



C2 IFQ Omnibus Amendments & IFQ Committee Report

October 2021 Council Meeting

Action Memo

Council Staff: Sara Cleaver (analysis), Sarah Marrinan (IFQ Committee report)
Other Presenters: Abby Jahn (NMFS AKRO SF), Alicia M. Miller (NMFS AKRO SF)
Action Required: 1. Review the Initial Review Draft of the EA/RIR and determine whether to release for final action
2. Consider whether to select a Preliminary Preferred Alternative
3. Review IFQ Committee Report

IFQ Omnibus Analysis

Under this agenda item, the Council will review an analysis on several revisions to Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program regulations and will also receive the IFQ Committee Report. This analysis evaluates five elements relevant to pot gear used to fish IFQ, including gear specifications and configuration requirements, pot limits, and gear retrieval requirements, and one element to authorize jig gear as a legal gear type for the harvest of sablefish IFQ. The Council's motion also included an alternative to temporarily remove the Adak community quota entity (CQE) residency requirement for five years, in response to public comment. This is analyzed as a separate alternative in this document.

Pots were implemented as legal gear in the GOA in 2017 (GOA Amendment 101), and in the BSAI in 2020 (BSAI Amendment 118), due to increasing whale depredation in the HAL fisheries. The Council's motion for Amendment 101 included pot limits, gear retrieval requirements, gear specifications, and a provision to allow the retention of incidentally caught halibut.

At its April 2021 Council meeting, the Council received the Gulf of Alaska ([GOA Sablefish Pots Review](#)), which summarized 3-4 years of fishery data and highlighted the expanding use of pot gear in the GOA IFQ fisheries. The Council initiated this analysis in response to public testimony and advisory body input that highlighted aspects of fishery management that could be improved within the Program.

The intent of these proposed actions is to increase operational efficiency in the IFQ fisheries and provide more opportunities for the Adak CQE to fully harvest its IFQ allocation. This analysis highlights the possible environmental and socio-economic impacts of these actions and provides a discussion of management and enforcement considerations relevant to these potential revisions to IFQ regulations.

IFQ Committee Report

The IFQ Committee met Monday, September 27, 2021 via web conference. The Committee meeting's [eAgenda](#) includes all documents and a list of oral testimony sign ups. The Committee reviewed the IFQ Omnibus Analysis and provided input to the Council in its report attached under this agenda item. The Committee also received NMFS updates relating to IFQ temporary transfers, cost recovery, a rulemaking update on removing GOA sablefish IFQ pot tags, and staffing updates.