



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Action Memo

File #: GF 13-025, **Version:** 1

Eric Olson, Chairman
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SUBJECT:

Chinook salmon PSC limit rollover for GOA non-pollock trawl catcher vessels

ESTIMATED TIME:

8 hours (all Groundfish Issues)

ACTION REQUIRED:

Take final action on measures to roll over unused Chinook salmon PSC from the Central GOA Rockfish Program catcher vessel sector to other non-pollock catcher vessel fisheries.

BACKGROUND:

This analysis considers a set of alternatives that could allow unused Chinook salmon prohibited species catch (PSC) to be rolled over from the Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program's catcher vessel (CV) sector to support other CV fisheries that occur later in the year. If an action alternative is selected, it would be added to the Council's final recommendation for management measures to address Chinook salmon PSC in the Central and Western Gulf of Alaska (GOA) non-pollock trawl fisheries, as voted on at the June 2013 meeting. The 'no action' alternative would result in a final recommendation that is identical to the Council's preferred alternative for the related action. The Council designated a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) at its October 2013 meeting.

This "trailing" analysis primarily considers whether or not incorporating a Chinook PSC rollover might reduce the efficacy of the "uncertainty pool" mechanism that the Council has already selected for its final recommendation. The document also examines the extent to which the Council's existing preferred alternative might relatively disadvantage some CV fisheries relative to others.

Selecting the 'no action' alternative would apportion 1,200 Chinook salmon PSC to the CV sector of the Central GOA Rockfish Program fishery, resulting in a 2,700 Chinook PSC annual hard cap for all other non-pollock CV activity. Both CV sectors would retain the ability to earn a "buffer" of additional PSC for the year following one in which that sector performed to a defined standard of Chinook avoidance.

Alternatives 2 and 3 would make some amount of the Rockfish Program CV sector's unused Chinook PSC available to the non-Rockfish Program CV sector on October 1. That amount would depend on how much of the Rockfish Program CV sector's 1,200 Chinook apportionment remains used on that date; these alternatives and their options differ in how much of the unused PSC may be rolled over. Under either alternative, all sectors would again remain eligible to earn a PSC buffer in the following year if their Chinook avoidance meets a certain standard.

Alternative 4 would not limit the amount of unused Chinook PSC that could be rolled over from the Rockfish Program CV sector to other CV fisheries, nor would it set a specific date on which the rollover would occur. If the rollover is to occur before the end of the Rockfish Program fishery (November 15), *all* Rockfish Program cooperatives must have "checked out" of the Program fishery. Selecting Alternative 4 would make the Rockfish Program CV sector ineligible to earn a PSC buffer by achieving a certain Chinook avoidance standard in the preceding year.

Alternative 5 (the Council's PPA) would establish an initial date-certain Chinook PSC rollover on October 1.

The rollover could occur even if some cooperatives are still active in the Rockfish Program fishery. The amount of PSC rolled over is determined by the Rockfish Program CV sector's unused PSC on October 1, less some amount that is held back to support Rockfish Program fishing between October 1 and November 15. There are two options for the amount of PSC held back from the initial rollover: 50 or 100 Chinook salmon. The PPA would make the Rockfish Program CV sector ineligible to earn a PSC buffer for the following year, so the Chinook PSC that is held back serves only to support the late-season Rockfish Program fishery. When that fishery closes on November 15, all remaining Chinook PSC allowances would then be rolled over to support other non-pollock CV activity.

The EA summarizes what was presented in June 2013, since none of the alternatives under consideration would allow an annual amount of Chinook salmon PSC that is greater than the levels previously analyzed. The document also includes an IRFA, which uses the PPA as the baseline for comparing significant alternatives to the proposed action.

A draft of the analysis was mailed to the Council in mid-November 2013. The Executive Summary is attached as **Item C-3(a)**.