

PILOT DOMESTIC OBSERVER PROGRAM

Update Report as of June 17, 1988

Summary

Our last report covered the period February 1 through April 1. From April 1 to June 12, 1988 observers were on duty a total of 133 days of which 64 days or 48% were spent on vessels. This brings the totals for spring period, February 1 through June 12, to 392 observer days on duty with 224 days or 57% on vessels. In total for the pilot program we have provided 20 man months of coverage, about 56% of the total 36 man months requested by the Council. The total expenditure for the pilot program to date is \$111,081, or 57% of the amount contracted.

Observations

Observers cannot both pursue vessels willing to participate in the program and at the same time perform observing duties. The full-time coordinator position used in the early part of the spring to obtain vessel participation significantly enhances the amount of coverage. The Alaska Sea Grant Program will be seeking to again fill this coordinator position for the remainder of the contract period.

New Phase

In this pilot program we have been using proven observers with experience in the foreign observer program. We anticipate no longer receiving assistance in locating former foreign fisheries observers and will begin recruiting more broadly. This will likely increase the training burden of the NMFS NW&AFC.

We have gained understanding of the degree of willingness of the fishing fleet to participate in a voluntary observer program. At the last council meeting Dr. Peter Craig of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and R. K. Dearborn, Director of the Sea Grant Program, addressed the increased value of the data being collected by our two cooperative programs if the data could be pooled into a single data base and if observer coverage was focused on specific fisheries and locations for a specific period and then moved to other fisheries and/or locations for a subsequent period. Unless otherwise advised by the Council, it is our intent to move toward a more specific focusing of the program for the remainder of the contract.


Pilot Domestic Program Fund Expenditure through 6/17/88

	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Total</u>
Salaries	\$19,585	\$46,246	\$65,831
Travel*	13,614	23,965	37,579
Services	1,506	3,013	4,519
Administration Fee	736	2,416	3,152
TOTAL	<u>\$35,441</u>	<u>\$75,640</u>	<u>\$111,081</u>
% of Total \$196,600	18	38	57
<hr/> Man months of coverage	7	13	20
% of total 36 man months	19	37	56

* includes transportation, lodging and meals

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke 
Executive Director

DATE: June 13, 1988

SUBJECT: Domestic Observer Program

ACTION REQUIRED

- (a) Status report on pilot program.
- (b) Council direction on further deployment of observers.

BACKGROUND

Ron Dearborn will report on observer activities since the April meeting. All but one observer, operating out of Kodiak, had been pulled from the field by mid-May. The fisheries had slowed significantly and the decision was made to save observer time for deployment this fall as DAP activities increase.

On May 18 a teleconference was held between Oscar Dyson, Ron Dearborn, Janet Smoker, Ron Berg, Clarence Pautzke, Rich Marasco, Janet Wall, and Peter Craig to discuss planning for the rest of the year and data sharing. The following summarizes the discussion:

Observer Deployment: In past years the DAP fishery has slacked in May and June and increased in July and throughout the fall (see accompanying figures). The Committee discussed whether to concentrate some of the observer coverage on selected fisheries to achieve scientifically reliable data or to prolong the remaining funds and program as long as possible.

Selected fisheries of interest include:

- Summer trawl rockfish in the Gulf of Alaska
- Sablefish longline in the Bering Sea
- Longline for Pacific Cod in Gulf of Alaska
- Icelandic joint venture using pots for Pacific cod
- Spring Shelikof pollock fishery
- Bering Sea rock sole and Greenland turbot.

The Committee agreed that the program had already served the purpose of learning how to run an observer program. They further agreed that while the program needed to be extended as long as possible, it would be beneficial to concentrate some effort on a single fishery to get better scientific data. The catcher/processor trawl rockfish fishery was chosen and Ron Dearborn and Rich Marasco agreed to coordinate with Alaska Factory Trawlers Association to solicit rides on three vessels from different companies fishing a single area so that confidentiality of data could be maintained. Three man-months were designated for that fishery. The rest of the funds would be retained for the fall and spring fisheries. Latest Council direction on observer deployment is under C-5(a).

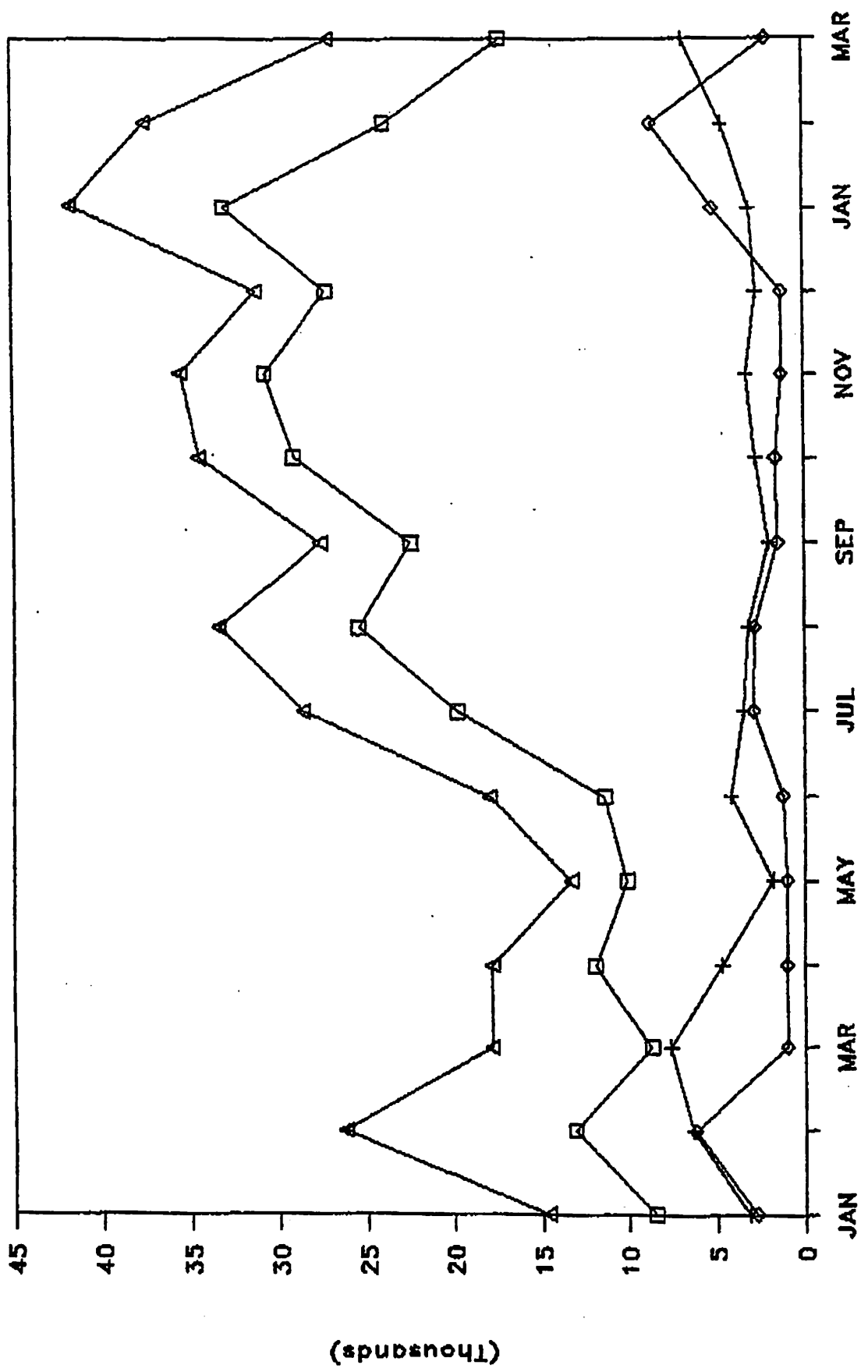
Data Sharing: There was concern expressed that similar types of observer data generated by ADF&G and the Council's program need to be shared to increase their statistical reliability. The Council's Bycatch Committee has encouraged the combining of state and federal observer data bases. Bill Aron has responded that a technical workgroup should be established to address and resolve the technical problems associated with this issue. In the meantime Ron Berg volunteered to develop a summary of the current requirements for confidentiality and have it reviewed by NOAA-GC. His report will be in your supplemental files.

Questions for the Council:

How should observers be deployed for the rest of the program? Should the coverage be extended in time as much as possible until new funds come on line? Or should the remaining effort be expended on a few select fisheries? How much effort should be put in the Kodiak area considering that ADF&G has assets concentrated there?

MONTHLY DAP GROUND FISH CATCH IN BSA

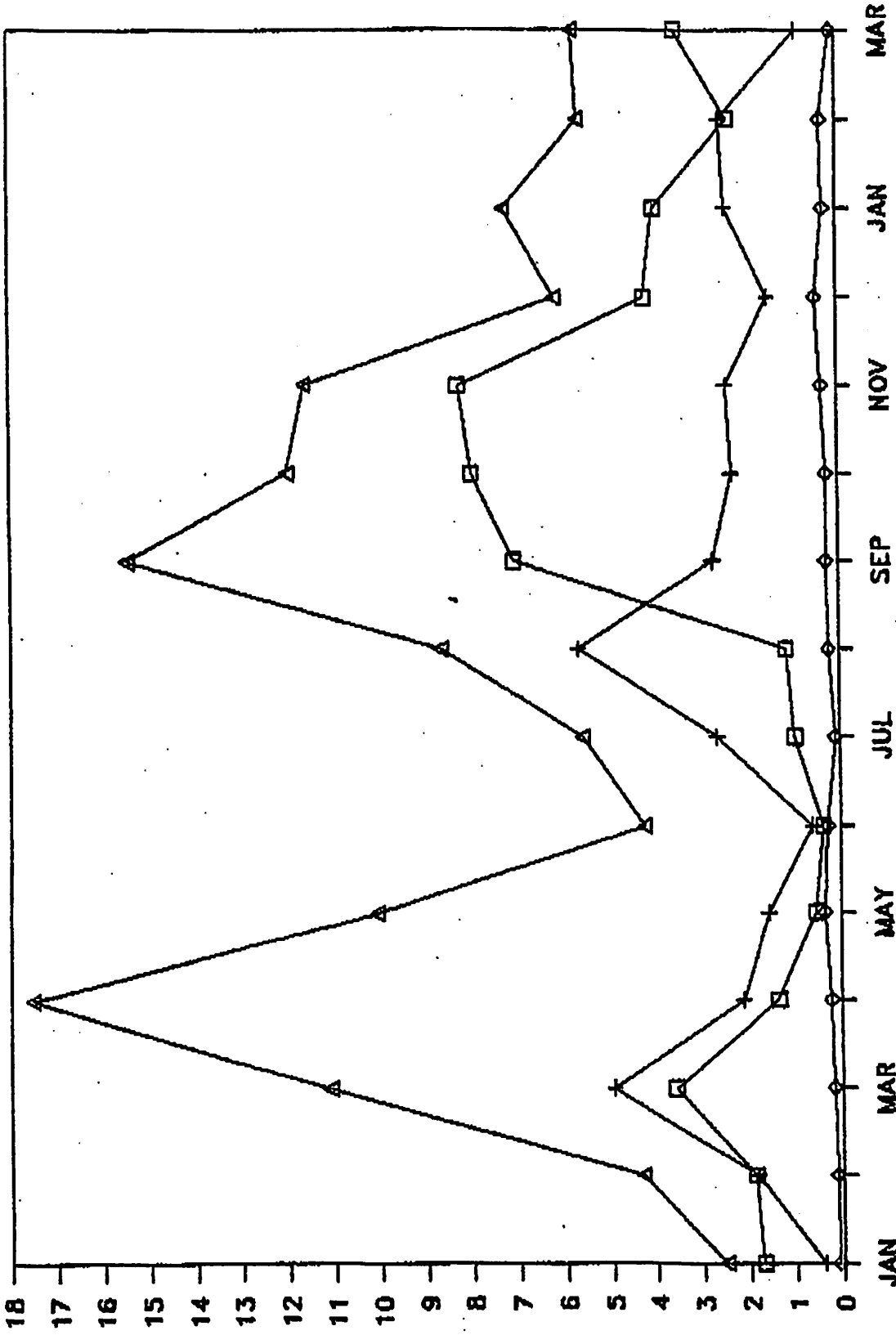
ALL GEARS



+ POLLOCK
 ◇ FLATFISH
 △ ALL GFISH

MONTHLY DAP GROUND FISH CATCH IN GULF

ALL GEARS



POLLOCK + P. COD ◇ FLATFISH △ ALL FISH

(Thousands)

MAY 18 '88 11:57 N.M.F.S.-RK(907)586-7131

513071# 2

P.2/2

NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Pilot Domestic Observer Program:

Proposed for 1987-88

Observer Coverage Proposed for 1987-88

Fall Fisheries (September - November 1987)

GOA: Pacific cod (all gear types) (6 mm)

BSA: Greenland turbot (trawl & longline) (6 mm)
Pollock (trawl) (3 mm)

Spring Fisheries (February - April 1988)

GOA: Shelikof Strait (trawl) (3 mm)
Sablefish (longline) (3 mm)
Rockfish/Sablefish (trawl) (6 mm)

BSA: Rock sole (trawl) (3 mm)
Spring cod fishery (all gear types) (3 mm)

Seasonal Distribution

Fall 15 man-months

Spring 18 man-months

33 man-months of 36-38 mm

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

AGENDA C-5
JUNE 1988
SUPPLEMENTAL
STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

P.O. BOX 3-2000
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99802-2000
PHONE: (907) 465-4100

June 8, 1988

JUN 13 1988

Mr. Clarence Pautzke
Executive Director
North Pacific Fishery
Management Council
P. O. Box 103136
Anchorage, AK 99510

Dear Mr. Pautzke:

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is embarking on a new crab observer program that I would like to bring to your attention.

In April 1988, the Alaska Board of Fisheries adopted regulations which require onboard observers for all catcher-processors and floating processors which process king crab species and C. bairdi Tanner crab. The regulation applies statewide but is anticipated to be most active in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. The regulation will be in effect starting with the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery in September 1988. A copy of the regulation is enclosed.

Observers certified by the department will be paid for by the processors.

ADF&G staff in the Westward Region are developing guidelines which will govern the qualifications and certification of industry-supplied observers. For further information, contact Peter Craig at ADF&G, 211 Mission Road, Kodiak, AK 99615, (907) 486-4791.

Sincerely,

Don W. Collinsworth
Commissioner

ASSIGN.	ROUTE TO	INITIAL
	Exec. Dir.	
	Deputy Dir.	W
	Admin. Off.	
	Exec. Sec.	
	Staff Asst. 1	
	Staff Asst. 2	
	Staff Asst. 3	
	Economist	
	Sec./Bkkt.	
	Sec./Typist	

5 AAC 39.645(a), (b), (c), and (d) are amended, (e) and (f) are added to read:

5 AAC 39.645. SHELLFISH ONBOARD OBSERVER PROGRAM. (a) The Board of Fisheries finds that onboard observers provide the only effective means of collecting essential biological and management data from catcher/processor and floating processor vessels that process shellfish. These data are necessary to achieve the sustained yield of the shellfish resource without overfishing. The department has traditionally collected essential biological and management data at the point of shoreside landing immediately before processing. The rapid evolution to processing by catcher/processor and floating processor vessels in particular shellfish fisheries has seriously eroded the department's ability to adequately monitor harvests. Onboard observers are the only practical data gathering mechanism for these fisheries without unduly disrupting the operation of these processors.

(b) Further, the board finds that in particular shellfish fisheries, onboard observers provide the only effective means to enforce regulations that protect the shellfish resource. The board finds that catcher/processor catch statistics have clearly demonstrated that some operators of these vessels have routinely failed to comply with king and Tanner crab size limit regulations. Without onboard observer coverage, sublegal and female crab may be taken and processed immediately, making enforcement of size and sex regulations impossible.

(c) The cost of providing these onboard observers is a reasonable expense to be borne by the processors themselves. No acceptable management alternatives exist other than disallowing operation of any vessel that is required, but refuses, to cooperate with an onboard observer program. The onboard observer program set out in this section is compatible with and complementary to the existing observer programs of other agencies.

(d) Based on the findings in (a) through (c) of this section, the department shall institute a mandatory onboard observer program following the requirements and guidelines set out in this section for all vessels that process Chionoecetes bairdi, red king crab, blue king crab, or brown king crab. The department shall waive the onboard observer requirement for a vessel that processes those species of crab at a place where a department sampler is located, where the sampler has reasonable access to the vessel, and where the vessel is tied to a dock or at anchor; all other vessel inspection requirements remain in effect.

(e) In addition to the permit requirements in 5 AAC 34.055 and 5 AAC 35.055, the permit for a vessel that processes C. bairdi, red king crab, blue king crab, or brown king crab must require that an observer approved by the department and provided by the permittee be on board the vessel before the start of and during all processing operations. For the purposes of 5 AAC 34.055, 5 AAC 35.055, and 5 AAC 39.140, the observer is a representative of the department. All information collected by the observer is confidential property of the department. The department shall develop guidelines for approval of observers, including training requirements, conflict of interest standards, data collection schedules and standards, record keeping and reporting requirements, and other criteria needed to insure accurate and objective reporting.

(f) Based on the above findings, it is the board's intent that a credible, fair, and enforceable observer program be implemented before the September 25, 1988 opening of the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery. Information gathered in this observer program is intended to promote both conservation and enforcement. (Eff. 7/12/86, Register 99; am ___/___/88, Register ___)

Authority: AS 16.05.251

5 AAC 39.975(36) is added to read:

5 AAC 39.975. DEFINITIONS. In 5 AAC 01 - 5 AAC 39

(36) unless otherwise specified, all measurements of water depth are from mean lower low water. (In effect before 1983; am 4/16/83, Register 86; am 6/30/83, Register 86; am 5/31/85, Register 94; am 4/18/86, Register 98; am 7/12/86, Register 99; am ___/___/88, Register ___)

Authority: AS 16.05.251



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

AGENDA C-5
 SUPPLEMENTAL
 JUNE 1988

June 17, 1988

Clarence Pautzke, Executive Director
 North Pacific Fishery Management Council
 P.O. Box 103136
 Anchorage, AK 99510

Dear Clarence:

This letter responds to your request for information concerning confidentiality of fishery statistics. We understand that your request relates to the problem of not being able to share statistics obtained from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Sea Grant, and NMFS domestic observer programs. We've reviewed the current Federal requirements, and also State of Alaska requirements, on confidentiality.

The Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act protects the identity of any person who submits statistics to the Secretary of Commerce in compliance with requirements of a fishery management plan. Section 303(d) specifically allows disclosure of statistics by the Secretary (1) to Federal employees and to Council employees who are responsible for management plan development and monitoring, and (2) when required by court order. Any other disclosures require that the statistics be aggregated or otherwise summarized such that the identity or business of any person who has submitted such statistics will not be revealed, either directly or indirectly.

You and your staff, but not Council members nor plan team members, can have access to confidential statistics. Thus, we can pass on to you any such statistics we receive during monitoring of the fisheries, including those which we obtain from observers. However, you would not be able to disclose them to ADF&G or to Sea Grant employees.

Similarly, ADF&G protects the identity of any person who submits statistics required by the laws of the State of Alaska. ADF&G may not release these confidential statistics, even to NMFS as required for preparation and implementation of FMPs, unless they are masked so as not to disclose identity of individual fishermen or their vessels (16 AS §815).

How then do we have access to the State's confidential statistics? The Secretary has published regulations at 50 CFR §603, et seq., that provide for NMFS to enter into cooperative agreements with the State of Alaska, such that these statistics can be shared with us. Our existing cooperative



P.1/2

1 S1307#

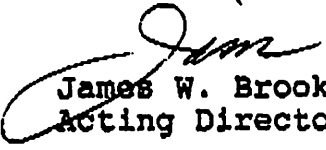
1317275867131

JUN 17 '88 14:34 N.M.F.S.-AK(907)586-7131

agreement with ADF&G, which we are using to fund the ADF&G's groundfish fish ticket and joint data management program, includes specific language which identifies the statistics to be reported to NMFS in a shared database.

These ADF&G statistics are available to us unmasked, and we can then make them available to your staff under Magnuson Act provisions and Federal confidentiality rules. Our funding arrangement with ADF&G is an example of how the regulations pertaining to cooperative agreements render possible the sharing of confidential statistics collected from fish tickets and other fishery observer programs.

Sincerely,


James W. Brooks,
Acting Director, Alaska Region



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center
Resource Ecology and Fisheries
Management Division
7600 Sand Point Way Northeast
BIN C15700, Building 4
Seattle, Washington 98115-0070

JUN 22 1988

Clarence Pautzke, Executive Director
North Pacific Fisheries Management Council
P. O. Box 103136
Anchorage, AK 99510

20 June 1988

Dear Clarence,

As the enclosed letter explains, we are trying to make it easier for vessels to share observer data with ADF&G until a means of integrating the two domestic observer databases is developed. Providing owners with photocopies and pre-paid/pre-addressed envelopes will hopefully aid that process.

Secondly, we are also providing a catch summary for each vessel, based on the observer's sampling while on board. Hopefully, the information will prove useful and informative to the owners, and, at any rate, will demonstrate some of the results of the Pilot Program. We further hope these summaries will result in increased participation in subsequent stages of the Pilot Program. Incidentally, the example summary enclosed with this letter is entirely fictional.

Data packages for all vessels that carried Pilot Program observers during the winter were sent out June 16th. Packages for the fall participants will go out shortly. We have requested suggestions from vessels owners on what types of summaries from the catch information collected aboard their vessels would be useful to them.

Sincerely,

Janet Wall *Steven Hare*
Janet Wall and Steven Hare
Observer Program

cc: UAK - Ron Dearborn
ADF&G - Leslie Watson





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center
Resource Ecology and Fisheries
Management Division

7600 Sand Point Way Northeast
BIN C15700, Building 4
Seattle, Washington 98115-0070

16 June, 1986

Dear Mr. Vessel Owner,

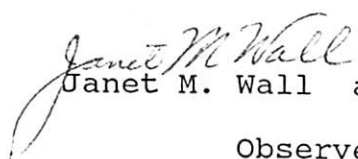

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your participation in the NPFMC/Alaska Sea Grant Pilot Domestic Observer Program. In return, we are sending you two sets of information based on the data collected by the observer you carried on your vessel.

First, you will find the data forms (Forms 2US, 3US and 7US) on which the observer recorded his/her raw data. These forms constitute confidential data that we cannot provide to anyone outside NMFS management personnel. This includes other management agencies (such as ADF&G), Council committees and industry organizations. At your option, however, you may release this information to any of the above mentioned interest groups. Many vessels have indicated a desire to share observer data collected on their vessel with ADF&G. Therefore, we have provided you with an addressed and stamped envelope in which you may mail the data forms, if you so desire.

Secondly, you will also find a one-page catch summary. This summary represents extrapolated totals from the observer's samples. We have attempted to provide you with information you will find useful. If you have any suggestions on other information that would be of use in these catch summaries, we would welcome hearing from you. Also, the same confidentiality restrictions apply to this catch summary: Except to the particular vessel involved, we cannot/do not release this individual vessel information to personnel outside NMFS management.

In closing, we hope this has been a positive experience for you and the people involved with your vessel. Further, we ask that you consider taking another observer should the Pilot Program, or another domestic observer program, request to sample aboard your vessel.

Sincerely yours,


Janet M. Wall and 
Steven R. Hare

Observer Program

cc: NPFMC - C. Pautzke
UAK - R. Dearborn



THIS SUMMARY BASED ON OBSERVER SAMPLING CONDUCTED ON BOARD YOUR VESSEL IN AREAS: BSA SUBAREA 511

VESSEL: UNKNOWN TRAWLER

CATCH SUMMARY FOR: JAN 1 - FEB 28, 1988

SPECIES NAME	PERCENT OF CATCH (BY WEIGHT)	NUMBERS PER MT	AVERAGE WEIGHT (KG)	TOTAL WEIGHT (MT)	TOTAL WEIGHT (LBS)	TOTAL NUMBERS	CATCH PER UNIT EFFORT (MT/HOUR)
PACIFIC COD	40.61	757.4	0.38	420.1776	926324	1119394	3.6242
WALLEYE POLLOCK	29.93	249.4	0.84	309.6477	682649	368576	2.6708
ROCK SOLE	17.17	67.4	1.78	177.6183	391577	99562	1.5320
YELLOWFIN SOLE	4.66	94.4	0.35	48.1854	106230	139535	0.4156
STARFISH UNID	1.64	66.4	0.17	16.9355	37336	98077	0.1461
STARRY FLOUNDER	1.10	6.6	1.17	11.3472	25016	9692	0.0979
ALASKA PLAICE	1.09	8.8	0.87	11.3229	24963	12996	0.0977
FLATHEAD SOLE	1.04	20.0	0.36	10.7173	23627	29601	0.0924
BUTTER SOLE	0.88	21.4	0.29	9.1423	20155	31638	0.0789
JELLYFISH UNID	0.57	6.0	0.67	5.9235	13059	8901	0.0511
RED KING CRAB	0.37	2.4	1.10	3.8574	8504	3522	0.0333
PACIFIC HALIBUT	0.31	1.5	1.47	3.2355	7133	2205	0.0279
BAIRDI TANNER CRAB	0.11	2.2	0.36	1.1539	2544	3185	0.0100
SKATE UNID	0.08	0.1	9.80	0.7844	1729	80	0.0068
POACHER UNID	0.06	2.0	0.21	0.6308	1391	2935	0.0054
SCULPIN UNID	0.06	0.4	1.11	0.6062	1336	547	0.0052
SPONGE UNID	0.06	6.0	0.06	0.5696	1256	8826	0.0049
IRISH LORD UNID	0.05	0.7	0.52	0.5367	1183	1028	0.0046
INVERTEBRATE UNID	0.04	0.7	0.38	0.4180	922	1094	0.0036
ARROWTOOTH FLOUNDER	0.04	0.6	0.48	0.4054	894	840	0.0035
HERMIT CRAB UNID	0.03	1.2	0.20	0.3590	791	1837	0.0031
SHRIMP UNID	0.03	1.7	0.12	0.3000	661	2459	0.0026
REX SOLE	0.02	0.4	0.38	0.2017	445	531	0.0017
KOREAN HORSEHAIR CRA	0.02	0.2	0.74	0.1911	421	260	0.0016
SNAIL SHELL - EMPTY	0.02	0.5	0.25	0.1810	399	730	0.0016
SNAIL UNID	0.01	0.1	0.40	0.0593	131	148	0.0005
PACIFIC SANDDAB	0.00	0.1	0.35	0.0431	95	123	0.0004
MUSSELS/OYSTERS/CLAM	0.00	0.1	0.15	0.0258	57	172	0.0002
OPILIO TANNER CRAB	0.00	0.0	0.45	0.0090	20	20	0.0001
KING SALMON	0.00	0.0	3.80	0.0079	17	2	0.0001
LYRE CRAB-SHARP SP	0.00	0.0	0.15	0.0065	14	44	0.0001
SALMON UNID	0.00	0.0	0.00	0.0000	0	0	0.0000
SPECIES COMBINED				1034.6000	2280879		8.9238

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

June 21, 1988

Dr. William Aron, Director
Northwest and Alaska
Fisheries Center
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. 4
BIN C15700
Seattle, WA 98115

Dear Dr. *Bill*

I appreciated receiving copies of your correspondence with Larry Cotter about the need to combine the domestic observer databases of ADF&G and NPFMC/NMFS. It is clear that we face an acute need for such data, so I share your interest in maximizing the information that we can extract from our observer programs.

The state is very concerned about the loss of observer coverage that has accompanied the rapid "Americanization" of the groundfish fishery. From an overall NMFS coverage of about 85 percent of the foreign and joint venture segments of the fishery, observer coverage in the Gulf of Alaska has plummeted to less than 10 percent in 1988 (because only 2 percent or so of the domestic fishery is now monitored by onboard observers).

I think that the present situation compels us to act cooperatively. Both ADF&G and NPFMC observer programs are small and likely to remain so for the near future. Both programs also address similar segments of the domestic fishery and indeed are in large part duplicative. Consequently, our limited pool of funding is being used to produce two separate data sets which generally describe the same fisheries.

This duplication, however, can be turned around to an advantage if we can overcome the confidentiality problems and combine the two databases. Figure 1 illustrates the statistical improvement that results when the sample size of observer coverage is increased. Because current fleet coverage by each program is low (only about 3 percent in the Kodiak fishery used in this example), the highly variable catches of prohibited species result in very imprecise bycatch estimates. By combining the raw data of both programs, however, the increased sample size improves the statistical confidence limits of the estimate. We therefore need to decide whether we will continue to produce two very

AGENDA C-5
SUPPLEMENTAL
JUNE 1988

STEVE COWPER, GOVERNOR

P.O. BOX 3-2000
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99802-2000
PHONE: (907) 465-4100

imprecise estimates for the same fishery, or whether we should produce a single, more accurate estimate.

As long as there is overlap in the segments of the fleet that our observer programs monitor, it is advantageous to combine ADF&G and NMFS data sets.

The mechanism for ADF&G to share our observer data is already in place. Section 16.05.815 of Alaska's statutes states the following:

"...the department may release

(1) any of its records and reports to the National Marine Fisheries Service as required for preparation and implementation of the fishery management plans of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council within the fishery conservation zone; however, information released to the National Marine Fisheries Service under this paragraph may not disclose the identity of individual fishermen or their vessels.

Thus, as long as ADF&G removes the fisherman's name and vessel number from the observers' data, we can provide the information to NMFS, and we are prepared to do so in support of the developing domestic fishery. Towards that end, I recommend that representatives of our respective staffs, along with staff from the NMFS Alaska Region and our attorneys, meet to work out a satisfactory method of exchanging data.

Sincerely,



Don W. Collinsworth
Commissioner

Enclosure

cc: Clarence Pautzke
Larry Cotter
Ron Dearborn
Peter Craig
Jim Brooks
Craig O'Connor

FLEET COVERAGE vs STATISTICAL PRECISION

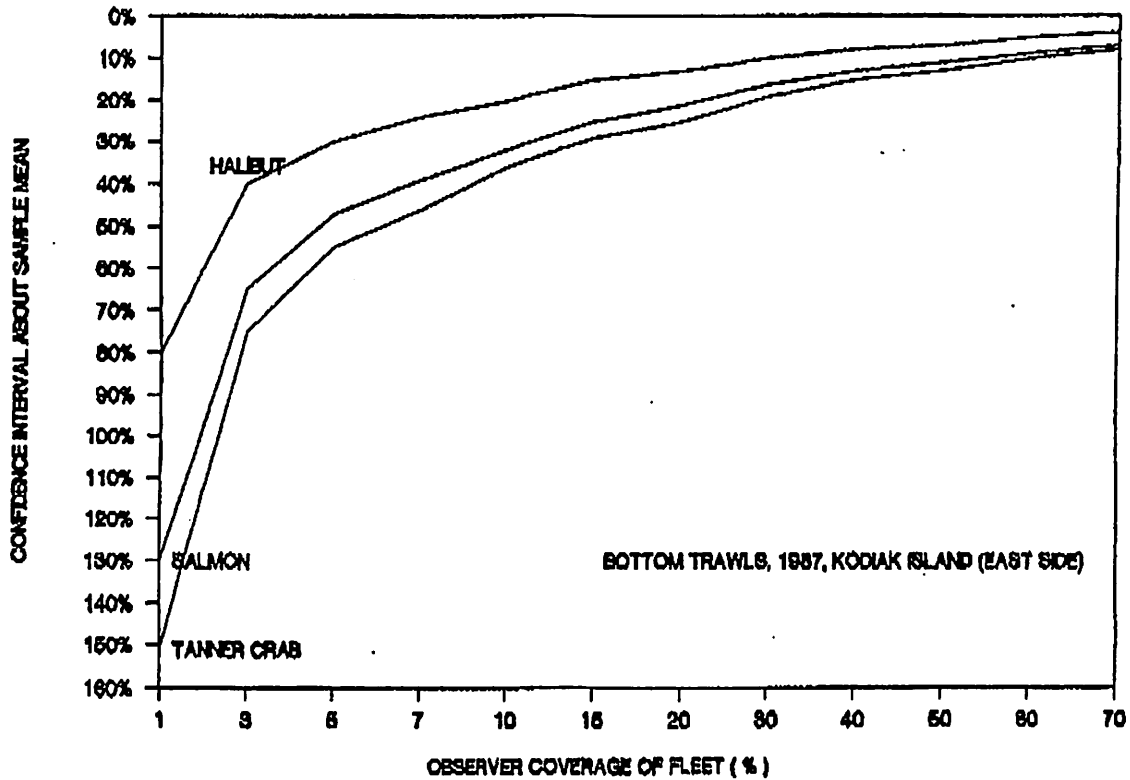


Figure 1. Relationship between observer coverage of the Kodiak bottom trawl fishery and the degree of statistical precision of the data obtained. This analysis is based on ADFG observer data obtained during 16 vessel trips in 1987. The graphs are species-specific because data variability differed for each species.