



## ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME REPORT TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Fisheries managed by the State of Alaska in 2023 include those for salmon, crab, scallop, and groundfish.

### Chinook Salmon

The Southeast Alaska summer troll fishery opened on July 1, 2023, as normal. The summer fishery targets the annual Pacific Salmon Treaty Chinook salmon catch limit during multiple open periods during the July 1 to September 30 timeframe. During the summer season, most waters of the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat area are open to commercial trolling, including outer coastal waters in the EEZ and excluding those waters described in 5 AAC 29.150. Chinook harvest during the summer troll fishery was 95,945 fish and 94,472 of those fish are estimated to be Treaty Chinook salmon (Figure 1).

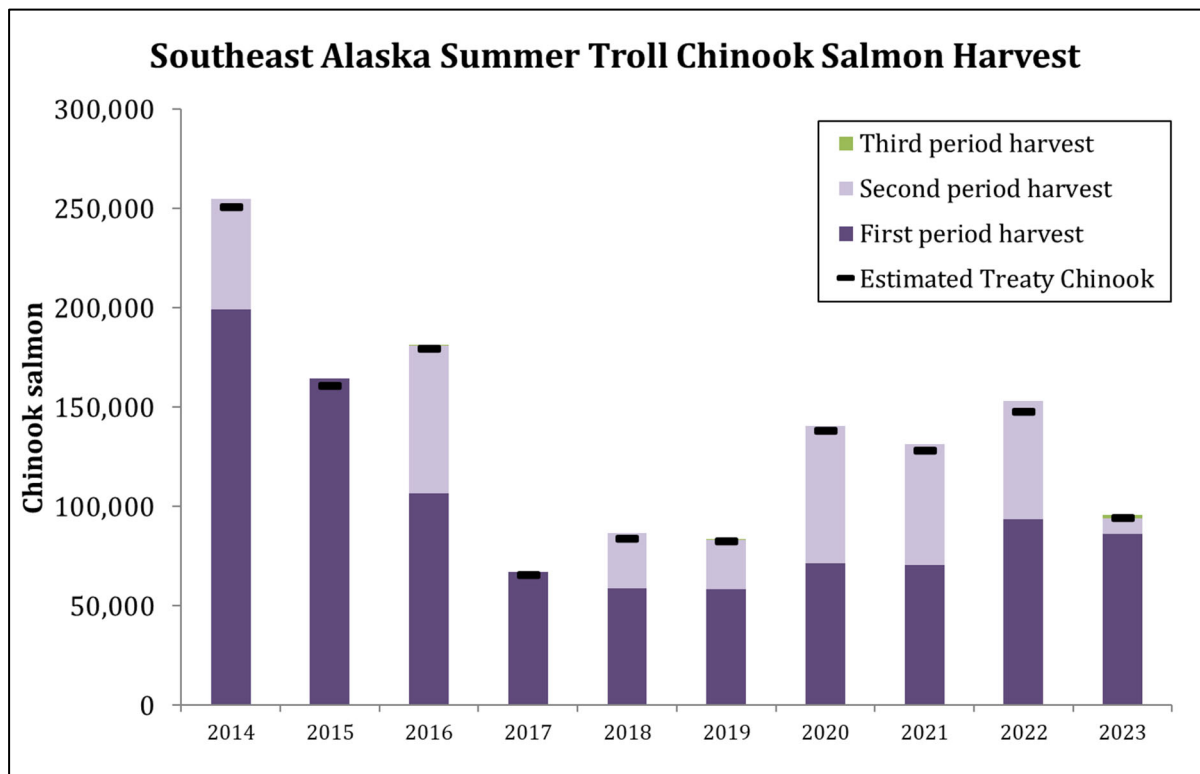


Figure 1. Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon summer troll harvest by harvest period, 2014-2023.

## Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab

The 2023/24 Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery opened on July 1, 2023, for the Community Development Quota (CDQ) fishery and on August 1, 2023, for the Adak Community Allocation (ACA) and Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) fisheries. All fisheries closed by regulation on April 30, 2024. The overfishing level (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) are set by the Council and ADF&G sets the total allowable catch (TAC) so that total removals do not exceed the ABC. For the 2023/24 fishing year, the Aleutian Islands golden king crab TAC is 5.53 million pounds, apportioned east and west of 174° west longitude. The Eastern Aleutian Islands golden king crab (EAG) TAC is 3.72 million pounds, and the Western Aleutian Islands golden king crab (WAG) TAC is 1.81 million pounds. Ten percent of the EAG TAC is allocated to the CDQ fishery and ten percent of the WAG TAC is allocated to the ACA fishery. To date, 1.14 million pounds have been harvested in the WAG fishery and harvest in the EAG fishery remains confidential (Figure 2).

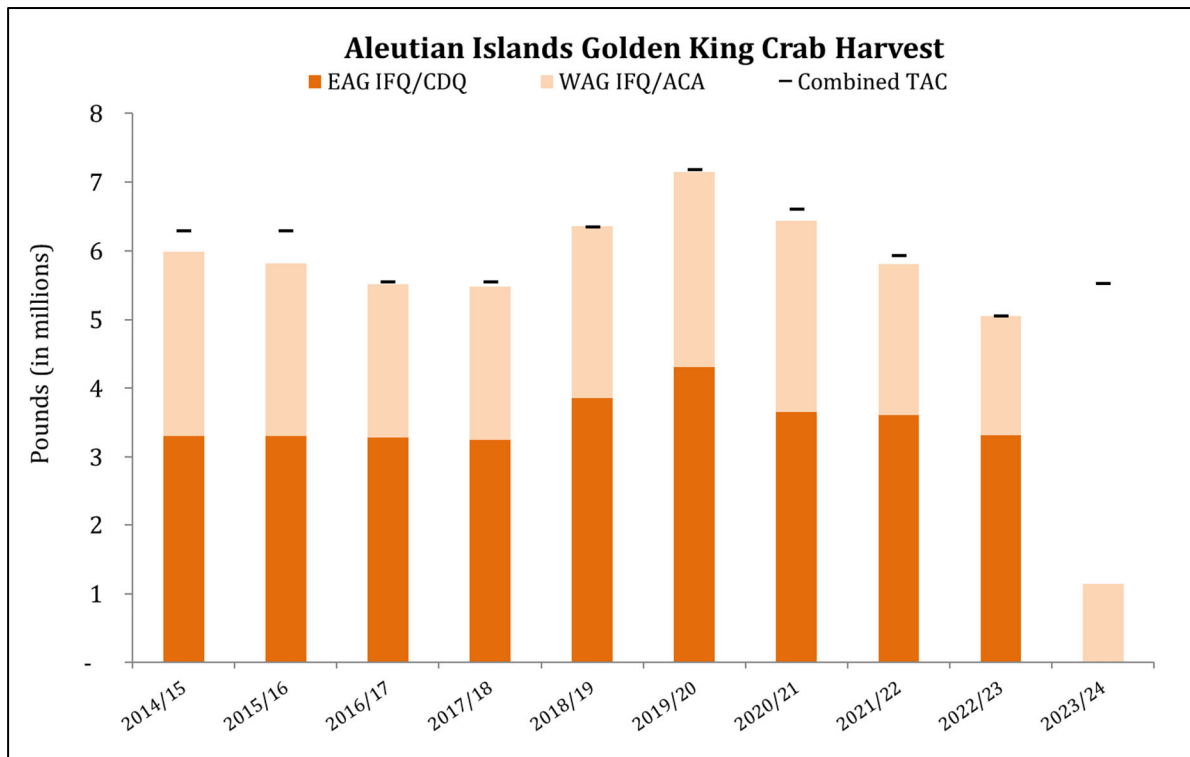


Figure 2. Aleutian Islands golden king crab harvest by area, 2014/15 – 2023/24 seasons.

### Bristol Bay Red King Crab

The 2023/24 Bristol Bay red king crab fishery opened October 15, 2023, after a two-season closure, with a TAC of 2.15 million pounds (Figure 3). Ten percent of the TAC is allocated to the CDQ fishery. The TAC has been fully harvested by 31 vessels and catch rates this season averaged 20 crab per pot which is below the ten-year average catch of 26 crab per pot and similar to the 2020/21 catch rate of 21 crab per pot.

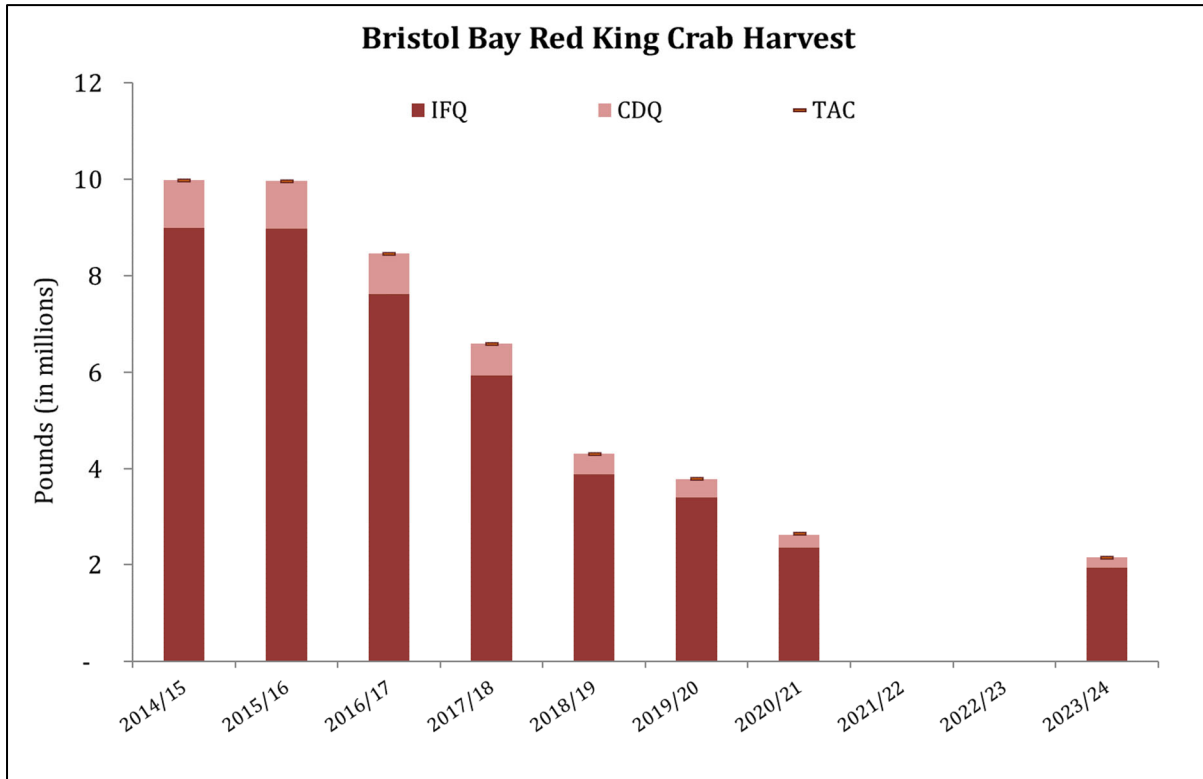


Figure 3. Bristol Bay red king crab harvest, 2014/15 – 2023/24 seasons.

### Eastern Bering Sea Tanner Crab

The 2023/24 Bering Sea District Tanner crab fishery opened in both the western area (west of 166° west longitude) and eastern area (between 166° west longitude and 163° west longitude) on October 15, 2023. TAC in the western area is 1.32 million pounds and TAC in the eastern area is 760,000 pounds; 10% of the TAC in each area is allocated to the CDQ fishery. Current harvest in the western area is 136,000 pounds by seven vessels and harvest in the eastern area is 455,000 pounds by thirteen vessels (Figure 4). Both areas closed by regulation on March 31, 2024.

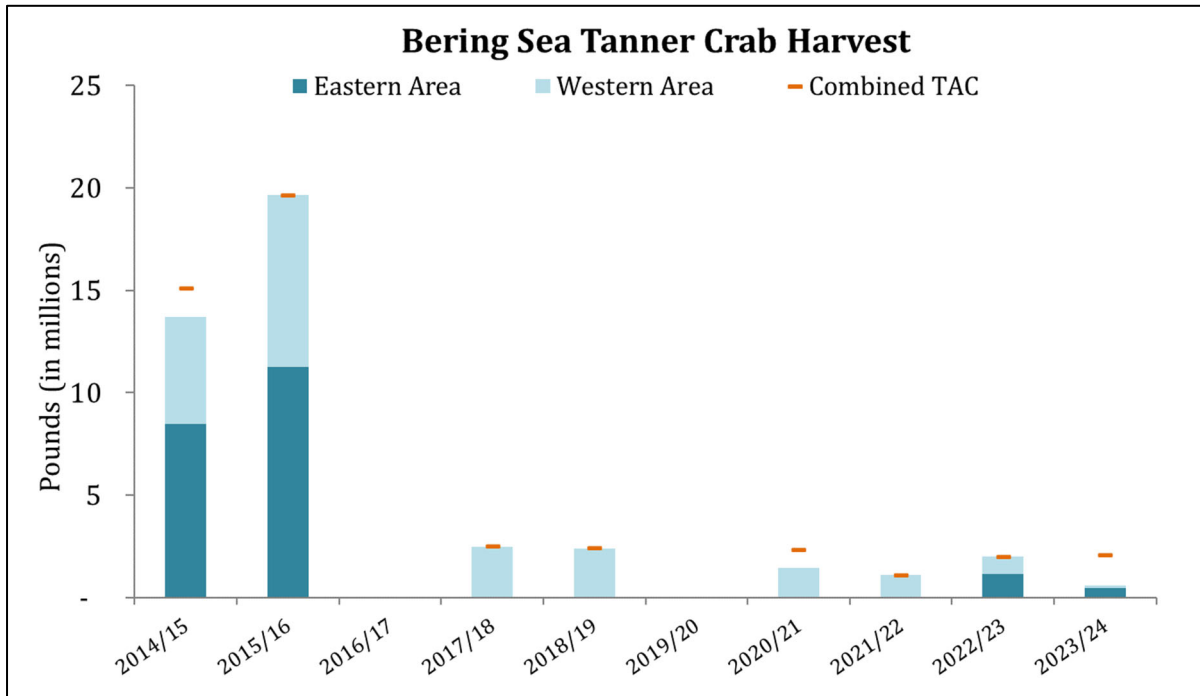


Figure 4. Bering Sea Tanner crab harvest by area, 2014/15 – 2023/24 seasons.

### Norton Sound Red King Crab

The Norton Sound red king crab guideline harvest level (GHL) for 2023 is 392,500 pounds with 92% allocated to the summer season and 8% to the winter season; 7.5% of the total GHL is allocated to the CDQ fishery, available for harvest during the winter or summer season. The 2023 winter commercial fishery closed on April 30 with a total harvest of 11,115 pounds by 8 permit holders (Figure 4) and the remaining winter commercial GHL was rolled over to the summer fishery for a total summer GHL of 351,947 pounds. The summer open access fishery opened on June 21 and closed on July 19 with a total open access summer fishery harvest of 386,006 pounds.

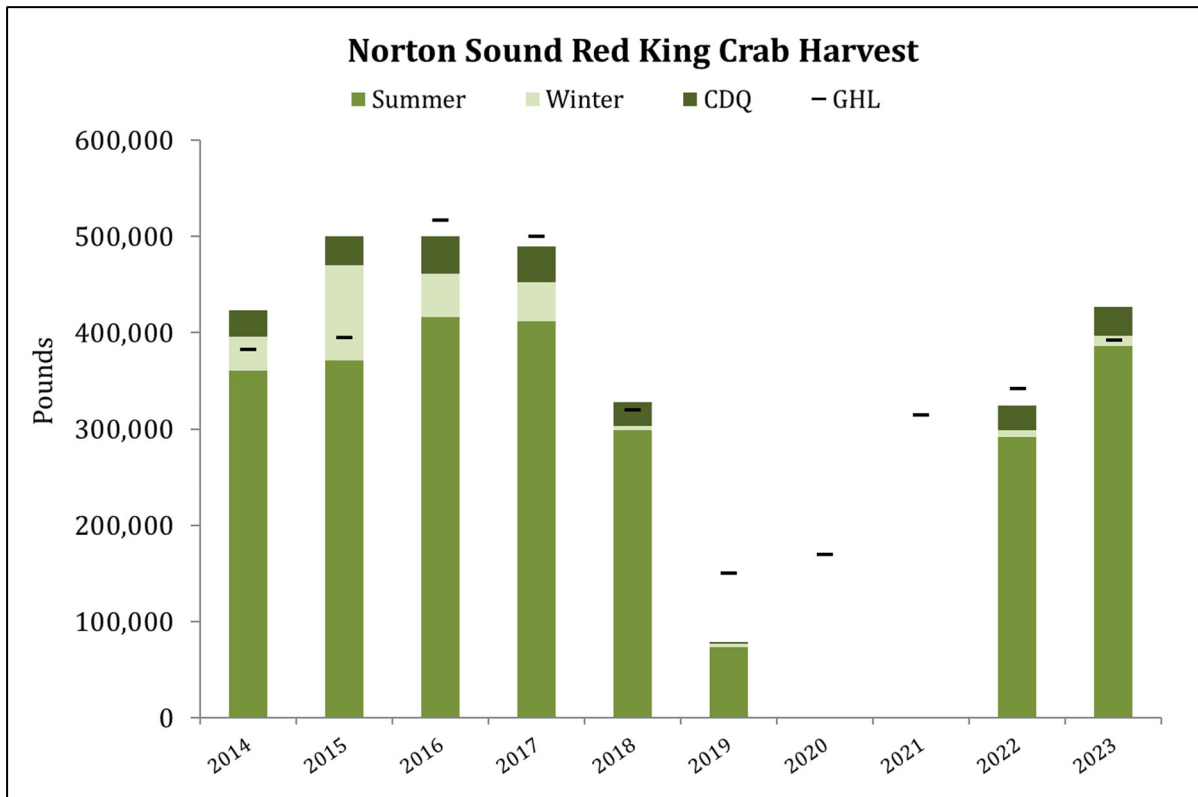


Figure 4. Norton Sound red king crab harvest, 2014-2023.

## Scallop

Weathervane scallop fisheries in the Yakutat, Prince William Sound, Kodiak, Alaska Peninsula, Dutch Harbor, and Bering Sea Registration Areas opened on July 1, 2023. The cumulative GHL for the 2023/24 season is 374,700 pounds of shucked meats (Table 1). The Kodiak Northeast District closed on July 14, the Prince William Sound West Kayak Subsection closed on July 23, the Yakutat Area closed August 27, and the Kodiak Shelikof District closed on September 23, 2023. All other areas remain open and to date a total of 318,221 pounds of shucked meats have been harvested (Figure 5).

Table 1. Alaska Weathervane scallop GHLs for 2023/24 and crab bycatch limits.

Registration Area	District/Management Unit	GHL (pounds of shucked meat)	Bycatch Limits (number of crab)	
			Tanner Crab	King Crab
Yakutat		145,000	N/A	N/A
Prince William Sound	East Kayak Subsection	<i>Closed</i>	N/A	N/A
	West Kayak Subsection	7,200	N/A	N/A
Cook Inlet	Kamishak Bay District	<i>Closed</i>	N/A	N/A
Kodiak	Northeast District	40,000	24,000	25
	Shelikof District	100,000	60,000	25
	Southwest District	35,000	21,000	25
	Southeast District	15,000	9,000	25
	Semidi Islands District <sup>1</sup>	<i>Exploratory Area (Commissioner's Permit)</i>		
Alaska Peninsula	Central (160° to 161° W. long)	7,500	4,500	25
	Unimak Bight <sup>1</sup>	7,500	4,500	25
Dutch Harbor	Bering Sea waters	5,000	3,750	10
	Pacific Ocean waters	5,000	3,750	10
Bering Sea		7,500	18,750	100
			<i>C. opilio &amp; hybrids</i>	
			11,250	

<sup>1</sup> Commissioner's Permit required to harvest scallops in these areas.

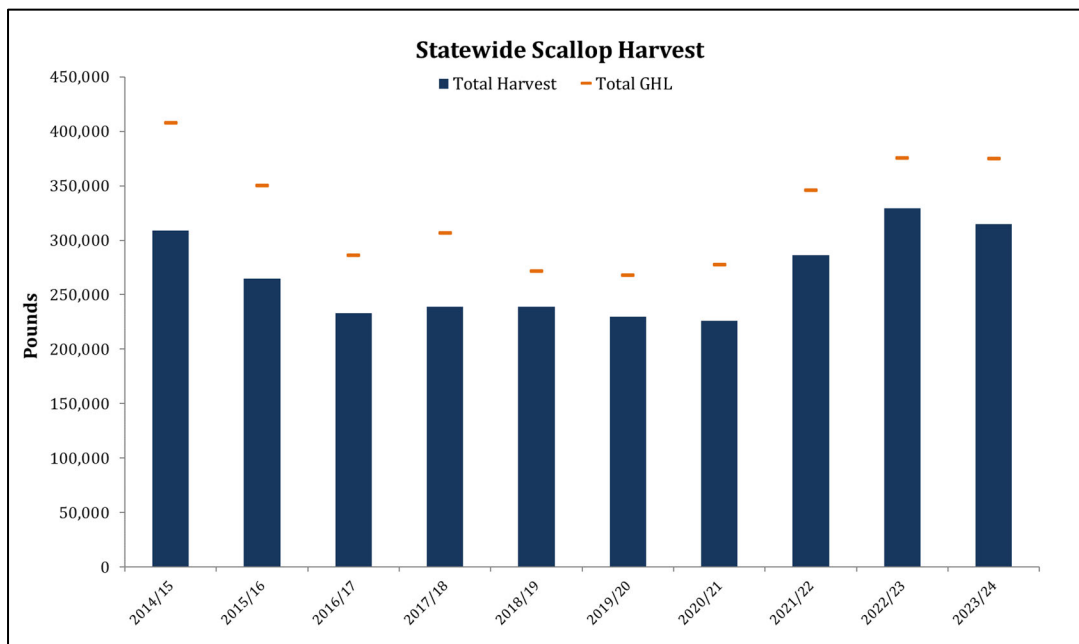


Figure 5. Statewide scallop harvest and GHL, 2014/15-2023/24 seasons.

## Pollock

The state-waters directed pollock fishery occurs in Prince William Sound and opened on January 20, 2023, with a GHL of 7.31 million pounds. The Inside District is divided into three sections: Hinchinbrook, Knight Island, and Bainbridge with harvest from any section restricted to 60% of the GHL or 4.39 million pounds in 2023. Overall bycatch is limited to 5% of the directed walleye pollock weight, annually. ADF&G sets bycatch limits by Emergency Order for salmon (0.04%), rockfish (0.5%), shark species (0.96%), squid (3.0%), and other species (0.5%). Vessels must adhere to trip limits of 300,000 pounds of pollock and logbooks are required for every trip. On January 30, the Hinchinbrook Section closed because harvest had reached 60% of the GHL. The Knight Island and Bainbridge sections closed on March 28 with a total fishery harvest of 7.17 million pounds (Figure 6).

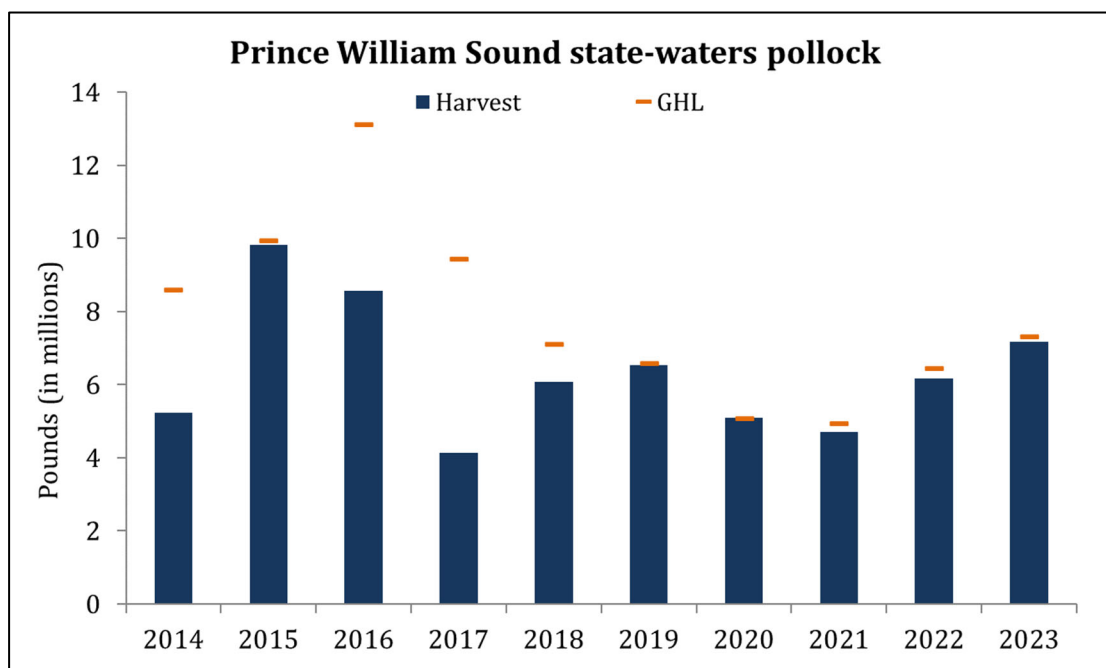


Figure 6. Prince William Sound pollock harvest and GHL, 2014-2023.

## Pacific Cod

State-water Pacific cod fisheries are established in Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Chignik, South Alaska Peninsula, and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Management Areas. The GHLS are calculated as a percentage of area ABCs and 2023 GHLS are as follows:

<b>State Water Pacific Cod GHL and Harvest</b>					
<b>State Management Area</b>	<b>ABC and GHL percentage in regulation</b>		<b>Gear</b>	<b>2023 GHL (pounds)</b>	<b>2023 GHL (mt)</b>
Prince William Sound	EGOA - 25%		Jig/Pot	193,456	88
			Longline	1,096,249	497
Chignik	8.75%		Jig	286,074	130
			Pot	2,574,670	1,168
Kodiak	12.50%	CGOA - 25%	Jig	2,043,389	927
			Pot	2,043,389	927
Cook Inlet	3.75%		Jig	183,907	83
			Pot	1,042,139	473
South Alaska Peninsula	WGOA - 30%		Jig	740,481	336
			Pot	4,196,059	1,903
Dutch Harbor Subdistrict	Bering Sea - 12%		Jig	100,000	45
			Pot	38,316,000	17,380
Aleutian Islands Subdistrict	Aleutian Islands - 39%		All	11,875,000	5,386



### Prince William Sound

The 2023 GHL for Prince William Sound (Eastern Gulf of Alaska) is 1.290 million pounds and is allocated 85% to longline gear and 15% to pot and jig gear. The state-waters fishery opened to vessels fishing with pot gear on February 27 and closed on April 3. State-waters opened for vessels fishing with longline gear on March 10 and closed on March 23. Vessels using longline gear harvested one million pounds and vessels using pot gear harvested 261,644 pounds (Figure 7).

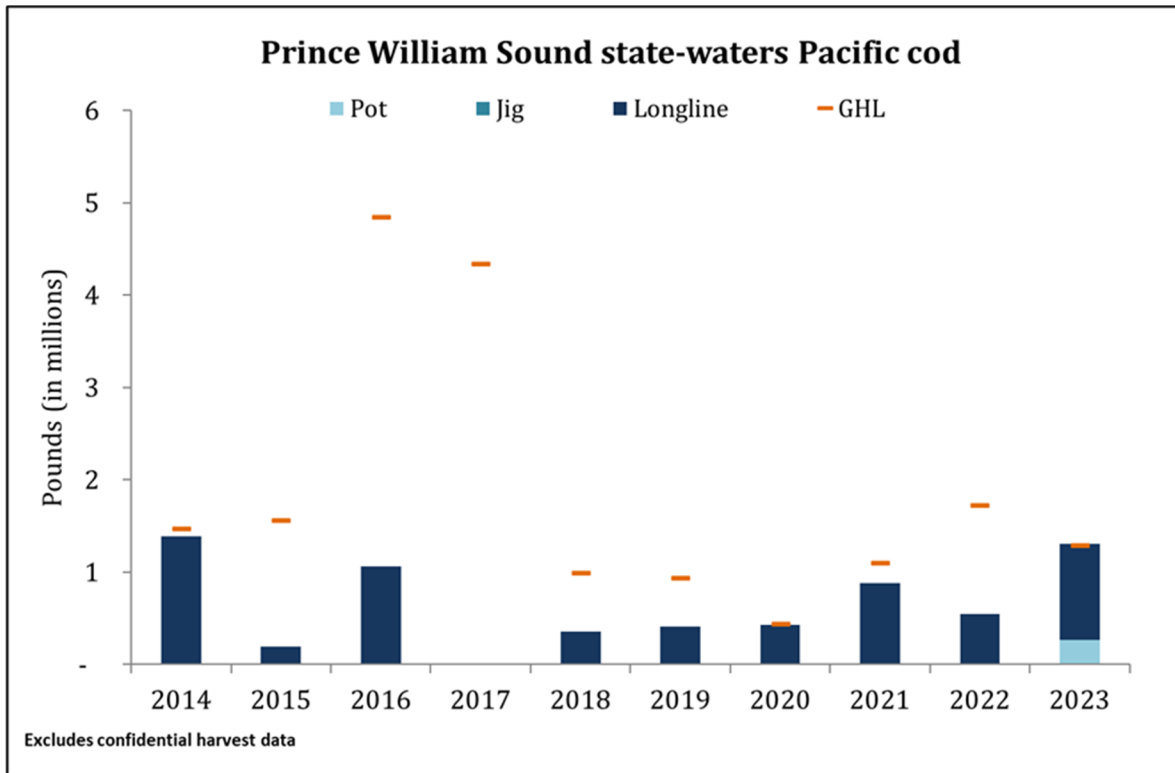


Figure 7. Prince William Sound Pacific cod harvest by gear and GH L, 2014-2023.

### Chignik

The 2023 GH L for the Chignik Area (Central Gulf of Alaska) is 2.86 million pounds and is allocated 90% to pot gear and 10% to jig gear. The state-waters fishery opened to vessels fishing with pot gear on March 5 and to vessels fishing with jig gear on March 15. The Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery management plan allows unharvested Pacific cod to be taken on or after August 15 with either pot or jig gear and for gear limits to be removed. Through July 31, less than 25% of the state-waters Pacific cod pot gear allocation had been harvested and no state-waters harvest had occurred with jig gear. Beginning August 15, pot or jig gear could be used to harvest the remaining GH L and gear limits were removed. The state-waters season will remain open until the GH L is achieved or until the fishery closes by regulation on December 31, 2023. Harvest is confidential.

## Kodiak

The 2023 state-waters GHL for the Kodiak Area (Central Gulf of Alaska) is 4.087 million pounds and is allocated 50 percent to mechanical jig and hand troll gears and 50 percent to pot gear. The state-waters fishery opened to vessels using pot gear on March 5 and closed on March 15, with a total harvest of 2.2 million pounds (Figure 8). The jig fishery opened on January 1 and closed on April 22, with a total harvest of 2.1 million pounds.

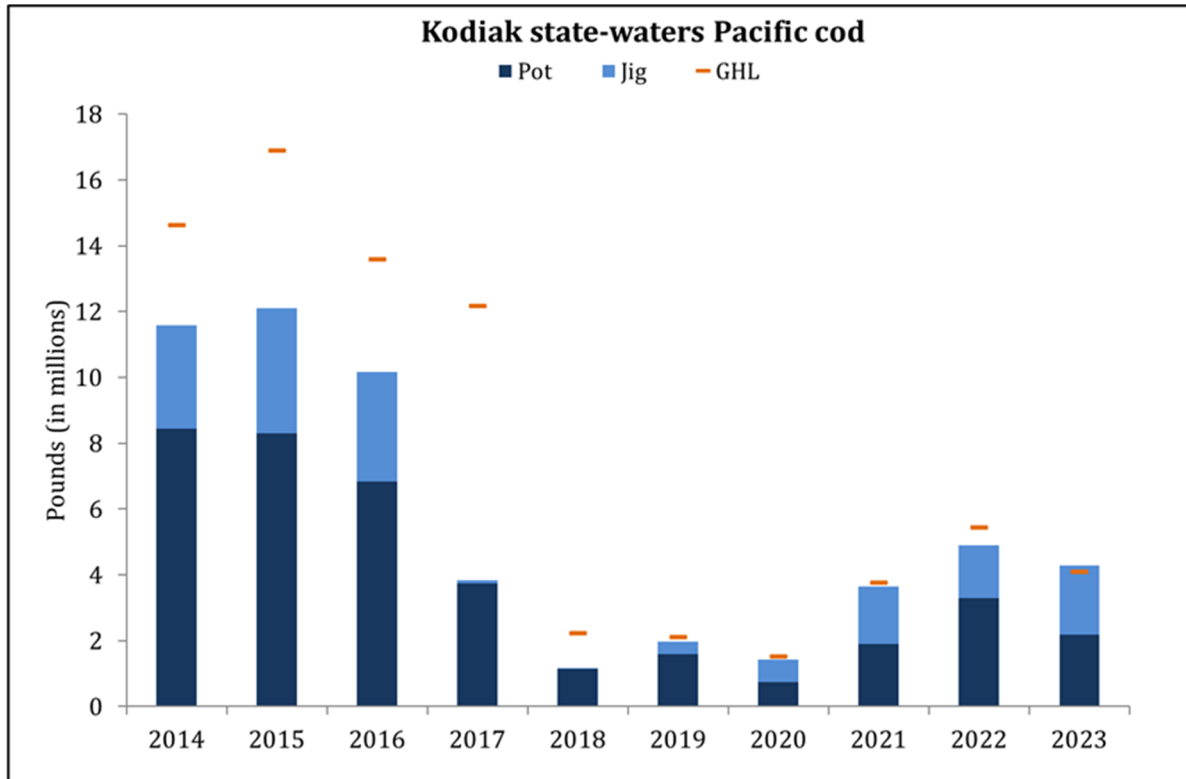


Figure 8. Annual Cook Inlet Pacific cod harvest by gear and GHL, 2014-2023.

## Cook Inlet

The 2023 GHL for Cook Inlet (Central Gulf of Alaska) is 1.226 million pounds with 1.042 million pounds allocated to pot gear and 184,000 pounds allocated to jig gear. The state-waters pot fishery opened on February 27 and closed to vessels greater than 58 feet in length on March 5; harvest by the larger vessels is confidential. The state-waters pot fishery closed to vessels less than or equal to 58 feet on April 9 and six vessels harvested 787,838 pounds (Figure 9). The jig fishery opened on April 29, following the closure of the federal sector, and remains open. Nine jig vessels have harvested 24,775 pounds.

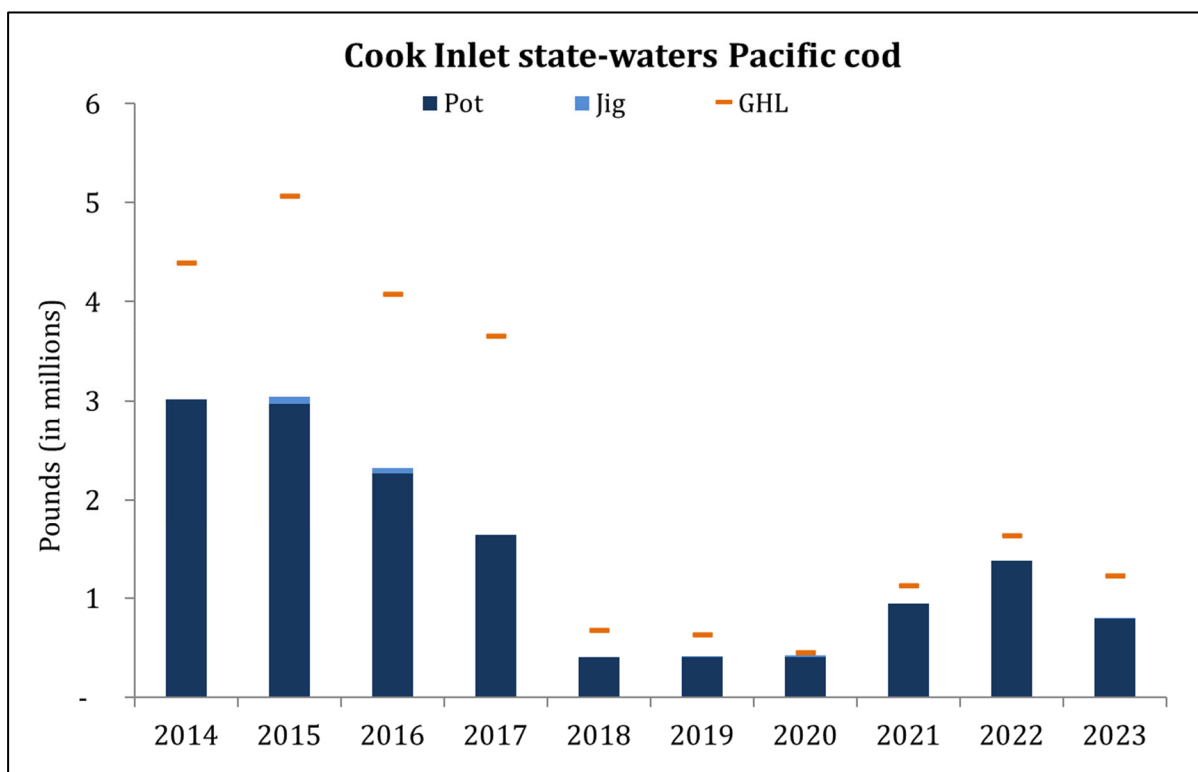


Figure 9. Annual Cook Inlet Pacific cod harvest by gear and GH L, 2014-2023.

### South Alaska Peninsula

The 2023 GHL for the South Alaska Peninsula is 4.937 million pounds and is allocated 85% to pot gear and 15% to jig gear. The State-waters fishery opened to vessels fishing with pot gear on March 7 and closed on March 12, with a total harvest of 3.98 million pounds (Figure 10). The fishery opened to vessels fishing with jig gear on March 14 and closed on June 28, with a total harvest of 963,863 pounds.

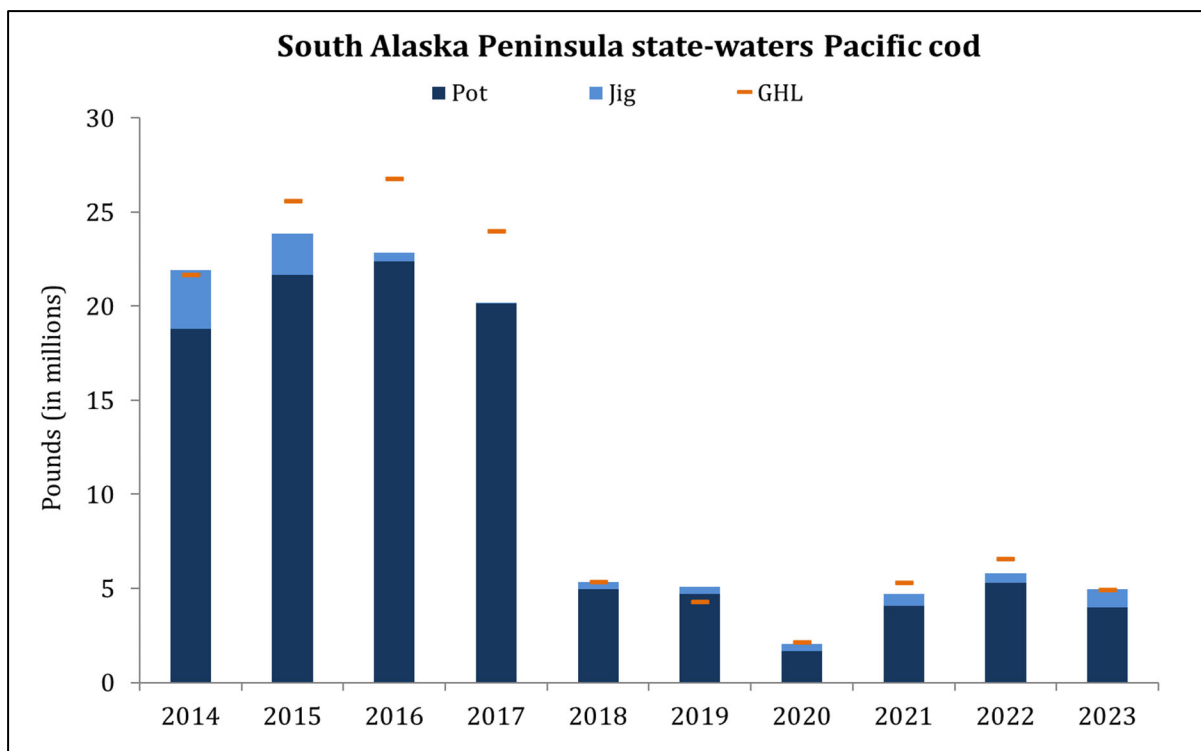


Figure 10. Annual South Alaska Peninsula Pacific cod harvest by gear and GHL, 2014-2023.

## Dutch Harbor

The 2023 GHL for the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict is 38.316 million pounds. The fishery is limited to vessels 58 feet or less. The state-waters pot fishery opened on January 23 and closed on April 7, with 26 vessels harvesting 37.6 million pounds (Figure 11). The Dutch Harbor jig fishery opened May 1 with a GHL of 100,000 pounds. By regulation, the jig fishery closes December 31, 2023, or when the GHL is achieved. To date there has been no activity in the jig fishery.

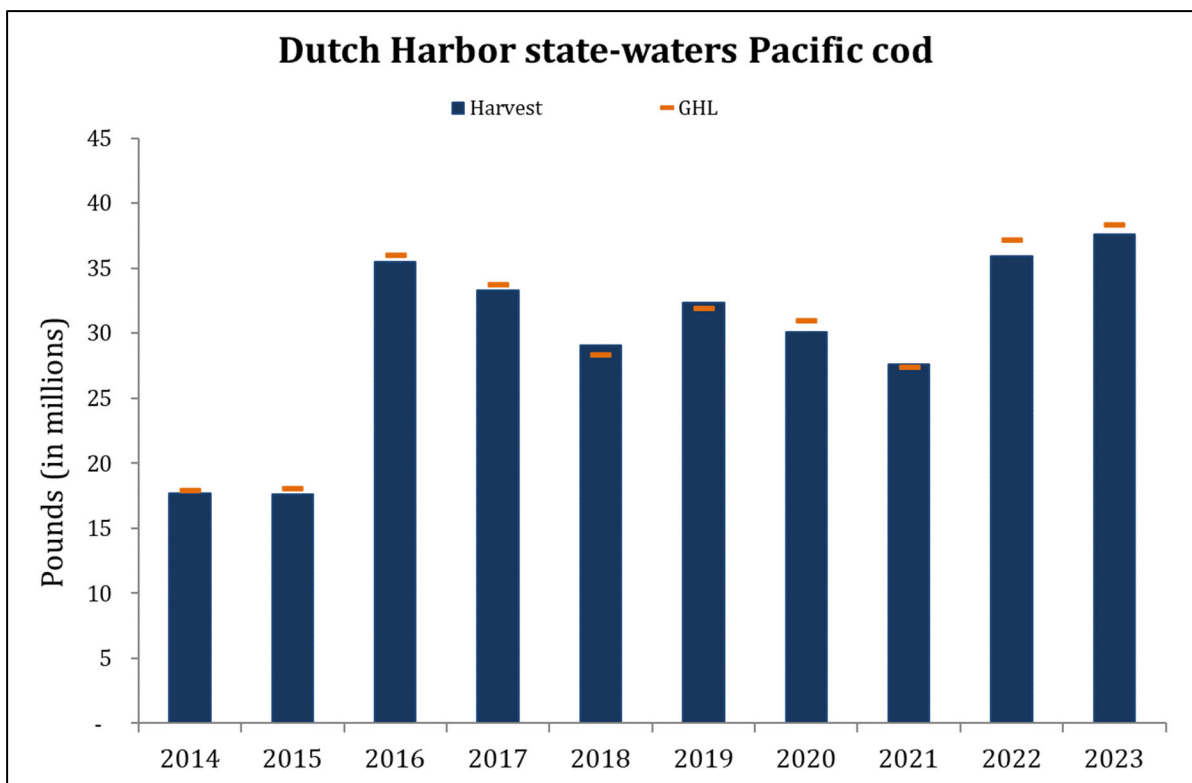


Figure 11. Annual Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific cod harvest by gear and GHL, 2014-2023.

Aleutian Islands

The 2023 Aleutian Islands Subdistrict (AIS) GHL is 11.875 million pounds which represents 39% of the Aleutian Islands Pacific cod ABC. The state-waters fishery in the Adak Section, between 175° west longitude and 178° west longitude, opened January 1 to vessels 60 feet or less, except for vessels fishing with longline gear which are limited to a length of 58 feet. On January 16, all state waters of the AIS opened to vessels 100 feet or less using pot gear, vessels 60 feet or less using nonpelagic trawl or mechanical jig gear, and vessels 58 feet or less using longline gear. On March 15, the AIS opened to vessels 125 feet or less using pot gear and vessels 100 feet or less using nonpelagic trawl gear. On March 25, the AIS fishery was designated as a nonexclusive registration area. By regulation, the fishery closes December 31 or when the GHL is achieved. Nine vessels have harvested 9.9 million pounds, 84% of the GHL (Figure 12).

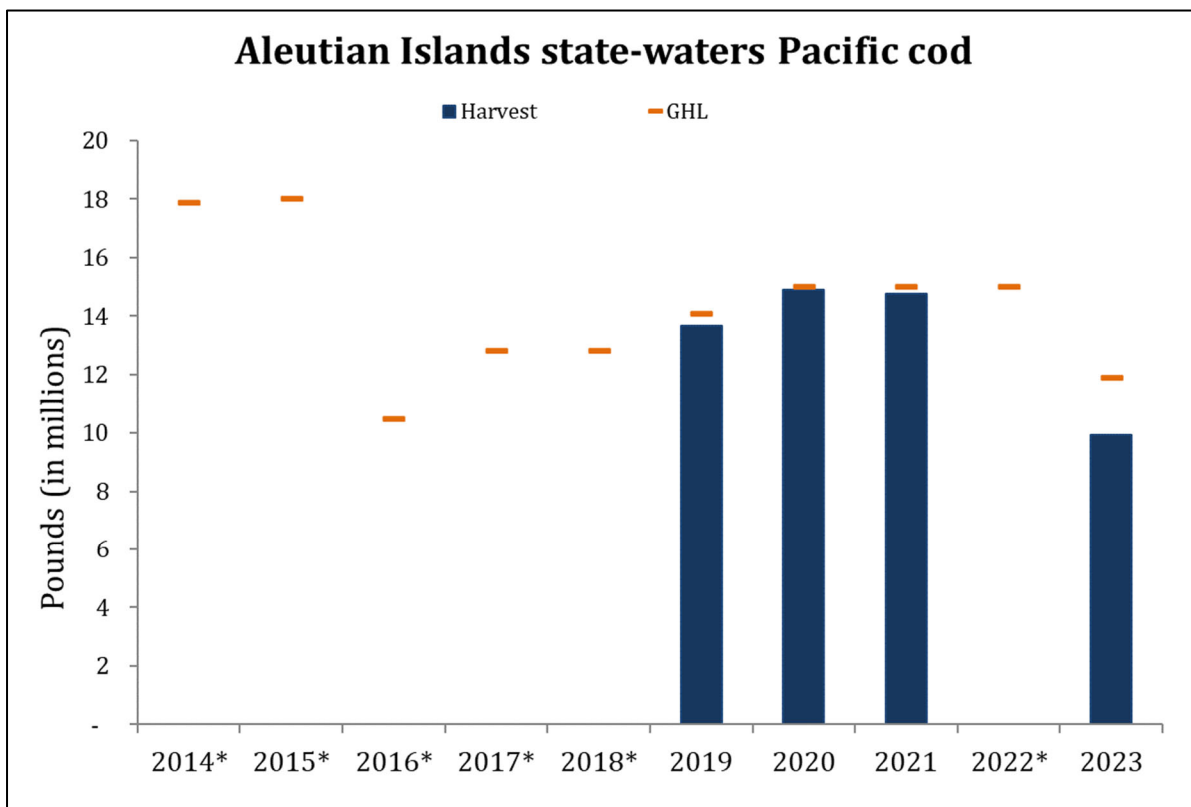


Figure 12. Annual Aleutian Islands Subdistrict Pacific cod harvest and GHL, 2014-2023.

## **Alaska Board of Fisheries**

Upcoming Board of Fisheries meetings:

- [Kodiak finfish](#), January 9-12, 2024, Kodiak. Written comments are due December 26, 2023.

Proposals of interest include:

Proposal 52 – Establish a new Kodiak Area commercial sablefish fishery;

Proposal 53 – Allow longline slinky pots for Pacific cod during the state water fishery.

- [Upper Cook Inlet finfish](#), February 23-March 6, 2024, Anchorage. Written comments are due February 8, 2024.