
C4: Amendment to the Scallop FMP

Initial/Final analysis

Council: April 2023

Introduction

Analysis for the Proposed Amendment to allow flexibility in the specification process in the Fishery Management Plan for the Scallop Fishery off Alaska

- **April 2022 Council Initiated an analysis**

Strawman Purpose and Need Statement:

- *“Scallops have had conservative GHs for scallops and stable harvest specifications for some time. Given the lack of assessment modeling approaches, the Council supports a decrease in assessment frequency which would reduce the burden on staff and review resources and provide more time for the development of new assessment methods. The FMP requires that a SAFE report be produced annually, and an FMP amendment would be required to accommodate an alternative assessment cycle. The Council initiates an analysis to amend the Scallop FMP to the extent that it allows greater flexibility in scheduling the SAFE report cycle and scallop harvest specification timing”*



Draft Alternatives

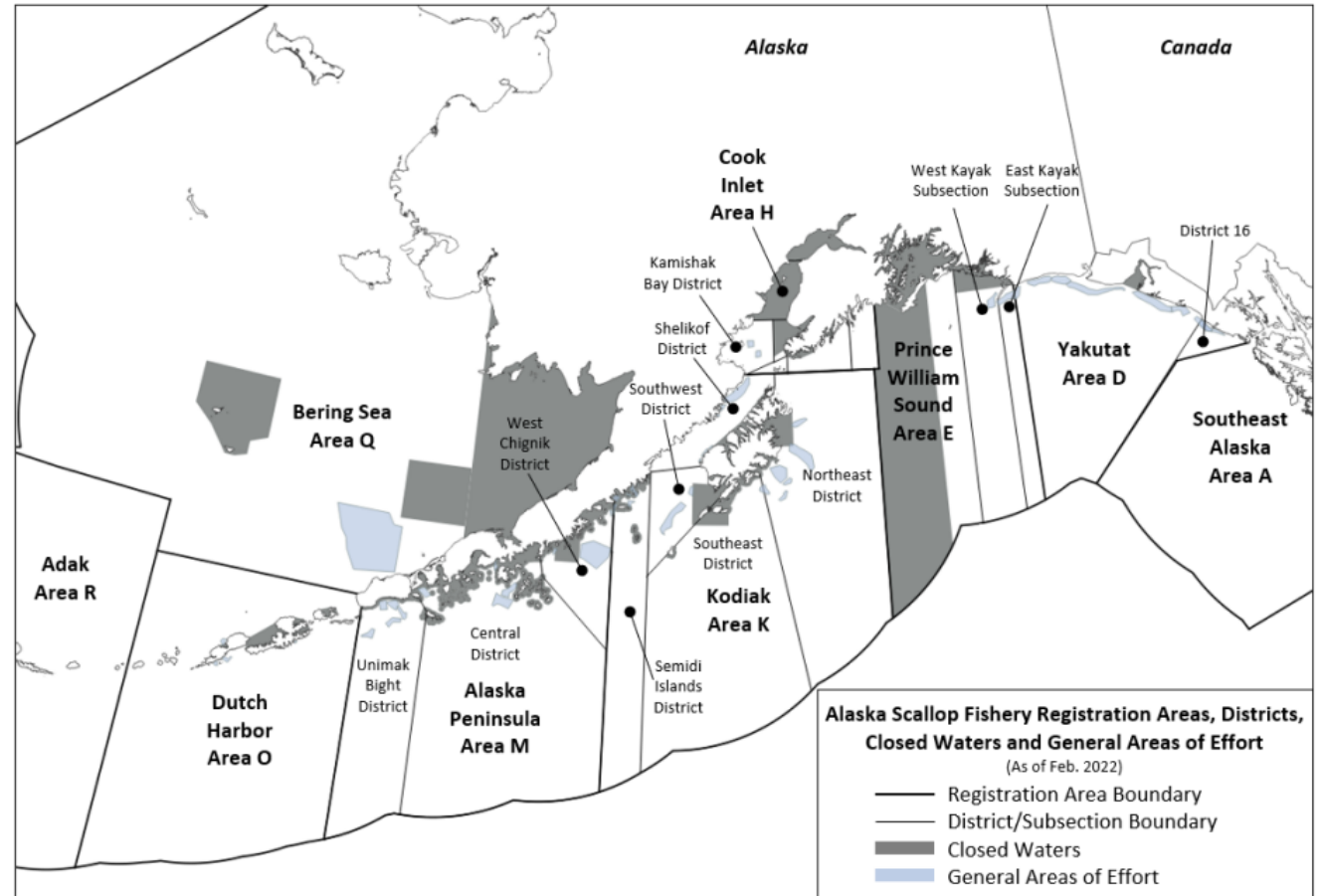
Draft Alternatives:

- Alternative 1: No action; status quo
- Alternative 2: Revise the Scallop FMP to remove the requirement for annual specifications



Scallop Fishery

- Scallop FMP:
 - 9 scallop registration areas
 - Abundance is estimated for 3 areas only:
 - Kamishak (Area H)
 - Kodiak NE (Area K)
 - Kodiak Shelikof (Area K)
- Weathervane Scallop season July 1-February 15
 - Kamishak district- August 15-October 31



Historical Harvest Specifications

Season	Total Removals (lb meats)	OFL (lb meats)	ABC (lb meats)	% OFL	% ABC
1993/94	984,583	1,800,000	1,620,000	54.7	60.8
1994/95	1,240,775	1,800,000	1,620,000	68.9	76.6
1995/96	410,743	1,800,000	1,620,000	22.8	25.4
1996/97	732,424	1,800,000	1,620,000	40.7	45.2
1997/98	818,913	1,800,000	1,620,000	45.5	50.6
1998/99	822,096	1,240,000	1,116,000	66.3	73.7
1999/00	837,971	1,240,000	1,116,000	67.6	75.1
2000/01	750,617	1,240,000	1,116,000	60.5	67.3
2001/02	572,838	1,240,000	1,116,000	46.2	51.3
2002/03	509,455	1,240,000	1,116,000	41.1	45.7
2003/04	492,000	1,240,000	1,116,000	39.7	44.1
2004/05	425,477	1,240,000	1,116,000	34.3	38.1
2005/06	525,357	1,240,000	1,116,000	42.4	47.1
2006/07	487,473	1,240,000	1,116,000	39.3	43.7
2007/08	458,313	1,240,000	1,116,000	37.0	41.1
2008/09	342,434	1,240,000	1,116,000	27.6	30.7
2009/10	512,958	1,240,000	1,116,000	41.4	46.0
2010/11	481,509	1,240,000	1,116,000	38.8	43.1
2011/12	461,946	1,284,000	1,156,000	36.0	40.0
2012/13	424,491	1,284,000	1,156,000	33.1	36.7
2013/14	408,101	1,284,000	1,156,000	31.8	35.3
2014/15	314,364	1,284,000	1,156,000	24.5	27.2
2015/16	261,930	1,284,000	1,156,000	20.4	22.7
2016/17	236,559	1,284,000	1,156,000	18.4	20.5
2017/18	250,591	1,284,000	1,156,000	19.5	21.7
2018/19	250,372	1,284,000	1,156,000	19.5	21.7
2019/20	246,900	1,284,000	1,156,000	19.2	21.4
2020/21	234,662	1,284,000	1,156,000	18.3	20.3
2021/22	311,978	1,284,000	1,156,000	24.3	27.0
2022/23	345,690	1,284,000	1,156,000	26.9	29.9

- Historically, the OFL and ABC have been set based definition of OY as defined in the FMP.
 - OFL and ABC are set based on the OY re-defined in 2012 (Amendment 13), when OY was re-defined as 0 to 1.284 million lb (585 t) of shucked meats to include estimated discards over the reference time frame. Annual specifications have been defined as: max OFL = OY, and ABC = 90% of OFL.
 - (90% OFL=1.156 mil lbs)
 - Alaska scallop harvests have not exceeded OY in any year since it was first established (Table 3-1).



Effects of the Alternatives

- **Alternative 1:** would maintain the current scallop FMP, and continue annual stock assessment fishery evaluation (SAFE) timing. This cycle would require the scallop plan team (SPT) and SSC to review the SAFE and set fishery specifications on an annual basis.
- **Alternative 2:** Council flexibility in modifying assessment cycle timing, with the potential to set multi-year specifications.
 - Given the consistency of the OFL/ABC in previous years, the use of multi-year specification setting process would be advantageous in time and resources.
 - However, If, in the future, a formal stock assessment model is developed, or there is a decrease in estimated stock abundance, the Council could request that the scallop SAFE be reviewed on an annual basis under the proposed alternative 2.
 - Other data-deficient stocks, such as Pribilof Island Golden King crab and Western Aleutian Island Red King crab set their harvest specifications on a triennial basis.
 - The assessment cycle timing can be defined in the SAFE document, with guidance from the Council to allow flexibility to shift assessment timing if the status of the stock warrants a more frequent assessment.



Proposed draft FMP Amendment Text

Additions are in bold, removals are ~~struck through~~.

1. Update Table of Contents as needed.
- 2.* (Section 1.1), Add Amendment 16 summary with text description below:
Amendment 16: Revise Specification timing
In April 2023, the Council adopted Amendment 16 to the FMP for the Scallop Fishery off Alaska. This action revised timing descriptions for Stock Assessment Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) reports and the harvest specification setting process.
3. (Section 2.2.2, #7 Research and Management Objective, page 13)
~~An annual~~ Stock Assessment Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report discussing current biological and economic status of the fisheries, guideline harvest ranges, and support for different management decisions or changes in harvest strategies will be prepared by the State (ADF&G lead agency), with NMFS and scallop plan team input when appropriate.
4. (Section 3.1.1.2, page 20) *Revise the sentence as follows:*
~~Annually,~~ The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee will set a statewide ABC for the weathervane scallop fishery prior to the beginning of the fishing season(s).
- 5.* (Section 3.1.1.2, page 20) *Revise the paragraph as follows:*

Overfishing Limit (OFL). The OFL will be used to determine if overfishing occurs in a given year. Overfishing occurs if the total catch exceeds the OFL.....**It may be appropriate to establish OFL on a multi-year basis based on stability of the stock status and the determination of harvest specification that are not likely to fluctuate significantly from year to year that would result in exceeding OFL.**
6. (Section 4.4. page 34) *Revise the sentence as follows:*

Vessel participation and total catch by registration area and year are published in the ~~annually updated~~ Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report compiled by the Scallop Plan Team of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.
7. Update chapter numbering for Ecosystem Component heading from 4.3.5 to 4.4.1 (Page 34)
8. (Section 4.4.1 Page 34) *Revise the sentence as follows:*
Evaluation of EC species bycatch in the weathervane scallop fishery occurs ~~annually~~ through the existing Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report process. process. The SAFE report ~~annually~~ summarizes best available scientific information on EC species.



National Standards

- Proposed action alternatives would address all the National Standards.
- NS1 particularly: Conservation and management measures shall prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continuing basis, the optimum yield from each fishery for the United States fishing industry.
 1. The Council should identify in its FMP or FMP amendment, circumstances when the multi-year approach is appropriate and will be used.
 - a) *It may be appropriate to establish OFL on a multi-year basis based on stability of the stock status and the determination of harvest specification that are not likely to fluctuate significantly from year to year that would result in exceeding OFL.*
 2. A multiyear plan must provide that, if an ACL is exceeded for a year, then AMs are implemented for the next year consistent with paragraph (g)(3) of this section.
 - a) Accountability measures are defined within the current FMP. If the ACL (ABC) is exceeded in one year, the following year the State must adjust the GHL downward.



Questions?

