

Council motion
February 4, 2012

D-1(a) GOA Chinook bycatch in non-pollock trawl fisheries

The Council moves the following problem statement and alternatives for preliminary review. Note: additions are underlined while strike-outs represent deletions from the previous suite of alternatives. The problem statement was revised significantly, and is not in redline/strikeout form.

Problem statement:

Magnuson-Stevens Act National Standards require balancing achieving optimum yield with minimizing bycatch, while minimizing adverse impacts on fishing dependent communities. Chinook salmon prohibited species catch (PSC) taken incidentally in GOA trawl fisheries is a concern, and incidental take is limited in the Biological Opinion for ESA-listed Chinook salmon stocks. The Council recently adopted a PSC limit of 25,000 Chinook salmon for the Western and Central GOA pollock trawl fisheries, while also indicating an intent to evaluate Chinook salmon bycatch in the non-pollock GOA trawl fisheries, which currently do not have a Chinook salmon bycatch control measure.

The following alternatives apply to non-pollock trawl fisheries in the Central and Western GOA.

Alternative 1: Status quo.

Alternative 2: 5,000, 7,500, or 10,000 Chinook salmon PSC limit (hard cap).

Option 1: Apportion limit between Central and Western GOA.

Option 2: Apportion limit by ~~directed fishery~~ operational type (CV vs. CP).

Applies to both options: Apportion proportional to historic average bycatch of Chinook salmon (5- or 10-year average).

~~Alternative 3: Mandatory salmon bycatch control cooperative membership.~~

~~In order to fish in the Central or Western GOA trawl fisheries a vessel must be a member of a salmon bycatch control cooperative for the area where they are participating. Cooperative formation will be annual with a minimum threshold (number of licenses).~~

~~Cooperative contractual agreements would include measures to control Chinook salmon bycatch, promote gear innovation, salmon hotspot reporting, and monitoring individual vessel bycatch performance. Annual cooperative reports to the Council would include the contractual agreements and successes and failures for salmon bycatch controls by season and calendar year.~~

~~The below alternatives applies to all trawl fisheries in the Central and Western GOA.~~

Alternative ~~3~~⁴: Full retention of salmon.

Vessels will retain all salmon bycatch until the number of salmon has been determined by the vessel or plant observer and the observer's collection of any scientific data or biological samples from the salmon has been completed.

~~Option: Deploy electronic monitoring or observers to monitor for discards in order to validate salmon census data for use in catch accounting.~~