

Agenda Item: "B-3"



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
REPORT TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL
April 2008**

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

Salmon Troll Fishery (FIGURE 1)

The winter fishery opened on October 11, 2007. The season remains open through April 30, 2008 unless 45,000-treaty chinook salmon are harvested prior to that date. The fishery is confined to those waters of Southeast that are east of the winter boundary line and includes the waters of Yakutat Bay. To date, 315 permits have made 1,659 landings totaling approximately 11,421 chinook salmon. Price remains the highest seen for this period and is averaging nearly \$9.00 per pound. Weather on the grounds has been a big factor in slowing catch rates, but it also appears that locations that produced high, historical catches are not contributing much to this season's catch. However, keep in mind that 25-30 percent of the entire winter catch over the past 4 years has been taken in the last 7-10 days of the fishery.

Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab (FIGURE 2)

The 2006/07 Area O (Aleutian Islands) commercial golden king crab fishery opened Tuesday, August 15, 2007. The total allowable catch (TAC) is 5.7 million pounds. The TAC is apportioned east and west of 174° W longitude. There have been 36 landings in this fishery, and the eastern Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) TAC of 2.7 million pounds has been harvest at this time. The western IFQ TAC is 2.43 million pounds. To date, about 77 percent (1.87 million pounds) of the IFQ TAC has been harvested in 29 landings. The golden king crab fishery in the Aleutian Islands remains open through May 15, 2008.

Bering Sea Snow Crab (FIGURE 3)

The 2007/08 Bering Sea snow crab fishery opened on October 15, 2007 and will remain open through May 15, 2008 in the Eastern Subdistrict and through May 31, 2008 in the Western Subdistrict. The TAC for the IFQ fleet is 56.7 million pounds. In the fishery, 371 landings have produced approximately 48 million pounds of crab to date.

Bering Sea Tanner Crab (FIGURE 4)

The season opened on October 15, 2007 and closed on March 31, 2008. The Bering Sea District Tanner crab stock was managed east and west of 166° W longitude, with a separate TAC for each area. The final harvest was 1.64 million pounds, or 32 percent of the IFQ TAC. This may be the result of much lower Catch Per Unit of Effort in this fishery (30-40 per pot) rather than in the snow crab fishery (more than 300-400 per pot), as well as limited markets for this season's Tanner crab (60 percent old shell).

Central Region Pacific Cod (FIGURE 5)

Prince William Sound

The Prince William Sound state managed Pacific cod season opened on February 21, 2008, which was seven days after the close of the federal fishery. The GHL is 944,460 pounds, which was calculated as 10 percent of the federal Eastern Gulf ABC. No activity has been reported for the area at this time.

Cook Inlet

The Cook Inlet state managed Pacific cod season opened on February ~~21~~²¹, 2008, which was 24 hours after the close of the federal fishery. The GHL is at 3,246,582 pounds. That GHL is calculated as 3.75 percent of the Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) for the federal Central Gulf of Alaska area. There are 12 pot vessels registered to participate in the fishery at this time. The harvest to date is approaching one million pounds.

Westward Region Pacific Cod (FIGURE 6)

Kodiak Pacific Cod (FIGURE 7)

The Kodiak Area state-waters Pacific cod season opened on Wednesday, February 27, 2008, which was seven days after the close of the federal fishery. However, the National Marine Fisheries Service made an error in their Central Gulf (CGOA) inshore closure and reopened for 24 hours (Friday – Saturday). The State opted to keep state-waters fishery open and not reopen parallel fishery. The 2008 state-waters guideline harvest level (GHL) is 10.44 million pounds. The GHL is allocated 50 percent to mechanical jig and hand troll gears and 50 percent to pot gear, or 5.22 million pounds each. Vessel operators fishing with pot gear on vessels that are longer than 58 feet overall length are restricted to 25 percent of the GHL (2.61 million pounds) before September 1.

A 60-pot limit is in effect for the state-waters season and vessels are limited to 5 jig machines or hand troll lines with no more than 30 hooks per line.

Effort in this fishery was up slightly this season given high prices, and catches were good. The Kodiak Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery closed for all vessels using pot gear on Wednesday, March 26, 2008 when it was estimated that the final harvest should approach their initial allocation.

Chignik Pacific Cod (FIGURE 8)

The state waters Pacific cod fishery in Chignik opened by regulation on March 1. The GHL is 7.31 million pounds, with pot vessels targeting 90 percent of that

amount. Pot cod catches have been good, with approximately 2 million pounds harvested to date. No jig effort has occurred at this time.

South Alaska Peninsula Pacific Cod (FIGURE 9)

South Alaska opened March 7, 2008, which was seven days after the close of the federal fishery. The GHL is approximately 14.29 million pounds, with 85 percent targeted by pot gear. Catches have been good, with about 6 million pounds harvested by that sector to date. No jig effort has taken place at this time.

Aleutian Islands Pacific Cod (FIGURE 10)

The AI Pacific cod fishery opened on March 10 at noon and closed on March 18 at midnight. The quota was 8.148 million pounds. A total of three longline vessels, 6 pot vessels (two were CPs) and 23 trawl vessels (one was a CP) registered for the fishery. Additionally, four floating processors and one shore based processor took deliveries. Preliminary numbers show that approximately 7.55 million pounds was harvested during this fishery. Therefore, by regulation, approximately 500,000 pounds will be rolled over into the June 10, 2008 B season.

Southeast Groundfish (FIGURE 11)

The directed fisheries for Demersal Shelf Rockfish (DSR) opened in Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI) waters and a portion of the Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) waters on January 5, 2008. Quotas were established at 17 metric tons (mt) in each area. The final harvest was 5mt harvested in NSEI, and no harvest occurred in SSEI.

Directed fisheries were also opened on February 1, 2008 in East Yakutat (EYKT) and Southern Southeast Outside (SSEO) waters. These were the first directed fisheries since 2005 and 2004, respectively. The EYKT quota was 56 mt, and approximately 22 mt was harvested. In SSEO, the quota was 31 mt, of which about 20 mt was harvested. Bad weather in the month of February limited effort.

All DSR fisheries closed March 7, 2008 the day before the Halibut IFQ season opened. The department will be sampling DSR bycatch from the IFQ fishery this year to fill in sampling goals for areas without a directed DSR fishery or for those areas in which biological sampling goals were not met.

High prices (\$0.60 per pound) have created significant interest in the Pacific cod fishery in NSEI this season. There has been approximately 311,000 lbs landed since the first of the year. Effort has dropped off some in recent weeks.

Lingcod bycatch in the longline fisheries was closed in NSEI on February 23, 2008. Longline bycatch remains open in the remaining areas of Southeast.

The directed lingcod fishery, as well as lingcod bycatch in the troll fishery does not open until May 16, 2008.

There has been no effort yet in the directed fishery for black rockfish.

The SSEI (Clarence Strait) sablefish quota will remain unchanged from last year. The quota is 696,000 round pounds. Equal quota share will be 21,750 round pounds for the 32 permit holders. The SSEI longline fishery will open on June 1, 2008.

The NSEI (Clarence Strait) sablefish quota has not yet been released.

Alaska Board of Fisheries (FIGURE 12)

The Alaska Board of Fisheries met in Anchorage from March 3-8, 2008. Proposals of interest to the Council, and their outcome, include:

Proposal 368 – Provides for voluntary transfer of CDQ allocation overage between groups – CARRIED AS AMENDED

Proposal 369 – Provides for partial observer coverage in the Bering Sea Tanner crab fishery (allows the department to require up to 100 percent coverage) – CARRIED AS AMENDED

Proposal 370 – Modify preseason vessel registration requirements for rationalized fisheries – CARRIED AS AMENDED

Proposal 372 – Clarify IFQ crab fisheries management plan – CARRIED AS AMENDED

Proposal 373 – Define incidental and directed Tanner crab fishing for rationalized fisheries and clarify registration for concurrent harvest of Tanner crab with Bristol Bay red king crab and Bering Sea snow crab – CARRIED AS AMENDED

Proposal 375 – Clarify gear storage for rationalized crab fisheries – CARRIED AS AMENDED

Proposal 376 – Repeal Tanner and snow crab pot limit and buoy tags – CARRIED AS AMENDED.

Proposal 377 – Repeal Bristol Bay pot limit and buoy tags – CARRIED AS AMENDED

Proposal 378 – Allow 20 pots configured for groundfish to capture bait for use in the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery – AMENDED AND TABLED TO APRIL 2008 FOR FINAL ACTION

Proposal 380 – Develop a Pribilof red king crab management plan – FAILED

Proposal 381 - Reduce or repeal the St. Matthew blue king crab minimum total allowable catch for fishery to open – FAILED

Proposal 382 – Increase the biodegradable cotton thread size for golden king crab
– FAILED

Proposal 383 – Increase harvest level in the AI golden king crab fishery – 3.15 million pounds east of 174° W Longitude, and 2.835 million pounds west of 174° W Longitude until the stock assessment model can be established – CARRIED AS AMENDED

Proposal 384 – Increase time that golden king crab gear may be left unattended prior to storage – FAILED

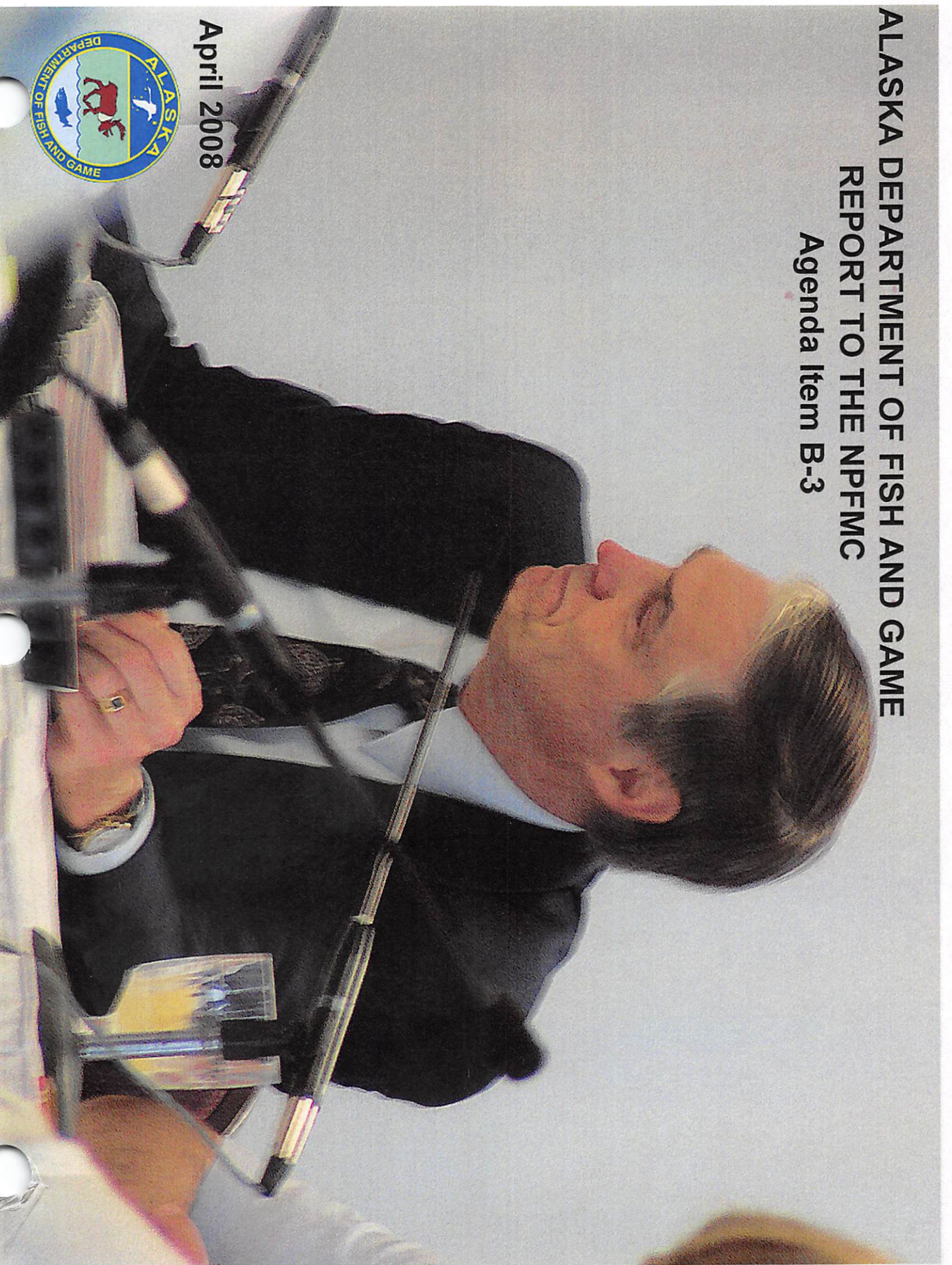
Proposal 402 – Develop new management measures to prevent overharvest and ensure accurate accounting, biological sampling, and enforcement of state waters scallop harvest – TABLED TO OCTOBER 2008

Proposal 403 – Update definitions to include Dark Rockfish (*S. ciliatus*) – CARRIED AS AMENDED

Proposal 405 – Modify seabird avoidance measures – CARRIED

Other actions – The BOF delegated authority to modify Essential Fish Habitat regulations for complementary action with National Marine Fishery Service regulations.

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Figure 1a. SE AK Winter Troll Fishery, 2007-2008

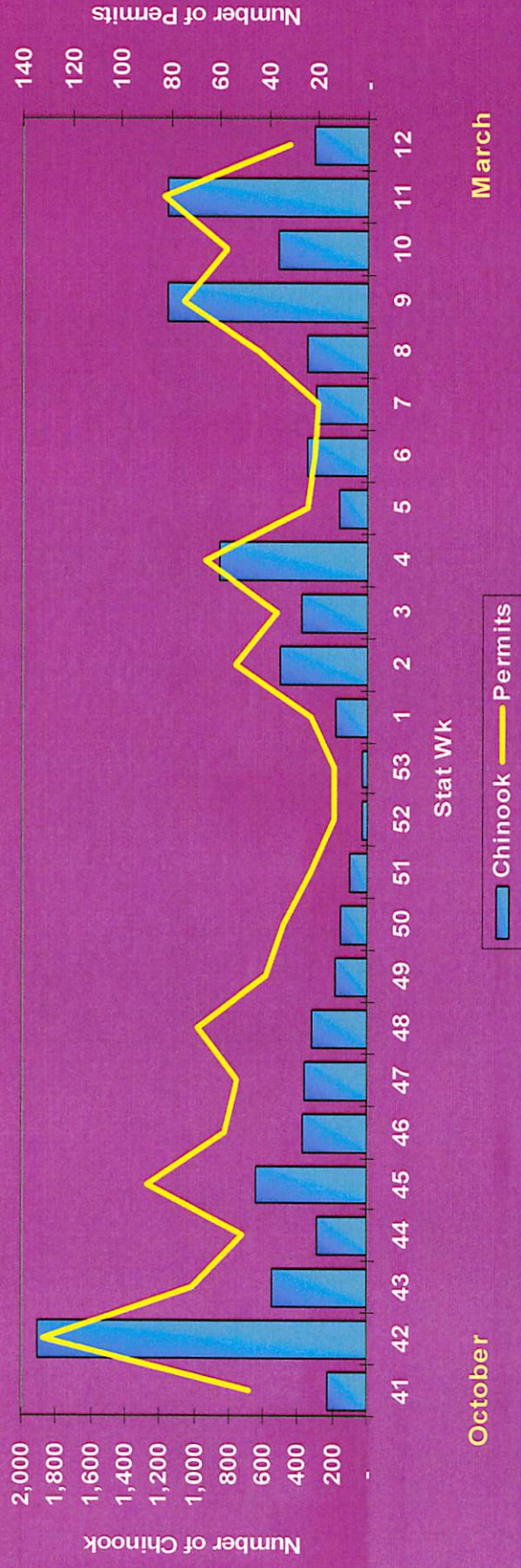


Figure 1b. SE AK Winter Troll Chinook Salmon 2001-2007

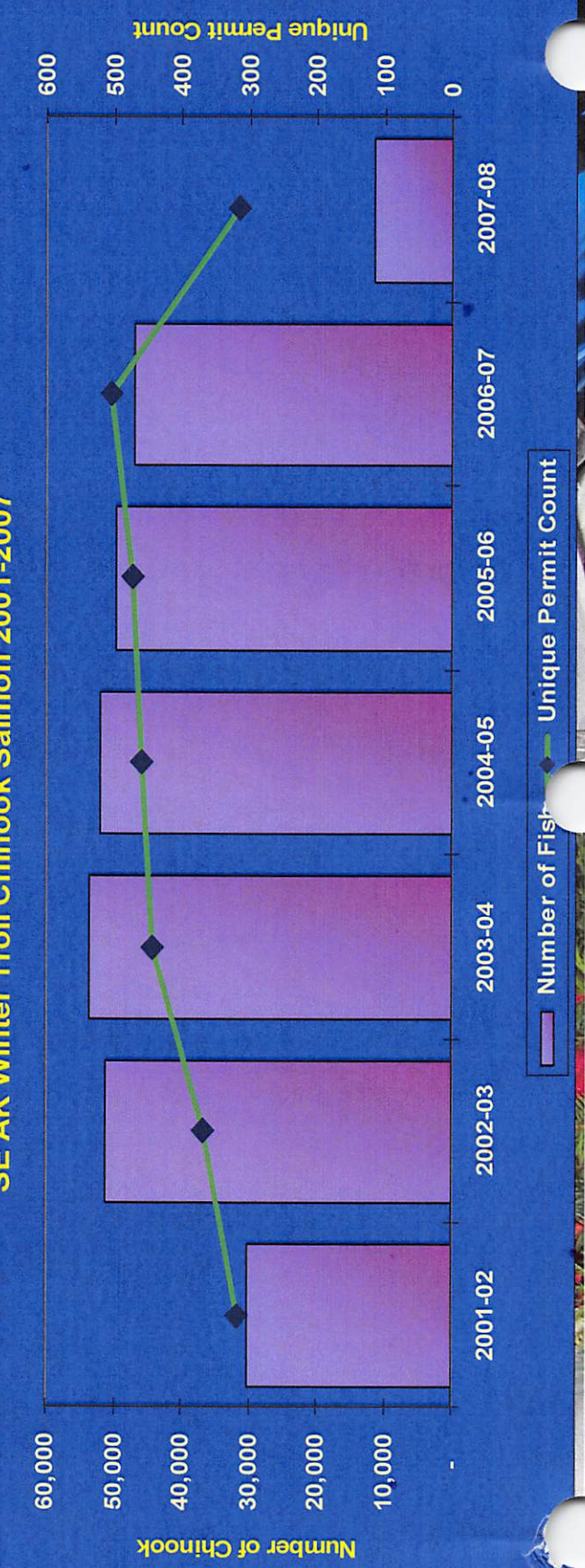


Figure 2.

Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab Fishery

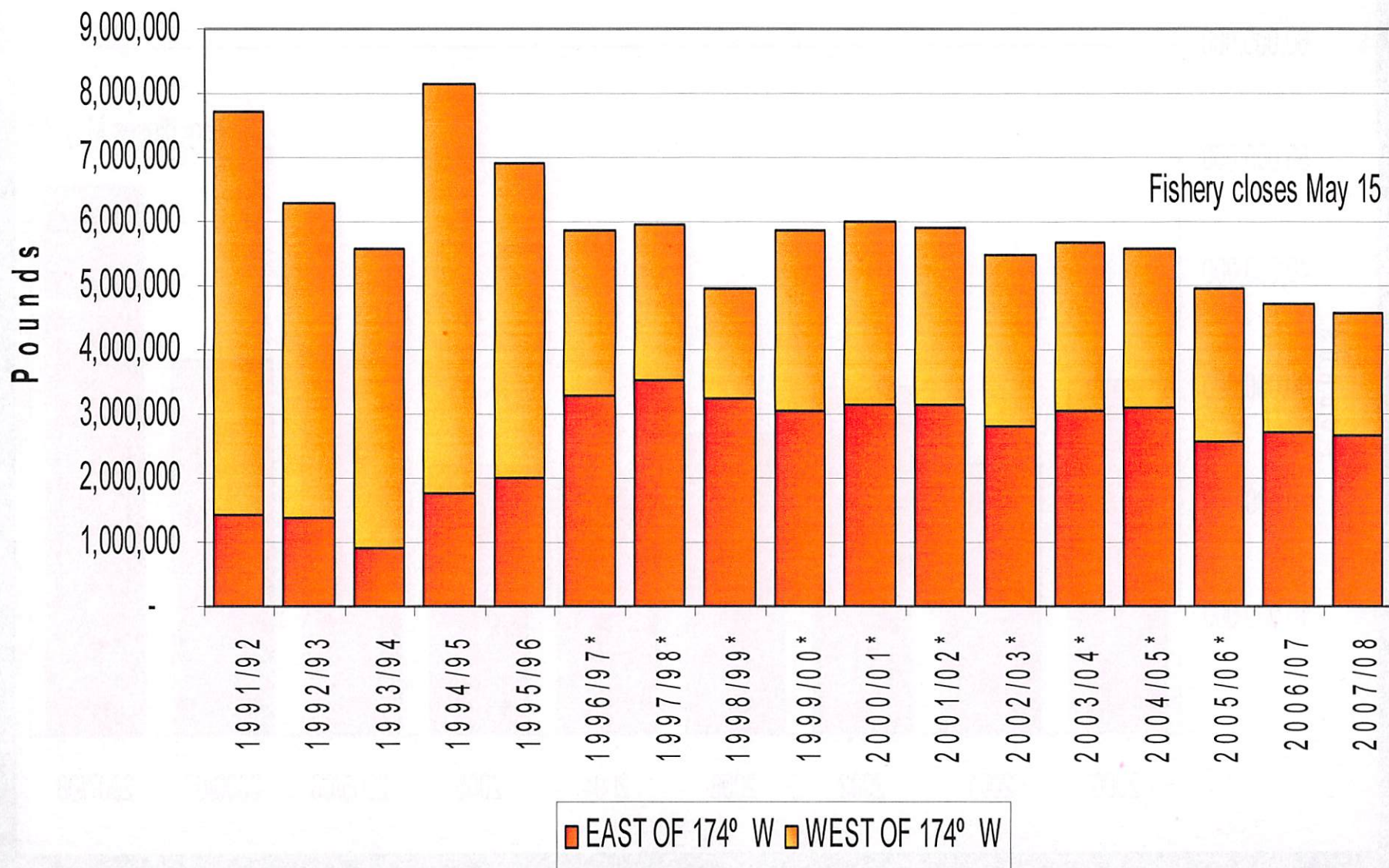


Figure 3.

Bering Sea Snow Crab Harvests

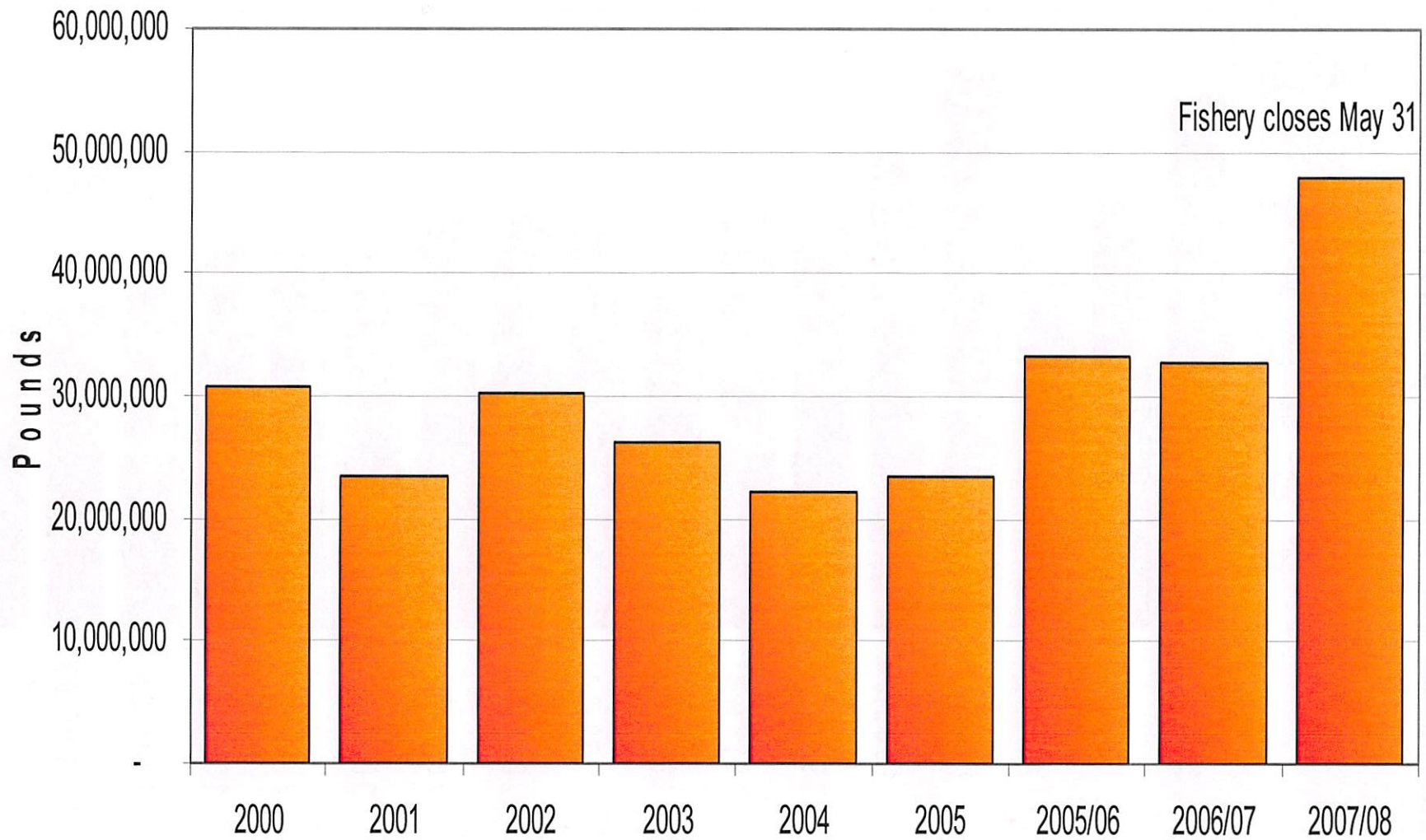


Figure 4.

Bering Sea Tanner Crab Harvests

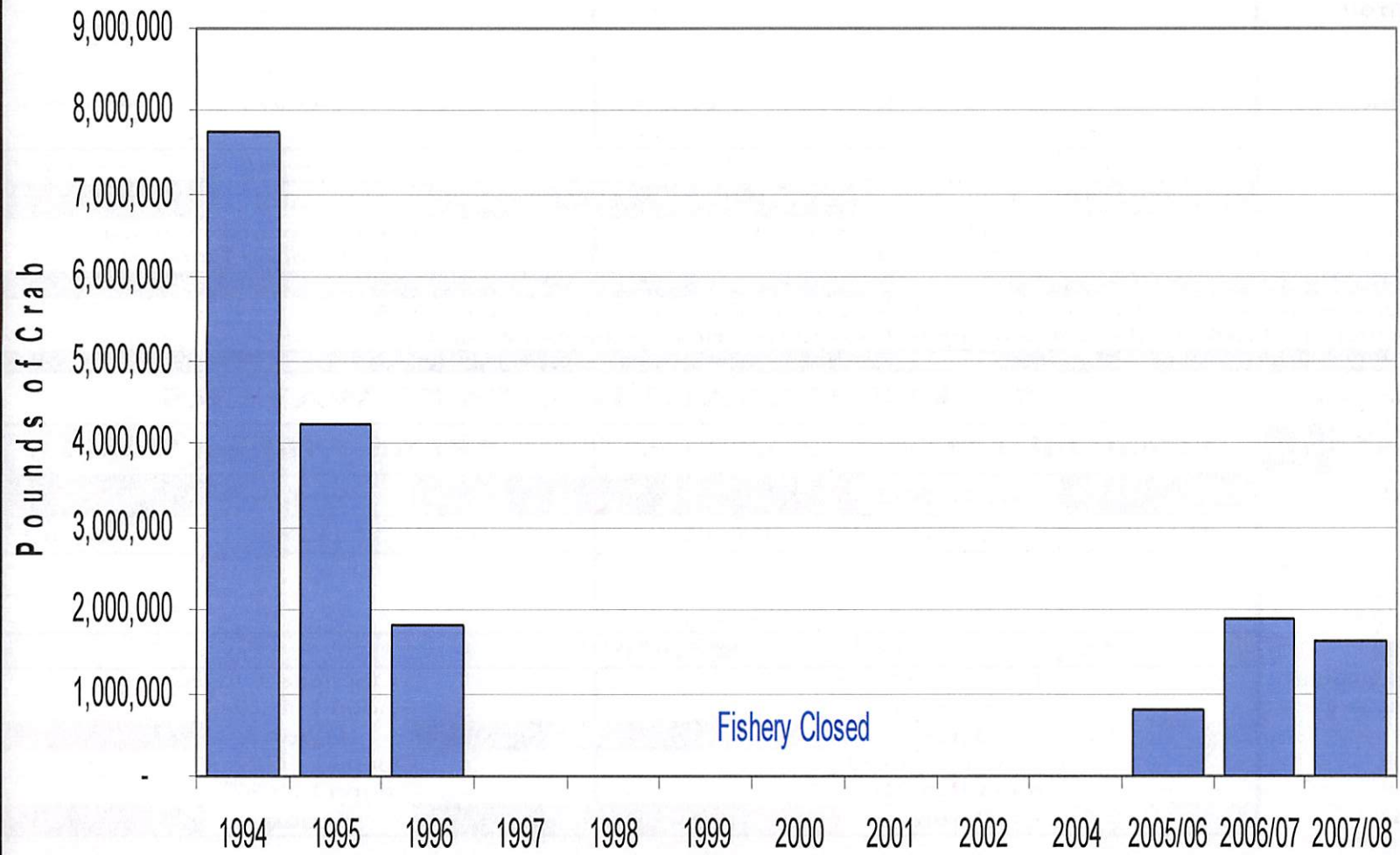


Figure 5. 2008 harvest guideline, effort, and catch reported for state water fisheries through Feb 29

This summary censored for CONFIDENTIAL reports or records.

Pacific Cod	PARALLEL SEASON - STATE WATERS					
	Cook Inlet Management Area			Prince William Sound		
	Vessels	Landings	Pounds	Vessels	Landings	Pounds
Gear						
Hand troll	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jigs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Trawl	-	-	-	-	-	-
Longline	5	9	83,339	2	<i>confidential</i>	<i>confidential</i>
Pots	6	36	111,349	-	-	-
Totals	11	45	194,688	2	<i>confidential</i>	<i>confidential</i>
Status		Bycatch			Bycatch	
Federal seasons:	Directed Opened - Closed			Directed Opened - Closed		
Central Gulf	Jan 1 - noon Feb 20			Jan 1 - noon Feb 20		

Parallel season concurrent with federal waters of the Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA).
Totals include Pacific Cod bycatch to other directed fisheries e.g. halibut & sablefish.

Pacific Cod	*STATE MANAGED - STATE WATERS					
	*Cook Inlet Management Area			*Prince William Sound		
	Vessels	Landings	Pounds	Vessels	Landings	Pounds
GHL (lb)		3,246,582			944,460	
Gear						
Jigs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pots < 58'	10	98	885,020	-	-	-
Pots > 58'	2	<i>confidential</i>	<i>confidential</i>	-	-	-
Totals	12	98	885,020	-	-	-
State seasons:	Opened - Closed			Opened - Closed		
State seasons:	noon Feb 21-			noon Feb 27-		
Jigs		Open			Open	
*Status	Opened - Closed			Opened - Closed		
Pots		noon Feb 21-			noon Feb 27-	
*Status		Open			Open	

*The state managed fishery for Pacific cod opens by emergency order to pot and jig gear under exclusive area registration 24 hours after the Federal closure in Cook Inlet and 7 days in PWS.
Includes only directed fishery harvest.
Gear and exclusive area registrations are not in effect during parallel season.



Figure 6.

2008 STATE MANAGED GROUND FISH

UPDATED :3/24/08

PRELIMINARY PACIFIC COD HARVEST BY FISHERY WEEK



	KODIAK				CHIGNIK				SOUTH ALASKA PENINSULA			
Vessel Registration	Total		Pot	Jig	Total		Pot	Jig	Total		Pot	Jig
Current	68		34	34	20		19	1	48		46	2
Overall	68		34	34	20		19	1	48		46	2
2008 GH L	10.44 Million Pounds				7.31 Million Pounds				14.29 Million Pounds			
ALLOCATIONS:	50% Jigs, 50% Pots				90% Pots, 10% Jigs				85% Pots, 15% Jigs			
	Pots >58' restricted to 25% of total GH L before Sept. 1.											
	Jigs = 5.22 million, Pots = 5.22 million, >58' pots 2.60 before Sept.1				Pots = 6.58 million		Jigs = .73 million		Pots = 12.15 million		Jigs = 2.14 million	
	Pots		Jigs		Pots		Jigs		Pots		Jigs	
DATES:	Landings	Catch	Landings	Catch	Landings	Catch	Landings	Catch	Landings	Catch	Landings	Catch
	Fishery opens 2/27/08 at 12 Noon				Fishery Opens 3/1/08 at 12 Noon				Fishery Opens 3/7/08 at 12 Noon			
2/27-3/1/08	15	291,300	7	9,063	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3/2-3/8/08	53	1,249,349	10	8,939	23	539,053	-	-	11	274,389	-	-
3/9-3/15/08	58	1,681,403	25	51,410	34	867,344	-	-	103	2,809,045	-	-
3/16-3/22/08	59	1,347,068	34	81,788	22	396,284			109	2,799,686	-	-
ACCUMULATIVE	185	4,569,120	76	151,200	79	1,802,681	0	0	223	5,883,120	0	0
CATCH	(Total combined) 4,720,320				(Total combined) 1,802,681				(Total combined) 5,883,120			

Figure 7

Kodiak State Waters Pcod Harvest

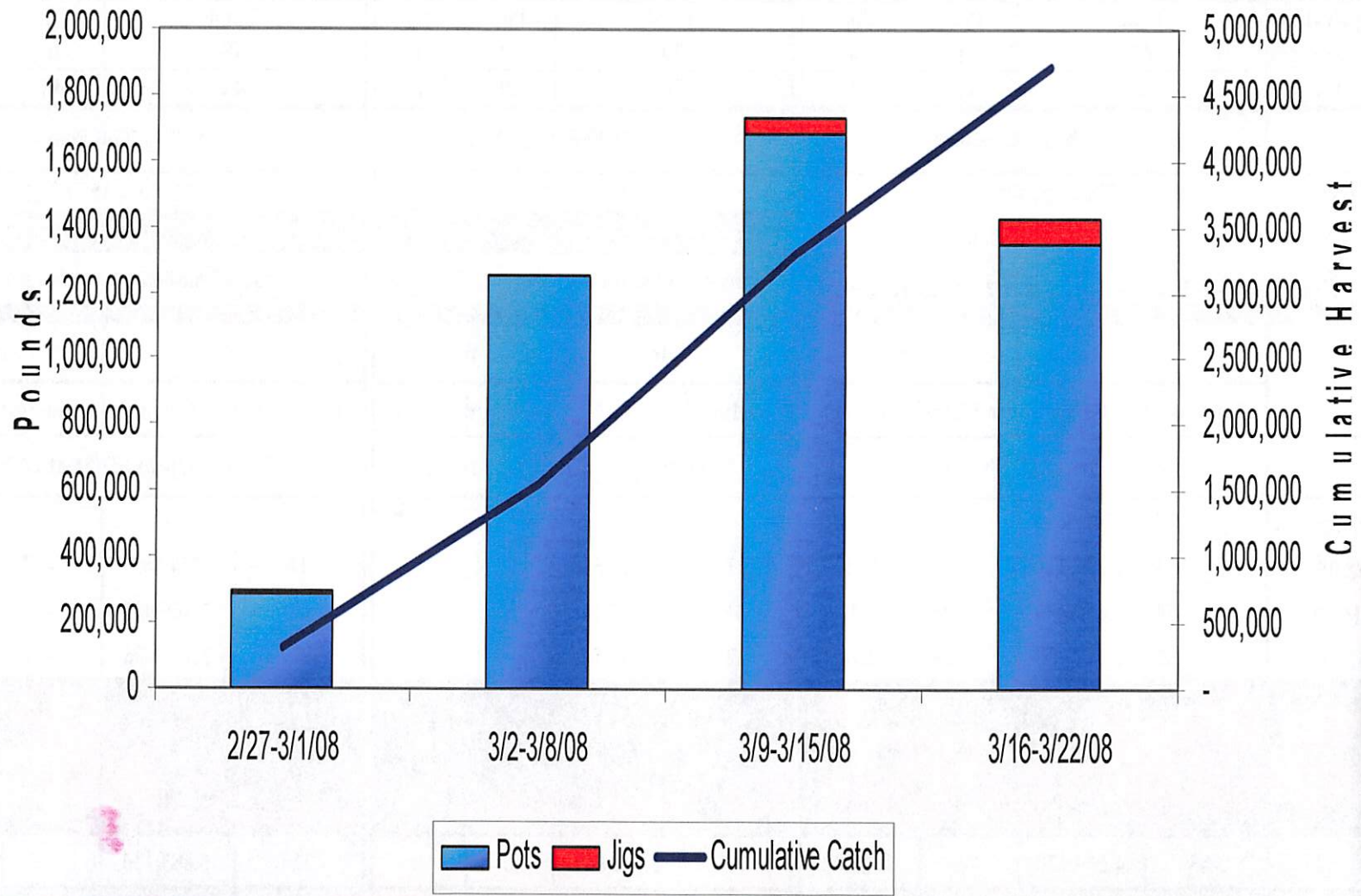


Figure 8

Chignik State Waters Pcod Harvest

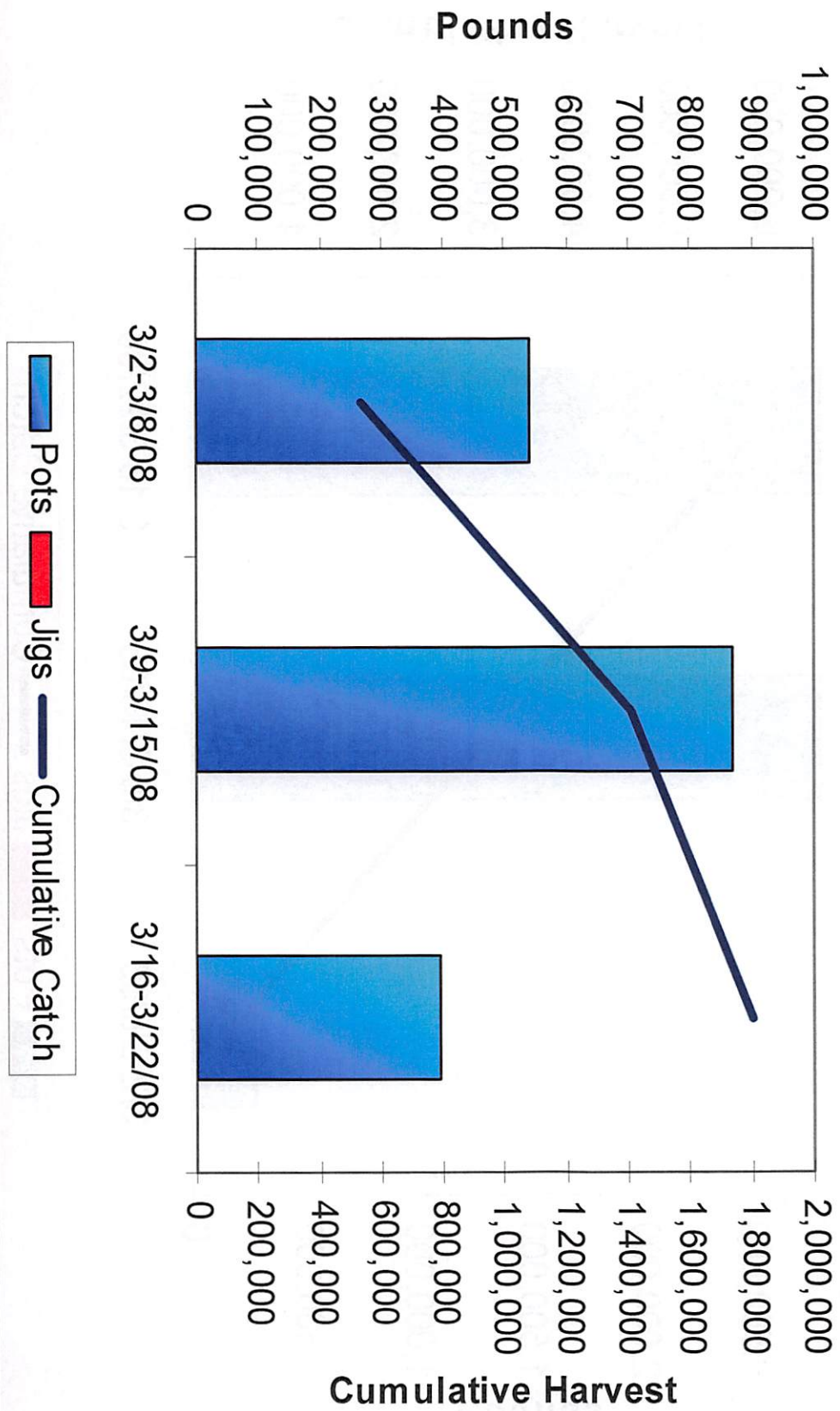
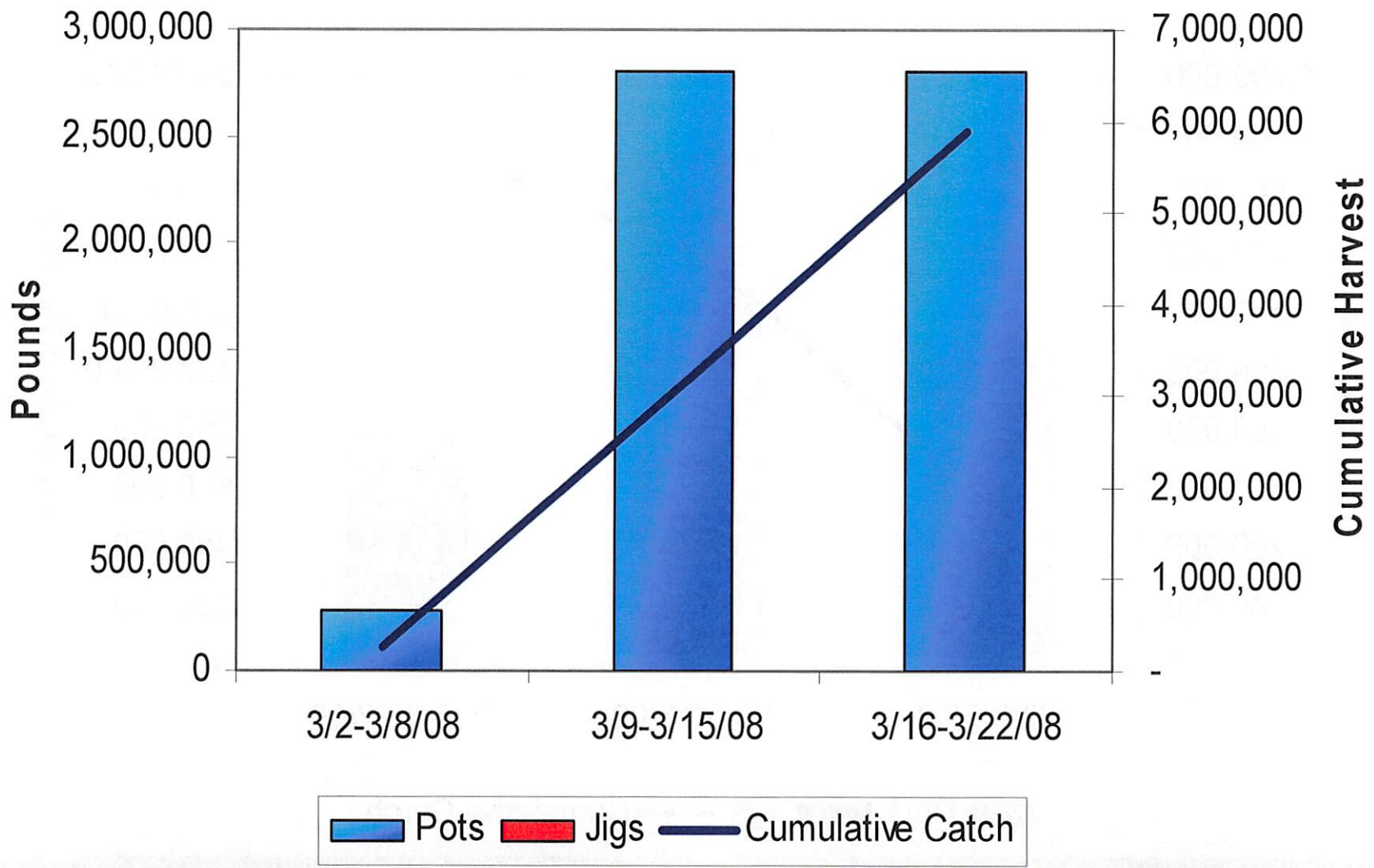


Figure 9

S AK Pen State Waters Pcod Harvest

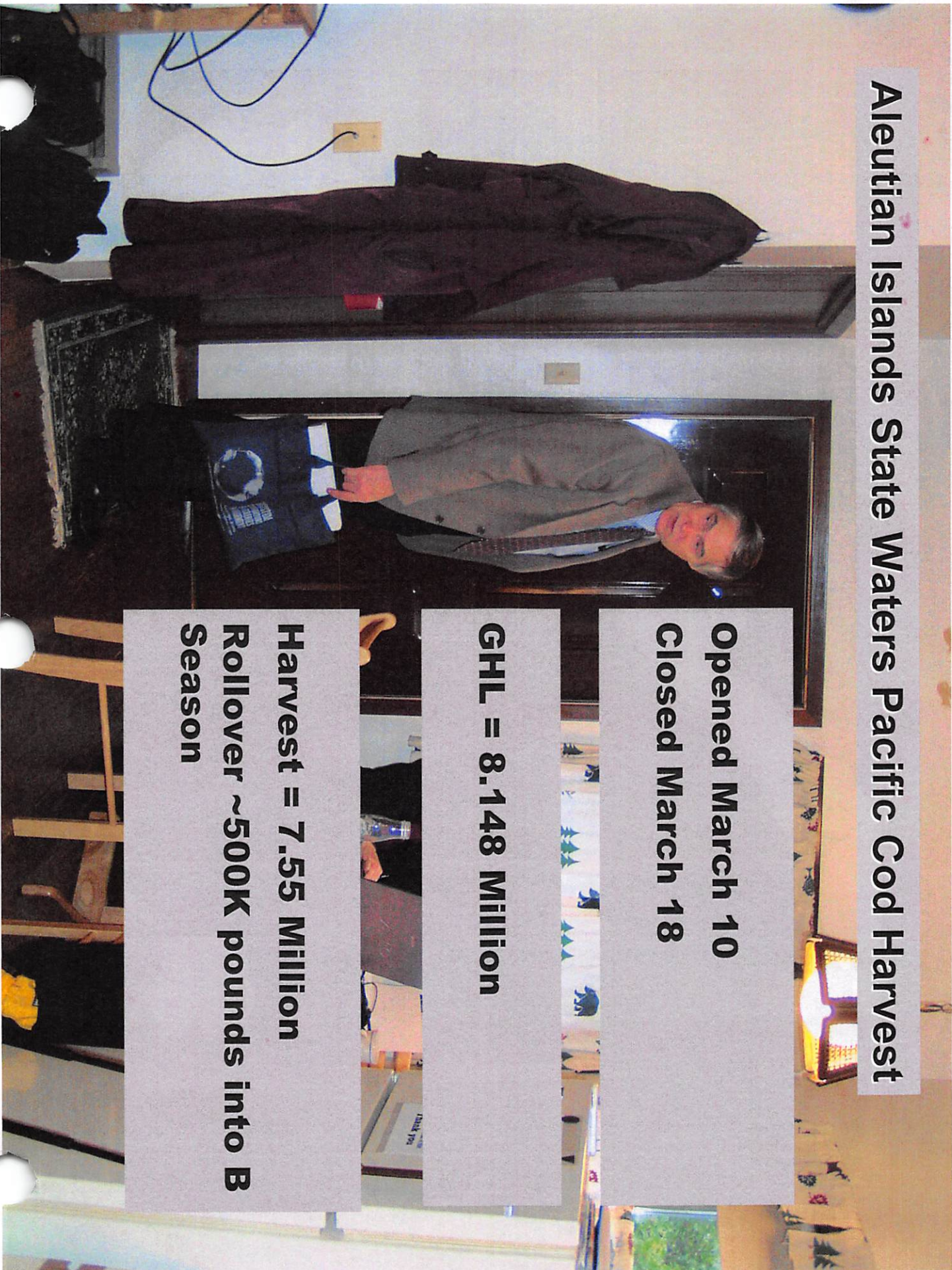


Aleutian Islands State Waters Pacific Cod Harvest

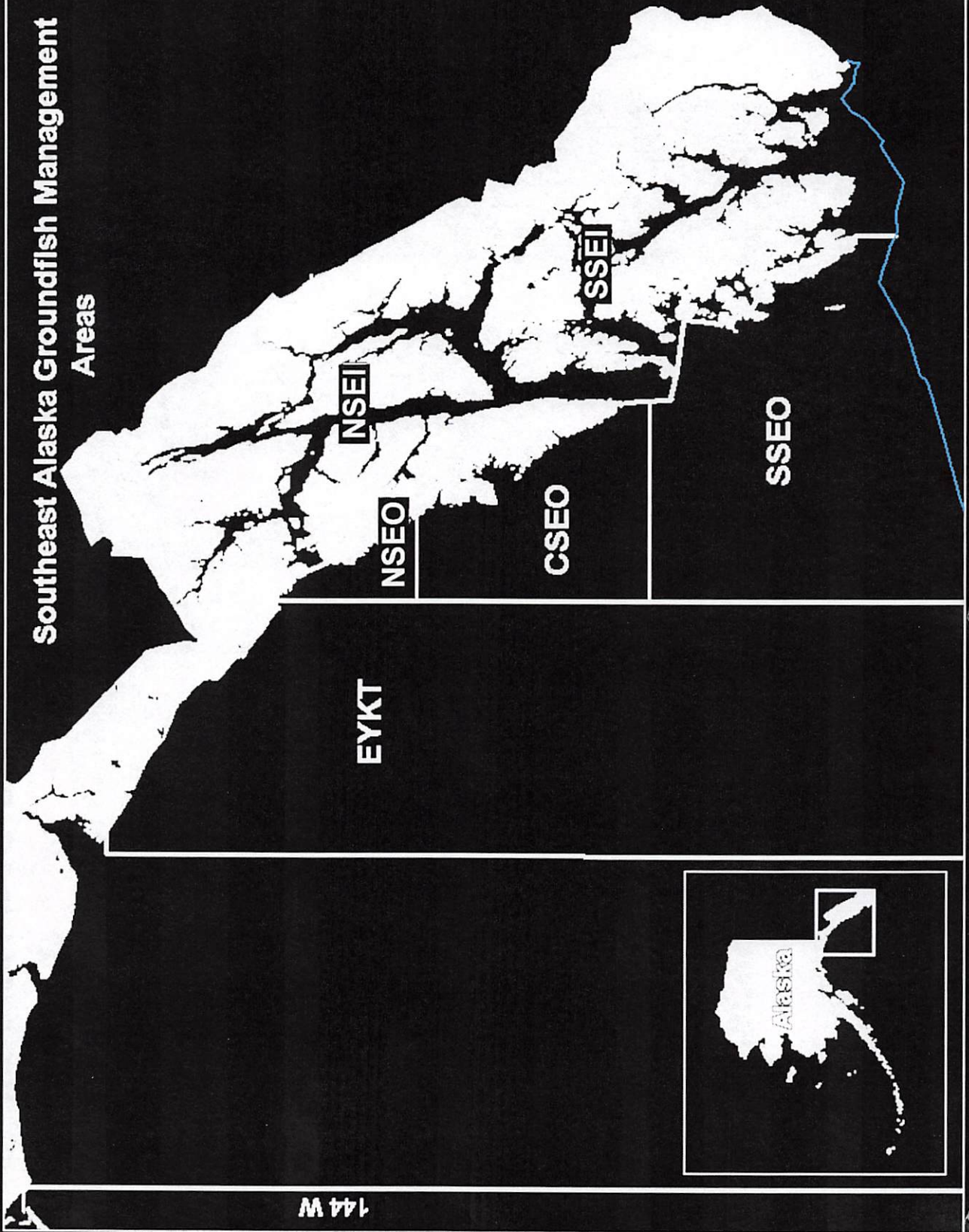
Opened March 10
Closed March 18

GHL = 8.148 Million

Harvest = 7.55 Million
Rollover ~500K pounds into B
Season



Southeast Alaska Groundfish Management Areas



144 W

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