		
	Catch	TAC	% Taken	Catch	TAC	% Taken
Atka mackerel	19,695	71,000	28%	15,345	65,000	24%
Pacific ocean perch	816	35,582	2%	744	33,250	2%

Gulf of Alaska**Pot gear for IFQ sablefish fishery in the GOA**

Currently for 2018, 19 vessels have registered for 9,130 pot tags. No catch by pot gear has been reported for 2018. In 2017 for the entire year, 25 vessels registered for 11,538 pot tags. In 2017, 18 vessels reported 898 mt or 10% of IFQ sablefish total catch and 16 mt of retained halibut in the IFQ fishery using pot gear.

Pacific cod - Western GOA

All sectors reached their A season allocations, except the jig sector remain open. Also, the A season directed fisheries did not open the hook-and-line catcher vessel and trawl catcher/processor sectors.

Sector	2018				2017			
	A season allocation	Catch Mar 24	A season closed	# of vessels Mar 24	A season allocation	Catch Mar 25	A season closed	# of vessels Mar 25
Hook-and-line C/P	607	590	Mar 16	<3	2,700	2,479	n/a	5
Hook-and-line CV	39	14	Jan 1	<3	173	44	n/a	5
Jig	51	19	n/a	4	381	48	n/a	5
Pot CV/CP	1,103	1,208	Feb 1	14	4,904	5,160	Feb 16	35
Trawl CV	1,543	1,347	Feb 23	18	6,861	7,489	Mar 8	29
Trawl C/P	50	0	Jan 20	0	223	C	n/a	C
Total	3,395	3,179		38	15,242	15,220		79

Pacific cod - Central GOA

All sectors reached their A season allocations, except the A season directed fisheries did not open for the jig, trawl catcher vessel, and trawl catcher/processor sectors.

Sector	2018				2017			
	A season allocation	Catch Mar 24	A season closed	# of vessels Mar 24	A season allocation	Catch Mar 25	A season closed	# of vessels Mar 25
Hook-and-line C/P	248	465	Mar 6	<3	1,347	849	n/a	7
Hook-and-line CV <50 ft	562	511	Mar 1	17	3,056	1,745	n/a	42
Hook-and-line CV ≥50 ft	338	291	Mar 14	7	1,840	398	n/a	11
Jig	37	0	Jan 1	0	199	17	n/a	19
Pot CV/CP	1,075	1,161	Feb 14	14	7,349	6,072	Feb 23	55
Trawl CV	1,274	107	Jan 20	43	5,433	1,158	n/a	46
Trawl C/P	121	6	Jan 20	<3	657	C	Jan 20	C
Total	3,653	2,343		85	19,881	10,239		180

In 2017, NMFS reallocated of 1,500 mt from trawl CVs to pot CV/CP.

Pollock

Most of the A and B season allocations have been reached. However, the area 620 B season directed fishery did not open because the allocation did not support the projected effort.

2018 Seasons	610	620	630	640
A season allocation	1,317	27,314	9,025	6,833 (annual)
A season catch	1,080	28,398	9,244	1,567 (annual)
A season closure	Mar 9	Feb 23	Feb 14	n/a
B season allocation	1,317	32,155	4,184	n/a
B season catch	2,033	33,122	0	n/a
B season closure	Mar 12	Mar 23	Mar 10	n/a

Salmon PSC Limits in the GOA

In 2018, Chinook salmon PSC is 6,600 salmon lower, and the percent of Chinook per metric tons of groundfish is lower relative to 2017 for fisheries with PSC limits.

Chinook Salmon	2018 Limit	2018 PSC (Rate ²)	2017 PSC (Rate ²)
Total	n/a	5,749 (7%)	12,349 (14%)
Western GOA pollock	6,684	178 (6%)	522 (16%)
Central GOA pollock	18,316	5,198 (7%)	9,681 (14%)
Western/Central trawl CV ¹	3,060	373 (8%)	2,013 (16%)
Western/Central trawl CP ¹	4,080	0	133 (0%)

¹Includes incentive buffers for 2017 and 2018 Western/Central trawl CV limit (360 Chinook), and Western/Central trawl CP limit (480 Chinook).

Non-Chinook Salmon	2018 PSC (Rate ²)	2017 PSC (Rate ²)
GOA Total	52 (0%)	84 (0.14%)

²Rate is number of salmon per metric tons of groundfish.

Halibut Mortality Data

In 2018 relative to 2017, the total halibut mortality in the BSAI is 56 mt higher and in the GOA is 167 mt lower.

Area, Gear, and Sector	2018			2017		
	Halibut mortality	Groundfish	Rate	Halibut mortality	Groundfish	Rate
BSAI Total	679	666,983	0.1%	624	680,821	0.09%
Amendment 80	269	61,050	0.44%	198	60,081	0.33%
BSAI trawl limited access	328	488,368	0.07%	334	493,341	0.07%
Non-trawl Pacific cod	46	43,092	0.11%	63	48,583	0.13%
Non-trawl Other	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
CDQ	36	74,472	0.05%	29	78,815	0.04%
GOA Total	115	83,088	0.14%	282	94,444	0.30 %
Trawl, Deep-water	78	3,350	2.3%	168	4,517	3.7 %
Trawl, Shallow-water	12	77,235	0.02%	27	81,252	0.03%
Hook-and-line CV/CP	25	2,504	1.0%	87	8,675	1.0%
BSAI/GOA Total	794	750,071	0.11%	906	775,265	0.12%