



C7 GOA Pollock, Pacific Cod Seasonal Allocation

December 2018 Council Meeting

Action Memo

Staff: Jim Armstrong, Sam Cunningham
Other Presenters: Bridget Mansfield (NMFS AKRO)
Action Required:

1. Initial review of analysis
2. Consider whether to release for public review
3. Consider whether to identify a preliminary preferred alternative

BACKGROUND

The Council is considering taking action to provide flexibility in the seasonal allocation of pollock and Pacific cod for Central and Western Gulf of Alaska trawl catcher vessels. The Council's intent in exploring this issue is to provide benefits to fishery participants through increased harvest flexibility while avoiding the creation of circumstances that could trigger a formal ESA Section 7 consultation for Steller sea lions.

Alternative 2, which applies to pollock, would combine the existing four seasons (A, B, C, and D) so that there are effectively two pollock seasons (A/B and C/D). Options under Alternative 2 would increase the existing 20% cap on rolling over a regulatory area's unharvested pollock from one season to the next.

For Pacific cod, Alternative 3 would increase the allocation of TAC in the A season for trawl catcher vessels (CV). Under the status quo, annual TAC is allocated 60%:40% between the A and B seasons across the entire suite of gear and vessel sectors. Three options under Alternative 3 propose to increase the A season allocation relative to the B season in 5% increments, but while only affecting the trawl CV fleet. In the analysis, staff explain that 5% incremental increases for the trawl CV sector equate to 2% shifts of the total allocation across gear groups, but do not reflect an allocative change for any other harvest sector.

These actions are intended to increase the opportunity for the affected participants to more fully achieve harvest limits and profitability. If the Council wishes to move toward final action it could choose to do so for both or either of these target fisheries.