

Agenda Item B-3



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
REPORT TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
December 2011

Fisheries managed by the State of Alaska since the last council report includes those for scallops, crab, and groundfish.

Scallops (FIGURE 1)

Weathervane scallop fisheries in Yakutat, Prince William Sound, Kodiak, Dutch Harbor, and the Bering Sea registration areas opened on July 1, 2011. The Kamishak District of Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound opened in mid-August. The cumulative guideline harvest level (GHL) for the 2011/12 season is 493,400 pounds of shucked meats, a 6% decrease from 2010/11.

Total harvest to date is just over 432,500 pounds or 88% of the total GHL. Fishing is closed in all areas except Yakutat. Further information is available on the department's website at: <http://www.cf.adfg.state.ak.us>

Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab (FIGURES 2 & 3)

The Area O (Aleutian Islands) commercial golden king crab fishery opened August 15, 2011. The total allowable catch (TAC) is 5.985 million pounds. The TAC is apportioned east and west of 174° W longitude. The Eastern IFQ TAC is 2.835 million pounds and the CDQ TAC is 315,000 pounds. Fishing is now complete in the Eastern Aleutian Islands. Three vessels have fully harvested both the IFQ and CDQ TACs. Catch per unit effort (CPUE) was at a historical high this year, with an average of 35 crab per pot.

The Western Aleutian Island IFQ TAC is 2.55 million pounds and the Adak Community Allocation is 283,500 pounds. Catch for the IFQ fishery remains confidential given the number of participants. To date, there has been no effort to harvest to Adak Community Allocation. The golden king crab fishery in the Aleutian Islands remains open through May 15, 2012.

Bristol Bay Red King Crab (FIGURE 4)

The Bristol Bay red king crab fishery opened on October 15, 2011 and will remain open through January 15, 2012. The TAC for this fishery is 7.834 million pounds, a ~53% decrease from the 2010/11 season, and is apportioned 7.05 million pounds to the IFQ fishery and 783,400 pounds to the CDQ fishery. To date, the IFQ quota has been fully harvested by 62 vessels and 10 vessels harvested 100% of the CDQ TAC. Preliminary data suggests that CPUE was up this year and averaged 28 crab per pot. Fishermen also reported finding substantial amounts of crab in areas that have historically been good, but where few crab have been seen in recent years.

St. Matthew Island Blue King Crab (FIGURE 5)

The St. Matthew Island blue king crab fishery opened on October 15, 2011 with a TAC of 2.36 million pounds, a 68% increase from the 2010/11 season. 2.12 million pounds is apportioned to the IFQ fishery and 235,900 pounds is apportioned to the CDQ fishery. Harvest is ongoing with 18 vessels catching approximately 1.49 million pounds (70%) of the IFQ TAC and four vessels have harvested 183,000 pounds (72%) of the CDQ TAC through December 2, 2011. Fishing this season started out better when compared to the past with a CPUE of 13 crabs per pot. However, two hurricanes and bad weather in general over the past few weeks has caused fishing to slow way down. The season remains open through February 1, 2012, although it is anticipated that all operators will stop fishing sometime this week and that the full TAC will not be harvested.

Bering Sea Snow Crab (FIGURE 6)

The Bering Sea snow crab fishery opened on October 15, 2011 and will remain open through May 15, 2012 in the Eastern Subdistrict and through May 31, 2012 in the Western Subdistrict. The 2011/12 snow crab TAC is 88.894 million pounds, a 61% increase over the 2010/11 season TAC. 80 million pounds is apportioned to the IFQ fishery and 8.89 million pounds is apportioned to the CDQ fishery. To protect the Pribilof blue king crab stock, the snow crab fishery is not open in waters enclosed by:

- 167° W longitude to 170° W longitude and 57° 30' N latitude to 58° 00' N latitude;
- 168° W longitude to 171° W longitude and 57° 00' N latitude to 57° 30' N latitude;
- 169° W longitude to 171° W longitude and 56° 30' N latitude to 57° 00' N latitude.

A few vessels have started fishing for snow crab and harvest is confidential.

Bering Sea Tanner crab

The 2011 area-swept survey estimate of mature female Tanner crab biomass in the Bering Sea District is 13.4-million pounds and is below the harvest strategy threshold for mature female biomass of 21.9-million pounds; therefore the Bering Sea District Tanner crab fishery was closed for the 2011/2012 fishing season.

Pribilof Islands red and blue king crab

The Pribilof District red and blue king crab fisheries are closed for the 2011/2012 season. Survey results for Pribilof District blue king crab indicate continued very-low abundance. In order to open the Pribilof District blue king crab fishery, a minimum threshold of 13.2 million pounds of total mature biomass (TMB) must be achieved in two consecutive years. Both the

2010 and 2011 estimates of TMB are well below this threshold; therefore, the fishery will remain closed.

Abundance estimates for mature and legal-size male red king crabs in the Pribilof District has increased over the prior year; however, there is considerable uncertainty surrounding the precision of the estimates. Due to the high uncertainty surrounding the red king crab abundance estimate, potential for blue king crab bycatch mortality during a red king crab fishery, and poor performance of ADF&G pot surveys and cost-recovery fishing efforts in the Pribilof District, the Pribilof District red king crab fishery will remain closed for the 2011/2012 season.

Alaska Board of Fisheries

2011 Work session, October 4-5, 2011

ACR 6 ACTION: Carried

DESCRIPTION: Amend the maximum allowable harvest in Norton Sound red king crab fishery.

DISCUSSION: In May 2011, the Crab Plan Team (CPT) revised the stock assessment model for estimating the legal male biomass of Norton Sound red king crab. The CPT determined the previous stock assessment was overestimating actual abundance by an average of 40%.

Maximum allowable harvest rate on legal males is currently 10%. A retrospective analysis estimated that the Norton Sound commercial red king crab fishery was allowing removal of 12 – 16% of the legal male biomass. The crab stock has been stable, suggesting that the historical harvest rate above 10% has been sustainable.

ACR 9 ACTION: Carried

DESCRIPTION: Increase total allowable catch in the Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery.

DISCUSSION: The Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery has been managed under a constant catch harvest policy since the 1998/99 fishing season. Harvest levels, based on historic catch, were originally set at 3 million pounds in the Eastern Aleutian Islands (EAI) and 2.7 million pounds in the Western Aleutian Islands (WAI). In March 2008, the Board of Fisheries increased the harvest amounts by five percent, setting new harvest levels at 3.15 million pounds in the EAI and 2.835 million pounds in the WAI. According to 5 AAC 34.612, regulatory harvest levels will remain fixed until a stock assessment model is established by the department. The stock assessment model is currently under development and has not yet been approved for use.

Both of these ACRs are scheduled for consideration at the Statewide shellfish meeting, March 20 -23, 2012 in Anchorage.

Pacific cod for Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Chignik, and South Alaska Peninsula Areas October 6 - 10, 2011, Anchorage

Gulf of Alaska

- 1 N/A Review licensing and reporting requirements for parallel Pacific cod fisheries for coordination with federal Pacific cod fisheries. *(No authority)*
- 2 N/A Require federal LLP license and observer when participating in a parallel Pacific cod fishery. *(No authority)*

Kodiak

- 3 C/A Develop regulations to coordinate state and federal Pacific cod fisheries. *State-waters jig fishery will open 48 hours after the CGOA federal A-season jig fishery closes or on/after March 15, based on inseason assessment of effort, harvest rate, or remaining federal Pacific cod quota. State-waters pot fishery will open 7 days after the CGOA Federal A-season pot fishery closes. Final regulations are under development.*

Chignik

- 9 C/A Develop regulations to coordinate state and federal Pacific cod fisheries. *State-waters jig fishery will open on March 15. The state-waters pot season shall open seven days after the closure of the CGOA federal A-season pot fishery or on March 7, whichever is later. Final regulations are under development.*
- 14 N/A Establish 14-day stand-down period for vessels using pot gear in a Pacific cod fishery prior to registering for the Chignik state-waters Pacific cod season.

Chignik and South Alaska Peninsula

- 18 N/A Implement 7-day stand-down for vessels that fished Pacific cod in the BS-AI Area before registering for the Chignik or South Alaska Peninsula state-waters Pacific cod fisheries.

South Alaska Peninsula

- 19 C/A Develop regulations to coordinate state and federal Pacific cod fisheries. *State-waters jig fishery will open 48 hours after the WGOA federal A-season jig fishery closes or on/after March 15, based on inseason assessment of effort, harvest rate, or remaining federal Pacific cod quota. The state-waters pot season shall open seven days after the closure of the WGOA federal A-season pot fishery or March 7, whichever is later. Final regulations are under development.*

Prince William Sound

- 36 N/A Allow only vessels without a federal Pacific cod endorsement to participate in the state-waters Pacific cod fishery. *(No authority)*
- 37 N/A Require that Pacific cod from other areas be landed before a vessel participates in the state-waters Pacific cod fishery.
- 39 C/A Develop regulations governing the state-waters Pacific cod fishery. *The state-waters jig season will open 24 hours after the closure of the CGOA federal A-season jig fishery. The state-waters pot season will open 24 hours after the closure of the CGOA federal A-season pot fishery. The state-waters longline season will open seven days after the closure of the*

CGOA <50'HAL sector or concurrent with the IFQ Halibut season opening date, whichever occurs later. **Final regulations are under development.**

Cook Inlet

42 C/A Develop regulations governing the state-waters Pacific cod fishery. *The state-waters jig season will open 24 hours after the closure of the CGOA federal A-season jig fishery. The state-waters pot season will open 24 hours after the closure of the federal A-season pot fishery. Final regulations are under development.*

Prince William Sound, Upper Copper River, and Upper Susitna River Finfish

December 2 – 7, 2011, Valdez

43 Prohibit the use of commercial bottom gear within three miles of shore between May 15th and September 1.

Figure 1

Alaska Weathervane Scallop Catch

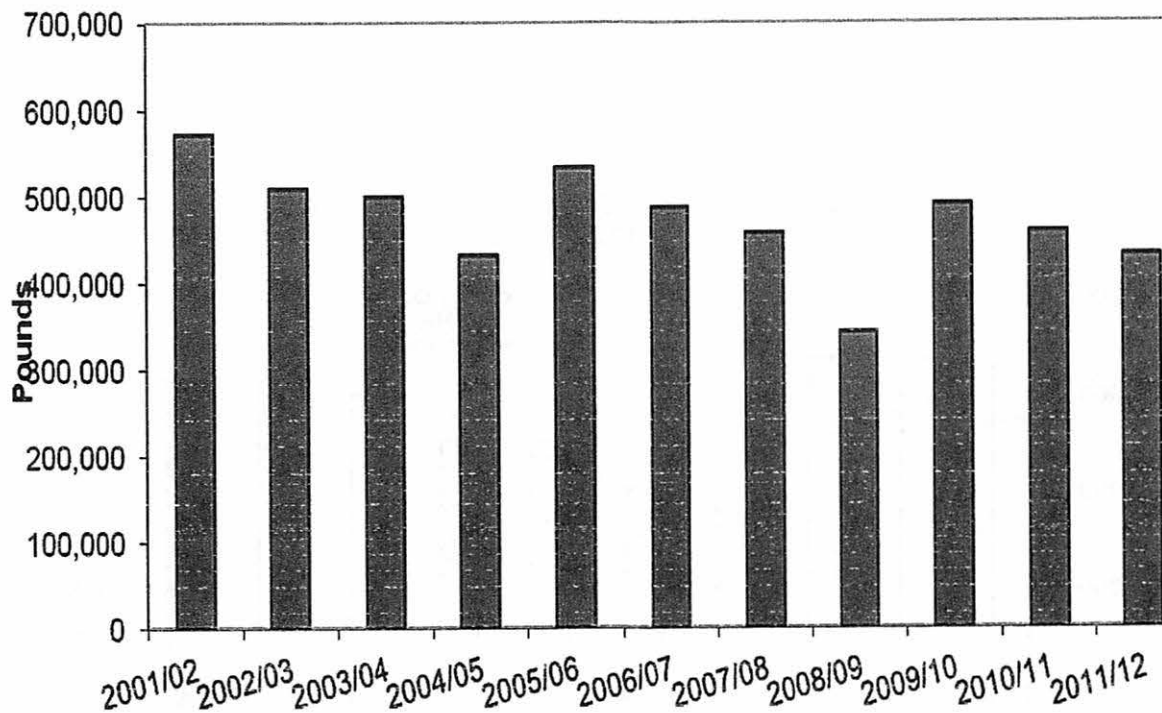


Figure 2

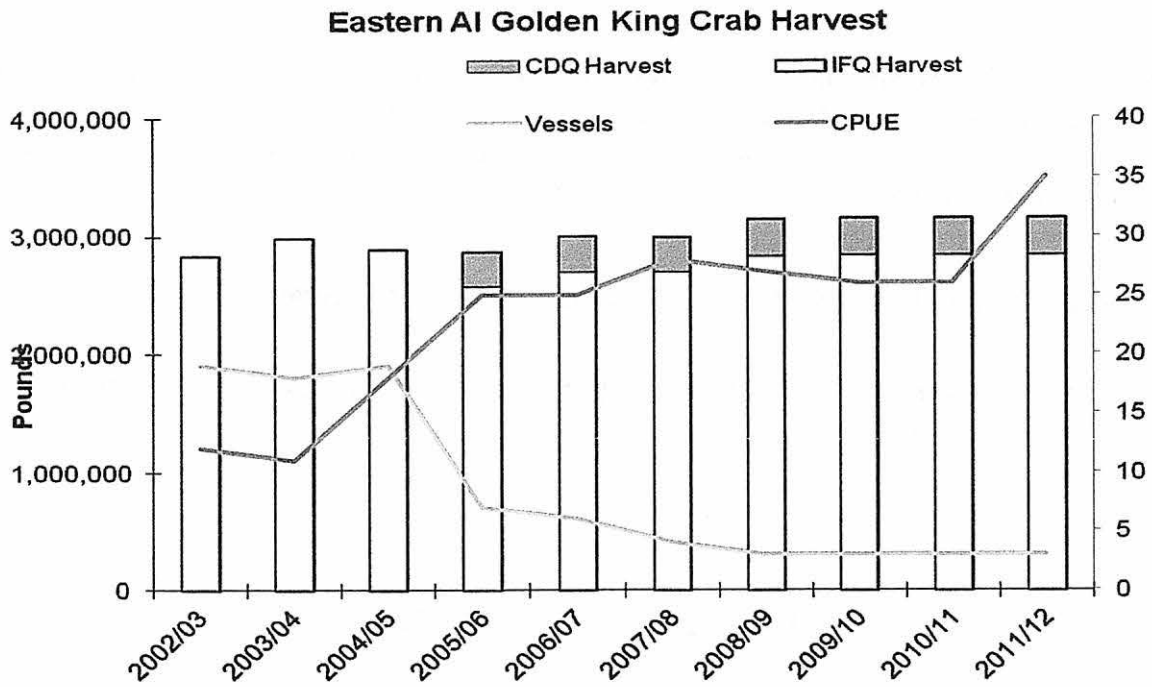


Figure 3

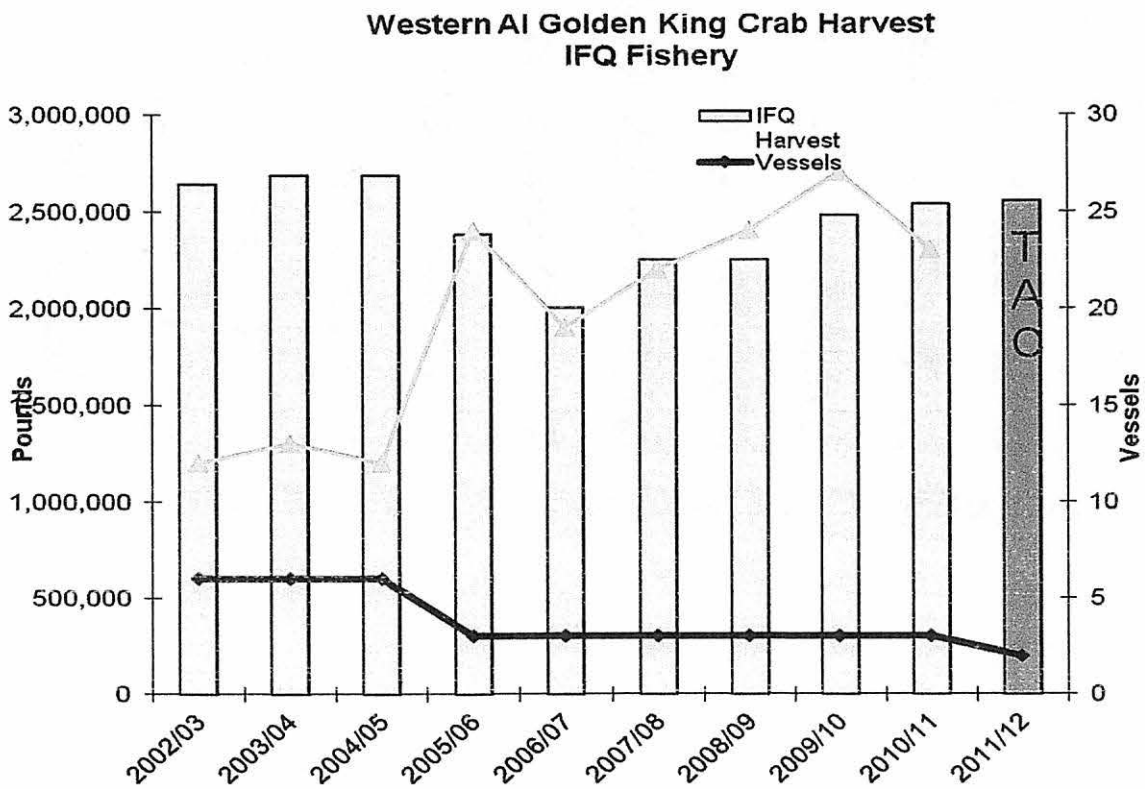


Figure 4

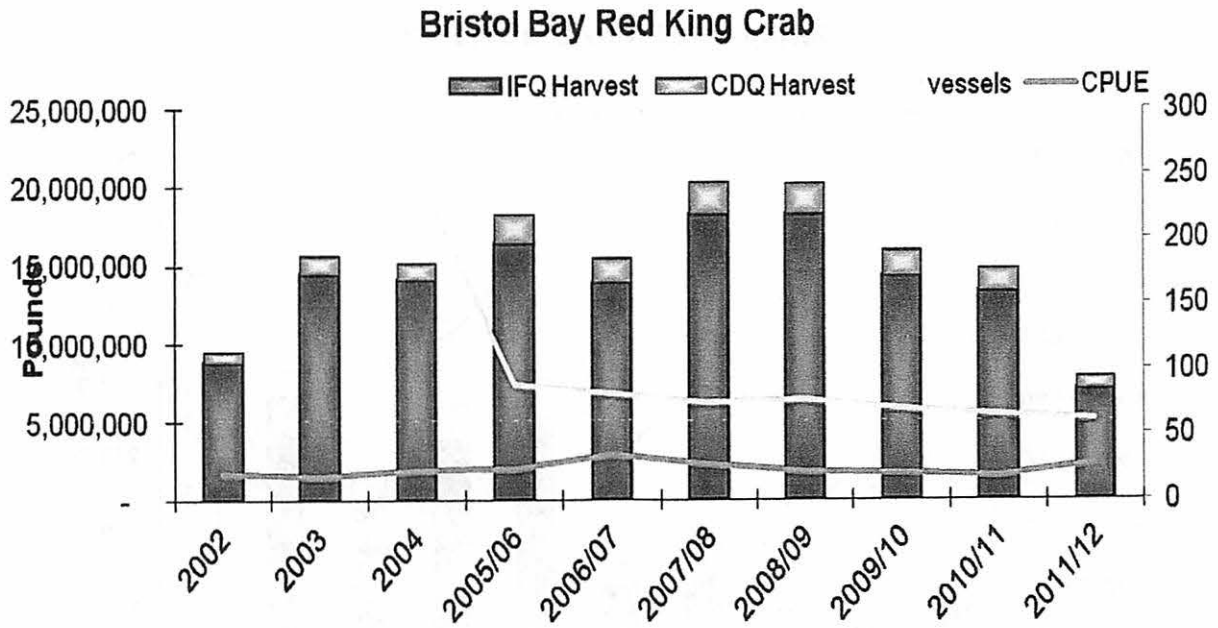


Figure 5

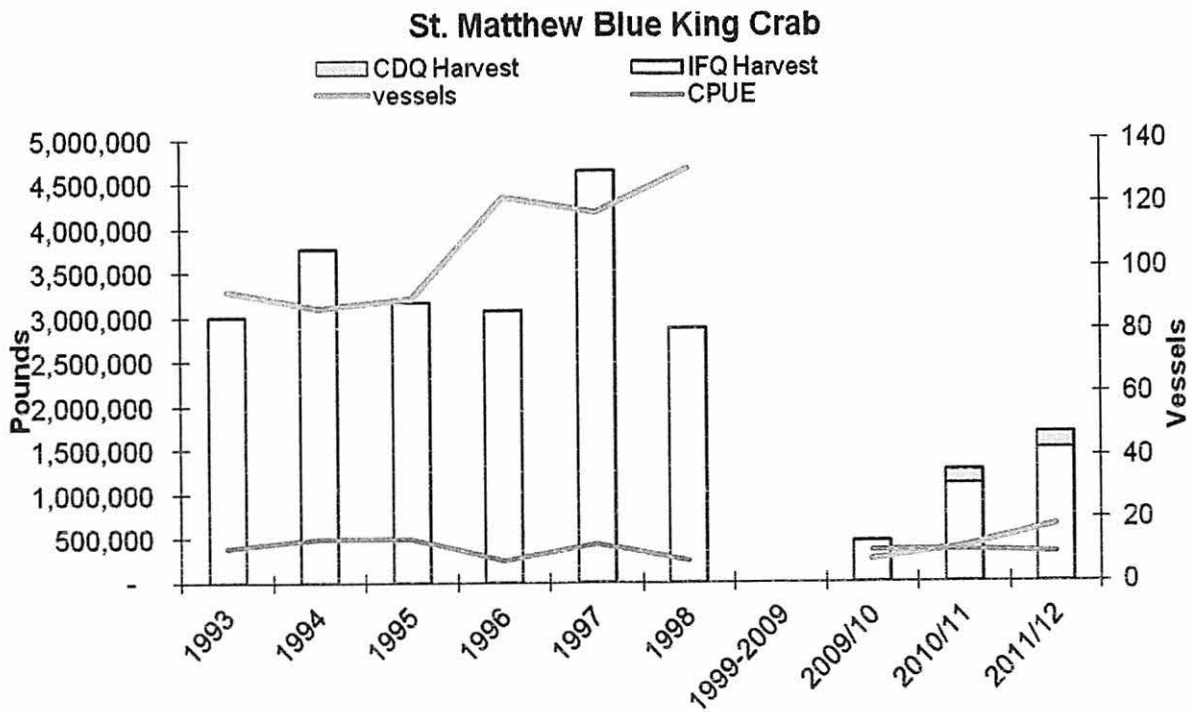
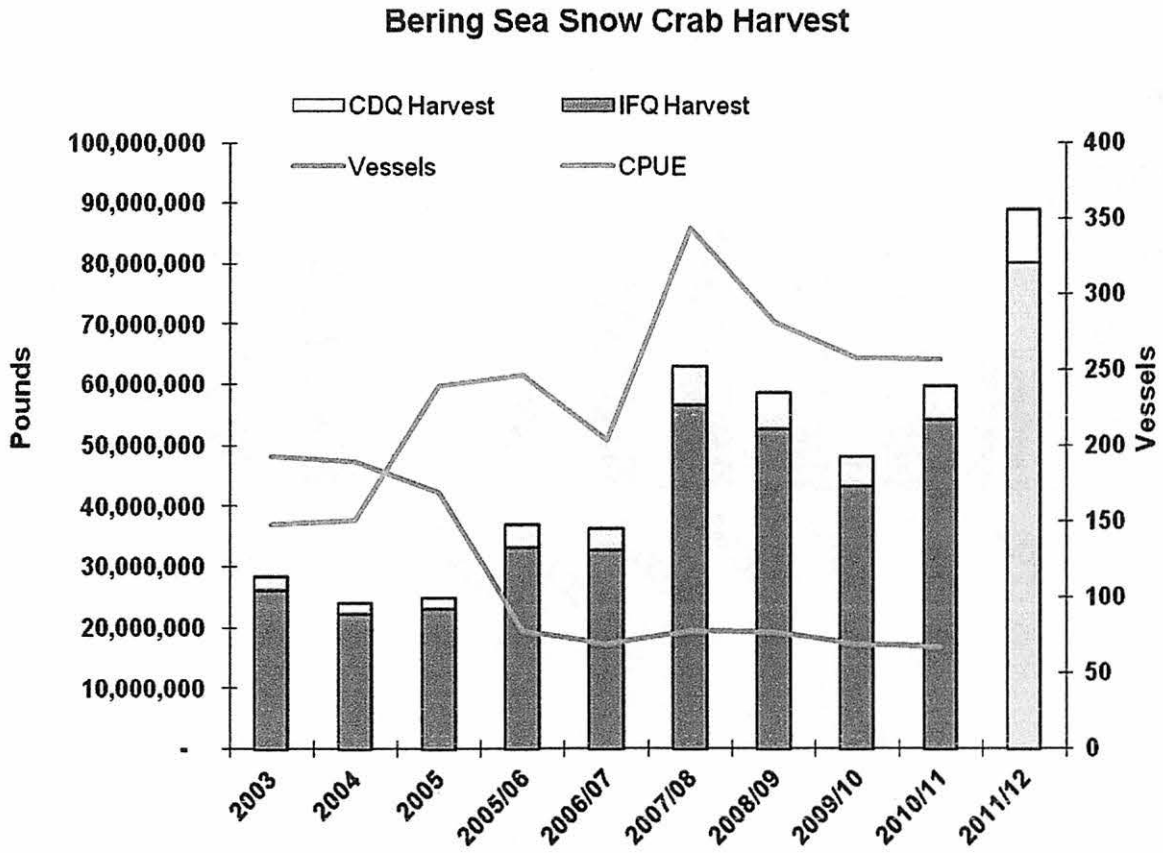


Figure 6



Subsistence Harvests of Pacific Halibut in Alaska, 2010



**Division of Subsistence
Alaska Department of Fish and Game**

**Presentation to the
North Pacific Fishery Management Council**

**Anchorage, AK
December 2011**

1

**Project funded through a grant
from the
National Marine Fisheries Service**

No. NA07NMF4370170

2

For the full study findings, see:

Fall, James A. and David Koster. 2012.
Subsistence Harvests of Pacific Halibut in
Alaska, 2010. Alaska Department of Fish
and Game, Division of Subsistence
Technical Paper No. 367. Juneau.

3

Project Background

- New subsistence regulations in effect May 2003
- 118 communities and 123 tribes eligible, plus residents of designated rural areas
- Registration requirement (SHARC)
- Regulations have provision for collecting harvest data
- This report covers the 8th year of the harvest assessment program (harvests in 2010)
- Funding reduced by 50% for 2008 - 2010
- Adjustments: 2 rounds of mailings, limited outreach and household interviews in Area 2C

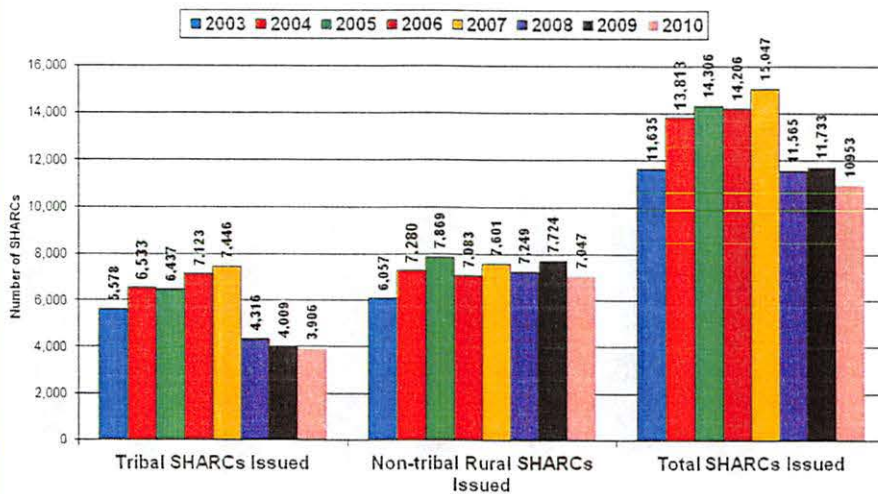
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Methods

- Mailed household survey is primary data collection method; response voluntary
- Mailed to all persons holding SHARCs during 2010: 10,953
- Two rounds of mailings
- Supplemented by household contacts and interviews in 4 Southeast Alaska communities (Area 2C)

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Number of SHARCs Issued by SHARC Type, 2003 - 2010



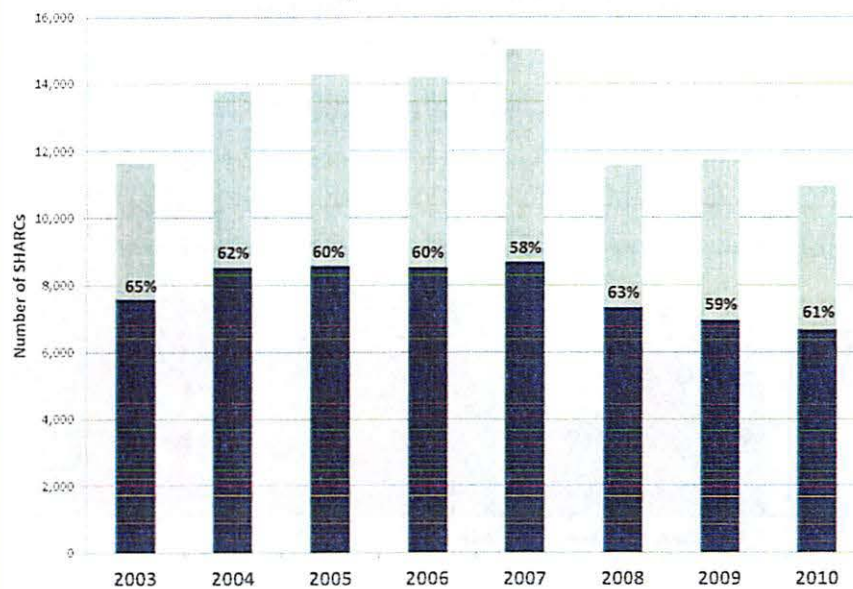
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Sample Achievement for 2010

- **6,670 surveys returned**, of 10,953 valid SHARCs
- **Sampling fraction of 61%**
- **High rates of return** achieved in most larger communities with the most SHARCs issued

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SHARC Survey Achievement, 2003 - 2010



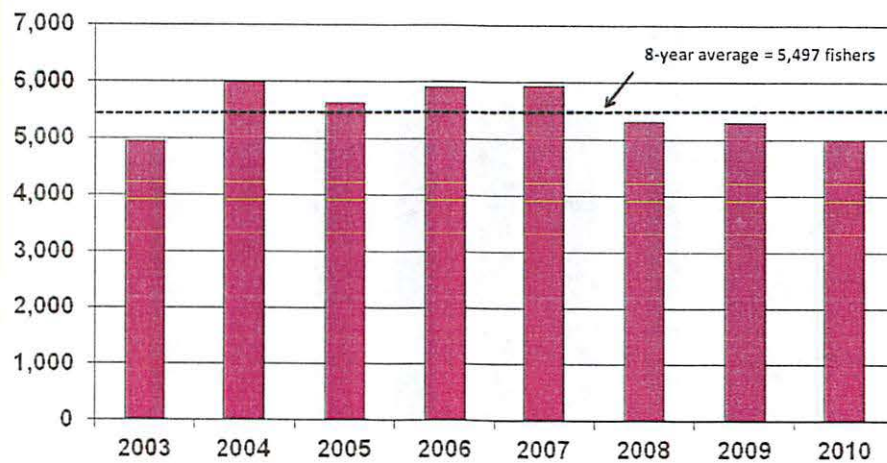
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Study Findings: Halibut 2010

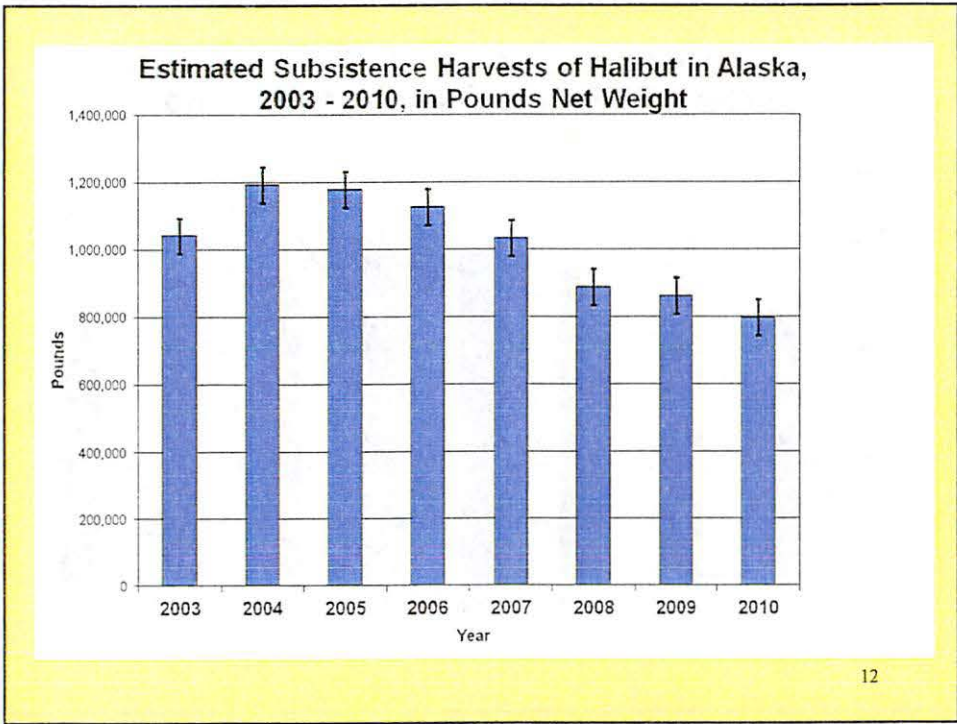
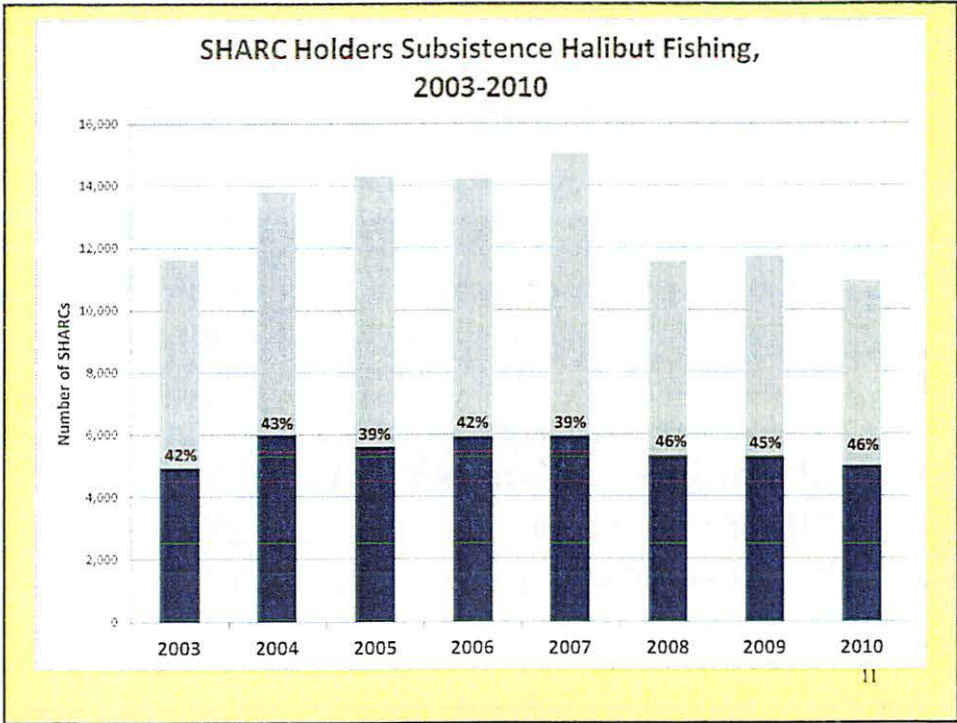
- Estimated number of **subsistence fishers** = 4,991
- Estimated subsistence harvest = **43,332 halibut**
- Estimated subsistence harvest = **797,560 lbs net weight** (= 75% of round weight) (18.4 lbs/fish)
- **53% of harvest occurred in Area 2C** (SE Alaska) & 39% in Area 3A (SC Alaska)
- 77% of harvest taken with setline gear; 23% with hand-operated gear

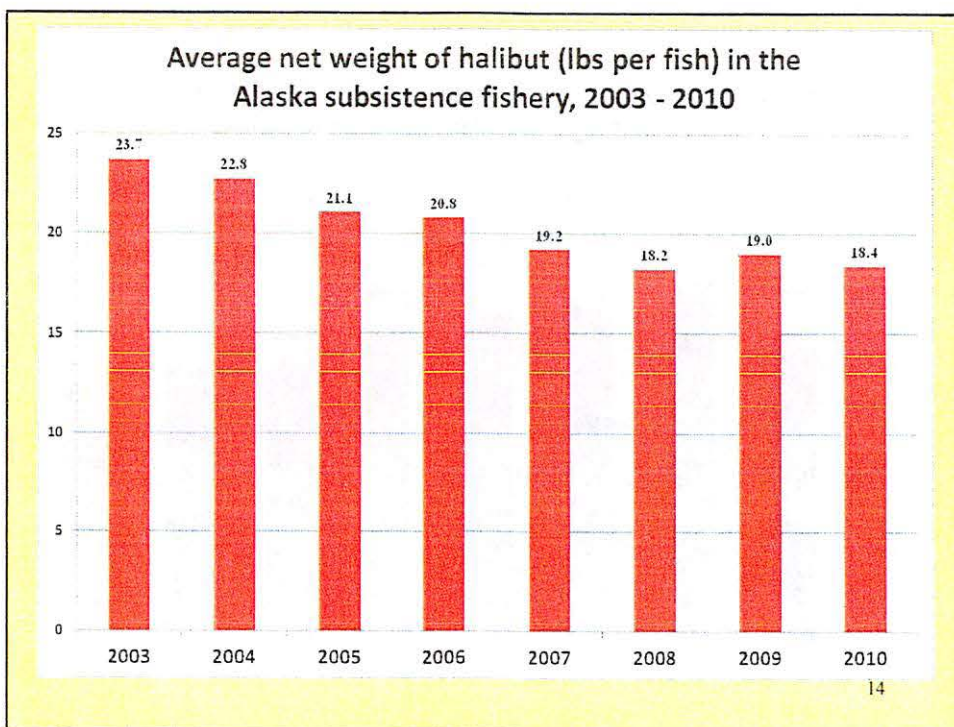
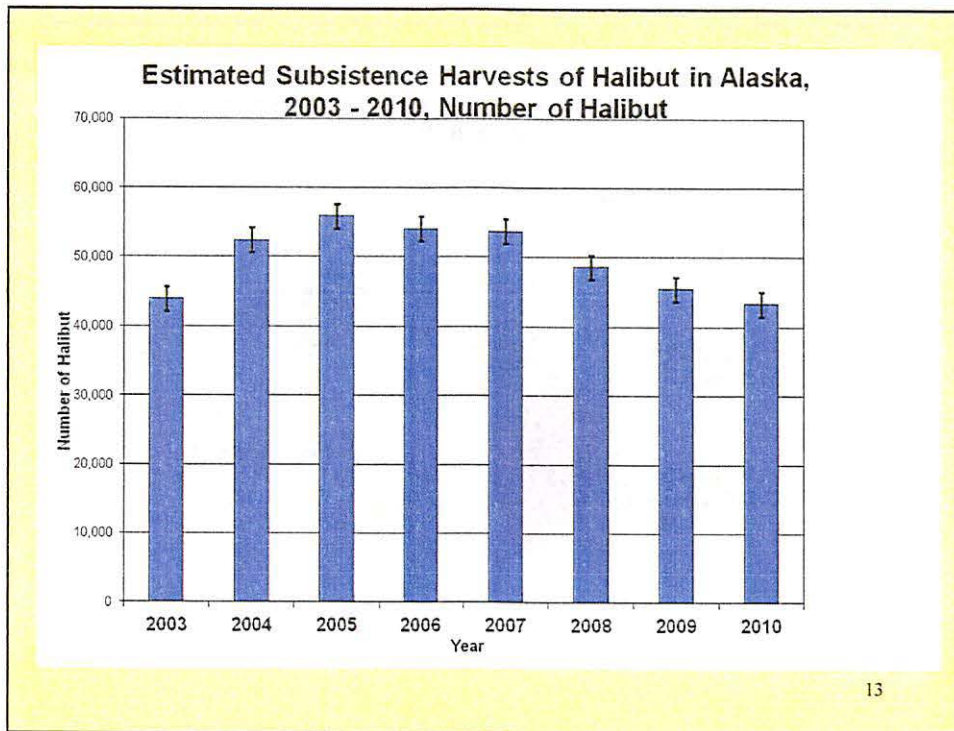
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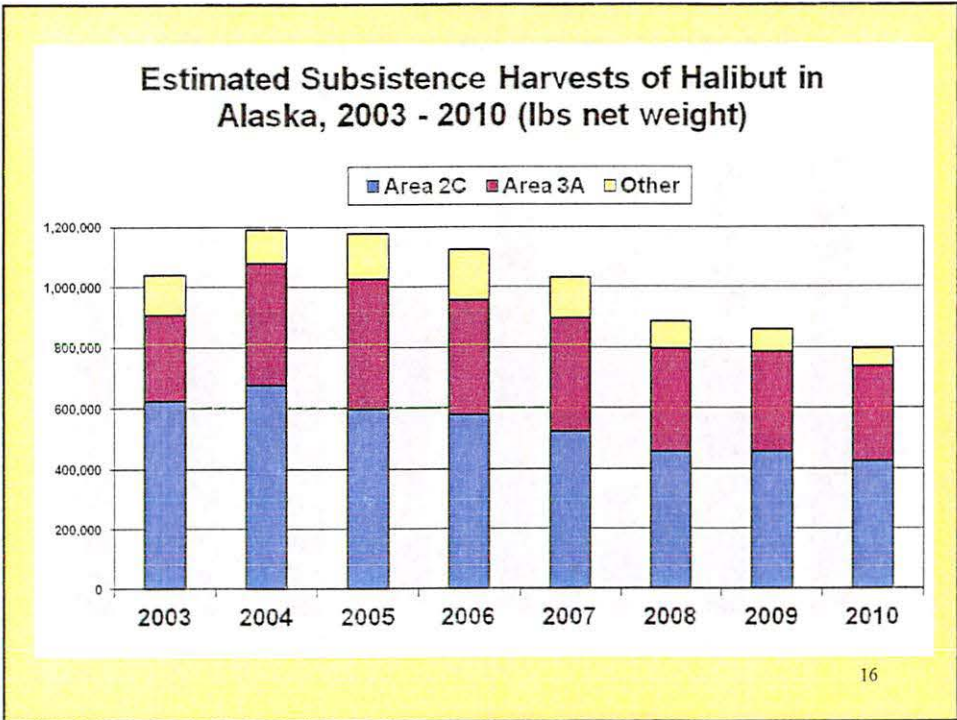
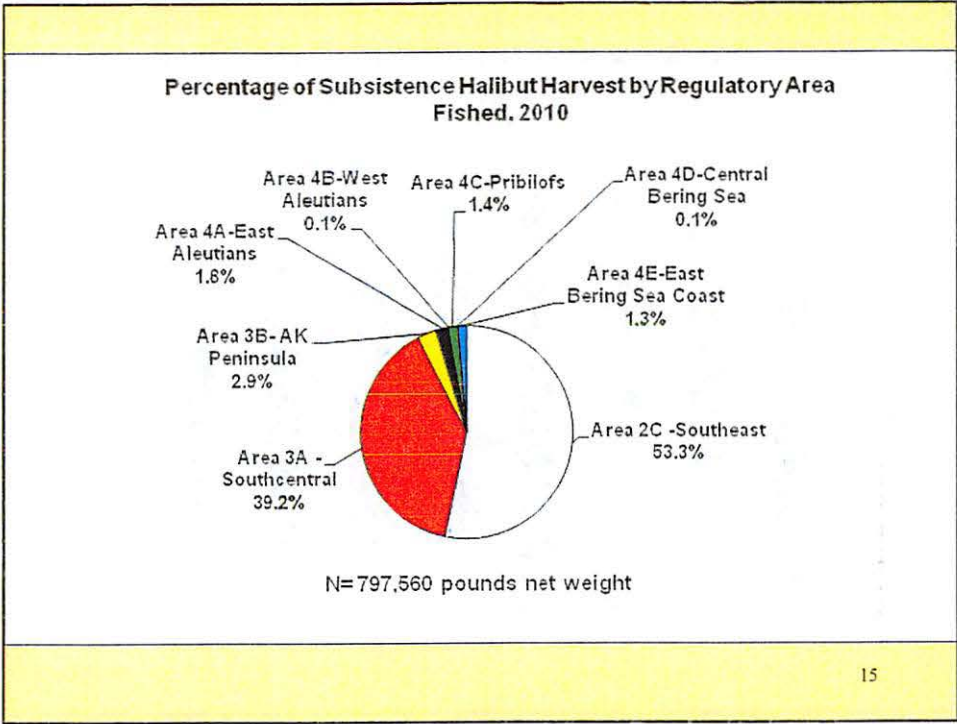
Estimated Number of Individuals Subsistence Fishing for Halibut in Alaska, 2003 - 2010

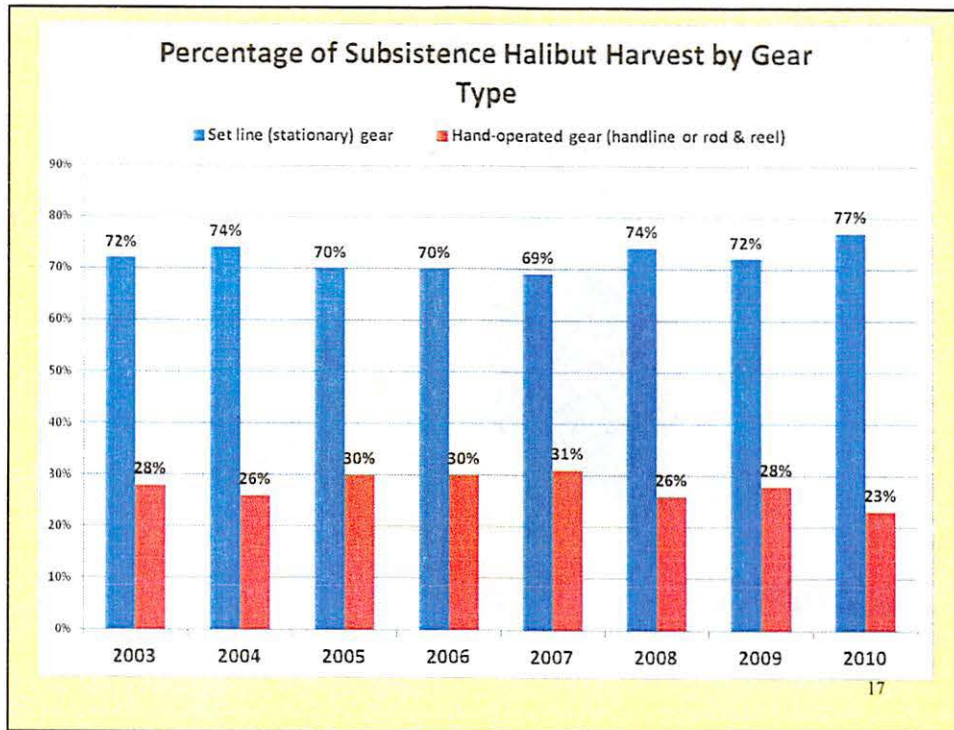


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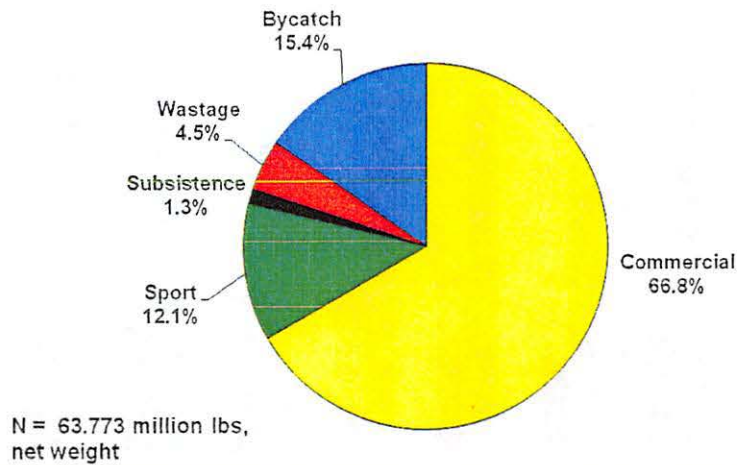




Halibut Removals in Alaska 2010

- Preliminary data from the International Pacific Halibut Commission plus results of this study
- Total estimated removal in 2010 of 63.773 million pounds net weight
- **Subsistence harvest = 1.3% of statewide removals**
- Subsistence harvests by area range from 5.3% (Area 2C) to 0.2% (Area 3B)

Halibut Removals, Alaska, 2010



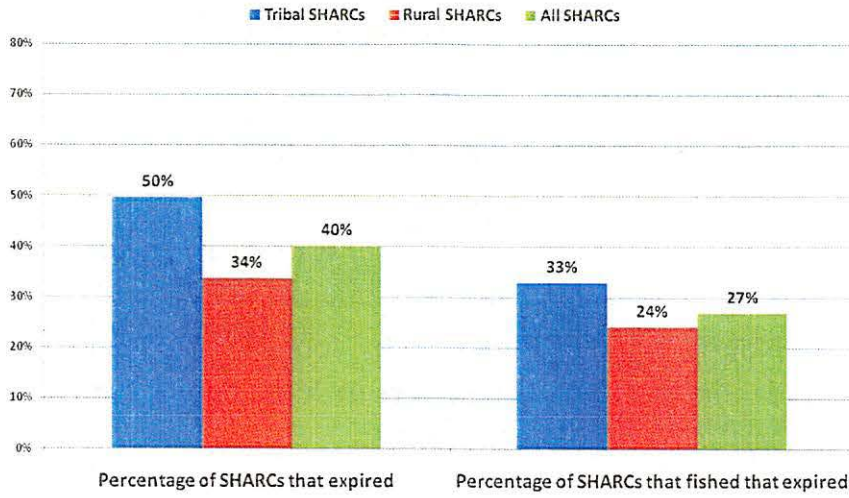
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Analysis of SHARC renewal patterns

- Rural SHARCs: renew every 2 years
- Tribal SHARCs: renew every 4 years
- 19,605 individual SHARC holders, 2003 – 2009
- **40% did not renew, including 27% who fished**
- 50% of Tribal SHARCs did not renew, including 33% that fished
- **Non-renewals more likely than active SHARCs to have not responded to the survey, not fished, and have lower harvests**

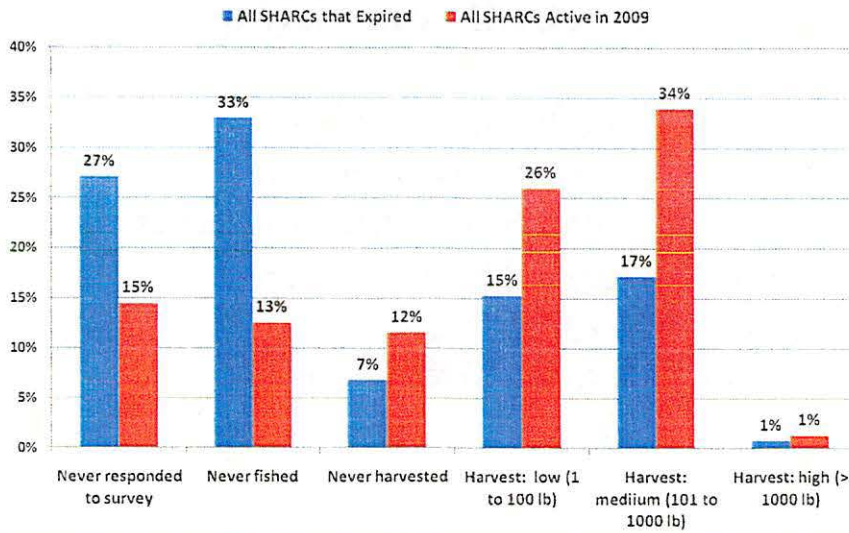
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Figure 35. Percentage of SHARC holders, and SHARC holders who fished for halibut, who did not renew their SHARC, by SHARC type



21

Expired SHARCs and Active SHARCs Compared by Survey Response Type (based on Fig. 36)



22

Study Conclusions: Harvest Survey, Year 8

- Overall, Year 8 of the harvest survey was a success: despite limited outreach, good response rates and overall reliable harvest estimates
- Can discern some general patterns in the fishery since the new regulations came into effect
- Non-renewal of SHARCs by some fishers, and declining SHARC numbers in some communities and areas requires discussion

23

Recommendations

- Continue monitoring subsistence harvests
- Evaluate geographic scope of project
- Continue outreach to selected communities
- Continue partnerships with tribal organizations
- Consider expanded outreach effort to encourage subsistence fishers to renew SHARCs

24

Year Nine of the Study: 2011

- New contract (grant) in place between ADF&G and NMFS to document 2011 subsistence harvests
- Funding increased to \$129.0, from \$103.0;
- Methods: 3 mailings to all SHARC holders; outreach and interviewing in 2C and selected other communities
- Outreach for Year 9 begins January 2012
- Surveys will be mailed in early January 2012
- Presently, no funding in place for continuing the project beyond the 9th year
- Discussion needs to continue regarding future harvest monitoring of this fishery

25

For More Information

- Division of Subsistence Website:
www.subsistence.adfg.state.ak.us and go to publications for draft final report
- Or: call us at 907-465-4147, or 465-3617, or 267-2353
- Or write: ADF&G, Division of Subsistence, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK, 99518
- Or contact NMFS at: 1-800-304-4846 (option 2) or www.fakr.noaa.gov/ram/subsistence/halibut.htm

26



SUBSISTENCE HARVESTS OF PACIFIC HALIBUT IN ALASKA, 2010

Division of Subsistence, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518
January 2012

Through a grant from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Division of Subsistence conducted a study to estimate the subsistence harvests of Pacific halibut in Alaska in 2010. The full results of the study appear in the Division's Technical Paper No. 367, "Subsistence Harvests of Pacific Halibut in Alaska, 2010" (January 2012). Key points in the report include the following:

- In May 2003, the NMFS published final federal regulations for a subsistence halibut fishery in Alaska. Residents of 118 rural communities and designated rural areas, and members of 123 tribes are eligible to participate. Fishers must obtain a subsistence halibut registration certificate (SHARC) from NMFS before fishing (www.fakr.noaa.gov/ram/subsistence/halibut.htm; 800-304-4846).
- 2010 was the eighth year in which subsistence halibut fishing took place under these regulations. Information about subsistence halibut harvests in 2003–2009 is reported in Division of Subsistence Technical Papers 288, 304, 320, 333, 342, 348, and 357, respectively.
- To estimate the 2010 harvests, a one-page survey form was mailed to SHARC holders in early 2011 or administered in person. After two mailings and community visits, 6,670 of 10,953 SHARC holders (61%) responded. Participation in the survey was voluntary.
- An estimated 4,991 individuals subsistence fished for halibut in 2010 (Figure 8).
- The estimated subsistence harvest was 43,332 halibut for 797,560 pounds net weight.
- Of this total, 77% was harvested with setline (stationary) gear (longline or skate) and 23% was harvested with hand-operated gear (handline or rod and reel).
- The largest subsistence harvests occurred in Southeast Alaska (Halibut Regulatory Area 2C), at 53% of the total, followed by Southcentral Alaska (Area 3A) at 39%. Table 6 and Figure 17 from the final report give more details on harvests by gear type and area.
- Based on place of residence of SHARC holders, communities with the largest subsistence halibut harvests in 2010 were Kodiak and Sitka (the largest eligible communities) (Figure 22).
- An estimated 12,851 rockfish were harvested by 1,322 fishers in the subsistence halibut fishery in 2010. Most (60%) were harvested in Southeast Alaska.
- An estimated 2,864 lingcod were harvested by 732 fishers in the subsistence halibut fishery in 2010. Most (63%) were harvested in Southeast Alaska.
- Based on preliminary data from the International Pacific Halibut Commission and this study, the estimated halibut removal in Alaska in 2010 was 63.773 million pounds, net weight. Subsistence harvests accounted for 1.3% of this total (Figure 33).
- The report concludes that the project was, overall, a success, with good response rates and a reliable estimate of subsistence halibut harvests. However, analysis suggests that a significant number of fishers may not have renewed their SHARCs. Additional outreach among eligible tribes and rural areas is necessary to maximize enrollment of fishers in the SHARC program.
- The report also recommends that monitoring of the Alaska subsistence halibut harvest continue in order to evaluate trends in the fishery.

For a copy of the full report, go to <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/publications/>, or call the Division of Subsistence of ADF&G at 907-267-2353 (Anchorage) or 907-465-4147 (Juneau).

Table 6.—Estimated harvests of halibut in numbers of fish and pounds net (dressed, head-off) weight by regulatory area and subarea, 2010.

Subarea	Regulatory area	Number of SHARCs subsistence fished ^a	Estimated subsistence harvest by gear type ^a									Estimated sport harvest		
			Set hook gear			Hook and line or handline			All gear			Estimated number respondents fished	Estimated number halibut harvested	Estimated pounds halibut harvested ^b
			Estimated number respondents fished	Estimated number halibut harvested	Estimated pounds halibut harvested ^b	Estimated number respondents fished	Estimated number halibut harvested	Estimated pounds halibut harvested ^b	Estimated number respondents fished	Estimated number halibut harvested	Estimated pounds halibut harvested ^b			
Southern Southeast Alaska	2C	1,618	1,373	9,797	207,535	671	2,927	46,831	1,618	12,725	254,366	833	2,928	47,523
Sitka Lamp Area	2C	718	657	3,118	68,532	229	586	8,456	718	3,704	76,988	236	529	8,960
Northern Southeast Alaska	2C	776	686	4,084	77,223	263	1,007	16,241	776	5,091	93,464	296	855	14,880
Subtotal, Area 2C		3,013	2,625	16,999	353,290	1,118	4,521	71,528	3,013	21,520	424,818	1,313	4,312	71,364
Yakutat Area	3A	66	53	543	13,296	29	191	4,768	66	734	18,064	15	76	1,198
Prince William Sound	3A	291	260	1,767	35,004	143	364	7,274	291	2,132	42,279	139	361	7,905
Cook Inlet	3A	228	138	2,780	36,870	157	2,607	28,939	228	5,386	65,809	126	579	9,008
Kodiak Island road system	3A	687	564	4,429	82,139	315	1,146	20,928	687	5,575	103,066	450	1,871	35,599
Kodiak Island—Other	3A	592	466	2,854	56,642	285	1,346	26,790	592	4,201	83,432	310	1,055	18,534
Subtotal, Area 3A		1,631	1,283	12,374	223,951	807	5,654	88,699	1,631	18,028	312,650	887	3,943	72,244
Chignik Area	3B	42	20	132	2,912	35	183	2,945	42	315	5,857	5	6	103
Lower Alaska Peninsula	3B	130	65	696	8,845	96	514	8,306	130	1,210	17,152	51	143	2,248
Subtotal, Area 3B		171	84	829	11,757	130	697	11,251	171	1,525	23,009	56	148	2,351
Eastern Aleutians—East	4A	99	61	429	7,046	66	409	6,297	99	838	13,343	53	217	2,682
Eastern Aleutians—West	4A	8	7	32	665	3	22	540	8	55	1,205	6	8	132
Subtotal, Area 4A		101	62	461	7,711	67	431	6,837	101	892	14,548	57	225	2,814
Western Aleutians—East	4B	10	6	22	210	4	14	240	10	36	450	3	21	432
Western Aleutians—Other	4B	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal, Area 4B		10	6	22	210	4	14	240	10	36	450	3	21	432
St. George Island	4C	6	5	23	563	5	8	158	6	30	720	0	0	0
St. Paul Island	4C	19	13	468	9,555	6	16	584	19	485	10,139	0	0	0
Subtotal, Area 4C		25	17	491	10,118	11	24	742	25	515	10,859	0	0	0
St. Lawrence Island	4D	4	2	32	843	2	6	328	4	38	1,171	0	0	0
Area 4D—Other	4D	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal, Area 4D		4	2	32	843	2	6	328	4	38	1,171	0	0	0
Bristol Bay	4E	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	2	2	35
Yukon Delta	4E	60	15	170	2,542	56	571	6,942	60	741	9,484	0	0	0
Norton Sound	4E	6	6	38	571	0	0	0	6	38	571	0	0	0
Kotzebue Sound	4E	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Subtotal, Area 4E		70	25	208	3,113	56	571	6,942	70	779	10,055	2	2	35
Total, Alaska^c		4,991	4,071	31,416	610,992	2,183	11,916	186,567	4,991	43,332	797,560	2,297	8,651	149,241

Source ADF&G Division of Subsistence, SHARC survey, 2011.

- “Setline” = longline or skate. “Hand-operated gear” = rod and reel, or handline.
- Weights given are “net weight.” Pounds net (dressed, head off) weight = 75% of round (whole) weight.
- Because fishers may fish in more than one area, subtotals for regulatory areas and the state total might exceed the sum of the subarea values. Includes subsistence and sport fishing.

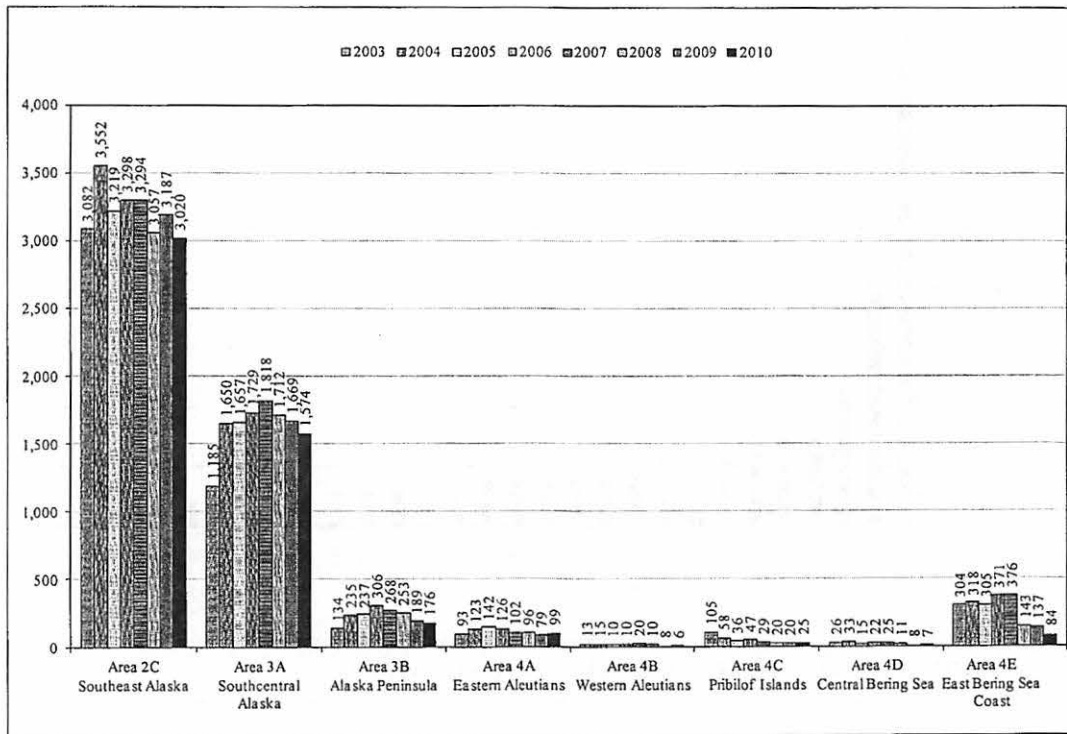


Figure 8.—Estimated number of Alaska subsistence halibut fishers, 2003–2010 by regulatory area of tribe or rural community.

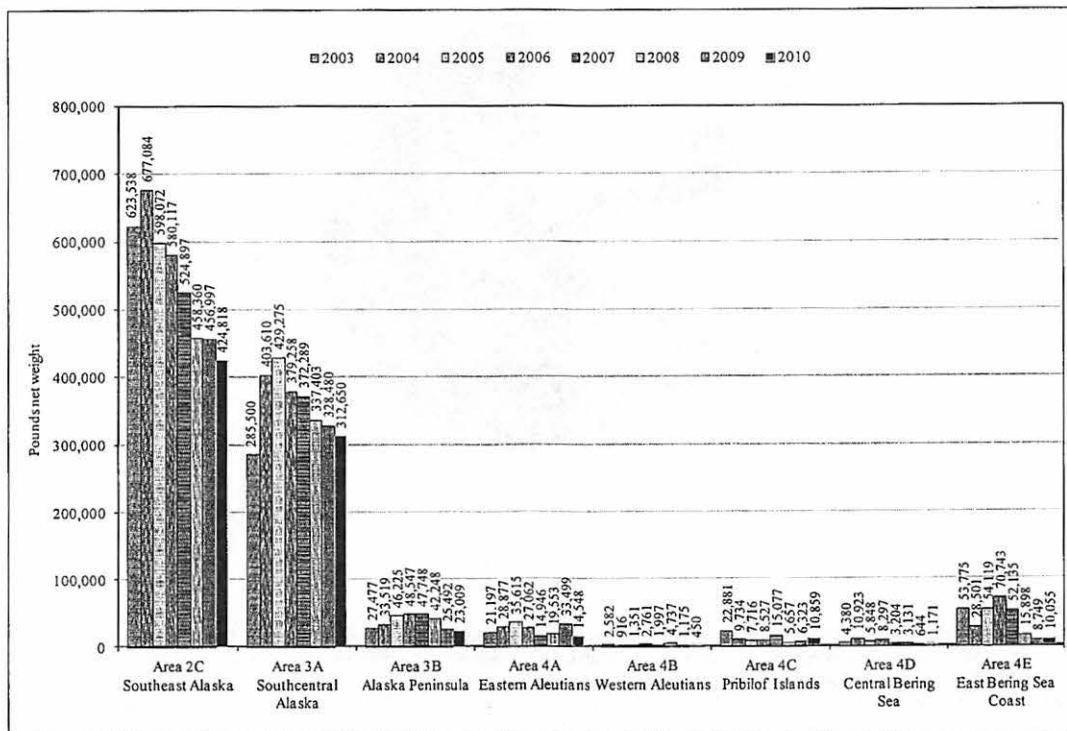


Figure 17.—Estimated subsistence halibut harvests, pounds net weight, by regulatory area fished, 2003–2010.

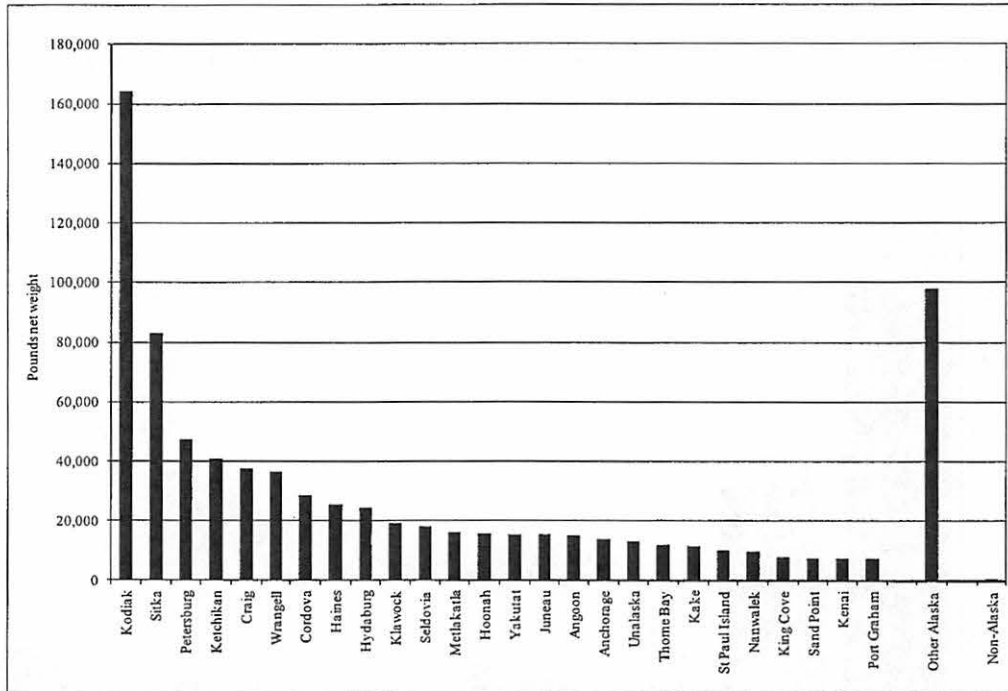


Figure 22.—Alaska subsistence halibut harvests by place of residence, 2010.

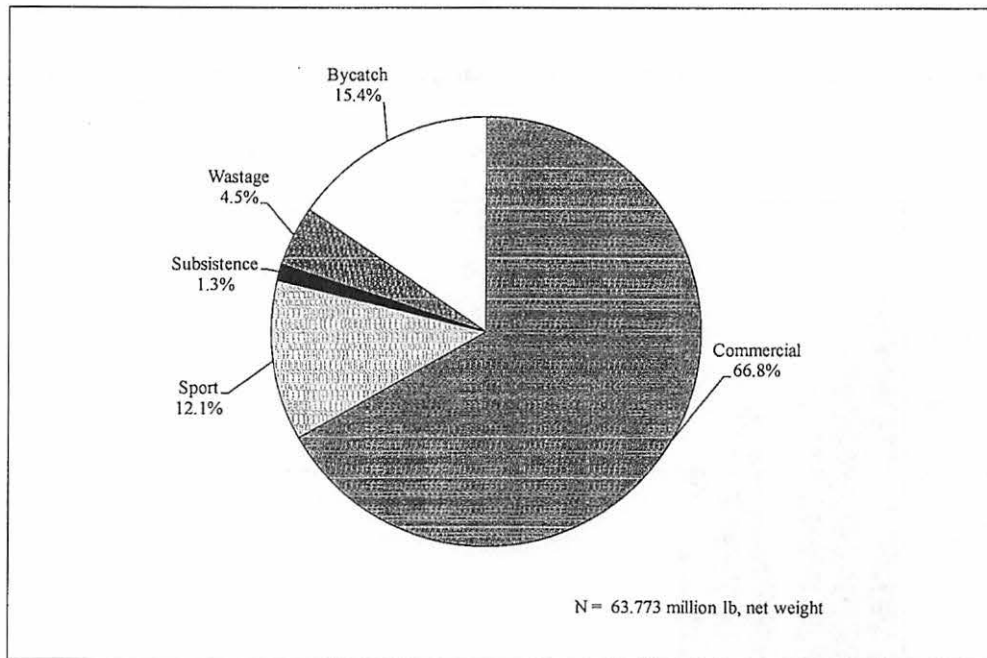


Figure 33.—Halibut removals, Alaska, 2010.

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