

Prioritization of AFSC bottom trawl surveys for informing annual groundfish and crab management

Assumptions for fish and crab biomass index monitoring surveys

- The full complement of survey locations (**core** areas within Alaska's 5 Large Marine Ecosystems) for fishery independent stock assessment surveys includes the Gulf of Alaska, Aleutian Islands, eastern Bering Sea shelf, Bering Sea slope, and the northern Bering Sea. This represents an extension in effort to cover the northern Bering Sea.
- Secondary priorities will include point estimate and process studies in the Chukchi Sea and Beaufort Sea.

Scenarios to guide survey prioritization: consider abbreviated/focused surveys in 21 and future funding/staffing limitations.

1. In odd years, if staffing or funding limit a full complement of core bottom trawl surveys, would the priority be to conduct the northern Bering Sea or increase GOA station density and deep station coverage?
2. How would an annual GOA survey rank among other core bottom trawl surveys if staffing/funding limit a full complement? That is, in an odd year would adding a GOA survey to our research portfolio be prioritized over another core area?
3. If the northern Bering Sea becomes a standard survey:
 - would biennial surveys be adequate?
 - should the Norton Sound region be included?
 - should station spacing be consistent with the eastern Bering Sea?
4. If surveys become severely limited would it be better to focus on a full survey in one core area or partial surveys in multiple core regions?
5. What is the value in considering any surveys in the Chukchi Sea to assess the northern edge of gadid distributions? Should such a survey come at the expense of a core survey area (e.g. EBS slope)?