



## C2 Salmon Bycatch Reports

April 2023 Council Meeting

### Action Memo

- Council Staff: Dr. Diana Stram
- Other Presenters: Dr. Wes Larson, Chuck Guthrie, Dr. Pat Barry, Dr. Chris Kondzela, Susie Zagorski, James Mize, Stephanie Madsen, Austin Eastabrooks, Jim Harmon
- Action Required: review (a) Chinook/chum genetics reports for BS, GOA; (b) pollock IPA and Sea Share reports; (c) Salmon Bycatch Committee recommendations- action as necessary

### Background

Under this agenda item, the Council will receive its annual update on a range of scientific and industry reports related to salmon bycatch, genetics and a report from the Council's Salmon Bycatch Committee. These regularly occurring updates help the Council to understand the relative impact of salmon bycatch and how its salmon bycatch management programs, particularly in the Bering Sea pollock fishery, are working. The ordering of presentations and information for the Council will start with a series of scientific reports on salmon bycatch genetics. The Council will also receive industry reports from the representatives of the Incentive Plan Agreements on their efforts to avoid Chinook and chum salmon in 2022 and an update from SeaShare on their efforts to distribute donated salmon (and halibut) to food banks. Finally the Council will receive the report from the Salmon Bycatch Committee's meetings in January and March of 2023. The Council's motion from December directing the committee's efforts is posted to the eAgenda.

### BSAI and GOA salmon genetics reports

Genetics reports on stock of origin of Chinook and chum salmon bycatch are available for the 2021 (Chinook) and 2022 (chum) Bering Sea pollock fishery, and the 2021 (Chinook) GOA pollock fishery, GOA rockfish (and arrowtooth) CV trawl fishery and the GOA non-pollock CP trawl fisheries. These reports are posted and NOAA genetics staff will be available to present these results. An overview of program modifications and improvements to analyses will also be provided by staff.

### Industry Reports

#### Chinook salmon Incentive Plan Agreements annual reports

Under regulations to implement the Amendment 91 Bering Sea Chinook salmon bycatch management program, annual reports are required of each IPA entity and are provided to the Council at the April Council meeting. Regulations at 50 CFR 679.21(f)(13) stipulates that IPA entities report annually on the following:

- Incentive measures in effect in the previous year;
- How incentive measures affected individual vessels;
- How incentive measures affected salmon savings beyond current levels;
- IPA amendments approved by NMFS since the last annual report and the reasons for amendments;
- Sub-allocations to each participating vessel;
- Number of Chinook PSC and amount of pollock (mt) at the start of each fishing season;
- Number of Chinook PSC and amount of pollock (mt) caught at the end of each season;
- In-season transfers among entities of Chinook salmon PSC or pollock among AFA cooperatives;
- Transfers among IPA vessels; and amount of pollock (mt) transferred.

Regulations promulgated under Amendment 110 as it relates to IPAs also incorporated chum salmon bycatch into the IPAs in lieu of the exemption to the Chum Salmon Savings Area previously enacted under Amendment 84. Some description of how chum salmon is managed under the IPAs is included in reports from the IPAs. Reports from each of the three IPAs are posted and IPA representatives will be available to provide verbal reports.

#### SeaShare report

SeaShare provides an annual update on the Prohibited Species Donation Program (PSDP) efforts to provide donated salmon and halibut PSC as well as other non-PSC fish to food donations programs in the GOA and BSAI communities as well as communities across the lower 48 states. Mr. Jim Harmon will be available to provide an overview of program modifications as well as 2021 donations.

### **Salmon Bycatch Committee**

The Council initiated a Salmon Bycatch Committee comprised of Tribal and industry representatives, as well as other experts to provide recommendations on: 1) the discussion paper on chum salmon bycatch; 2) the findings and recommendations from the State of Alaska's Bycatch Task Force and the work of the Western Alaska salmon subcommittee; and 3) current information, including Local, Traditional, and Subsistence knowledge, and needed research to determine what is driving western Alaska salmon declines.

At its December 2022 meeting, the Council directed the committee to develop recommendations for potential regulatory and non-regulatory chum salmon bycatch management measures, including an overall bycatch cap. The committee was directed to specifically develop alternative management measures with focus on avoidance of Western Alaska chum salmon. The Council indicated that the committee could recommend concepts or specific components of alternatives for metrics to evaluate bycatch performance, including management measures linked to abundance indices or other triggers and metrics to evaluate bycatch performance. The committee met in January and March 2023 to address the Council's requests, both reports are posted to the agenda and the recommendations will be summarized at this meeting. **The Council will review the committee's final recommendations for a purpose and need statement and concepts for alternatives at this meeting.**