

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC, and AP Members

FROM: Chris Oliver *DO*
Executive Director *for*

ESTIMATED TIME
12 HOURS

DATE: May 17, 2013

SUBJECT: GOA Chinook salmon bycatch

ACTION REQUIRED:

Final action: Chinook salmon prohibited species control measures in GOA non-pollock trawl fisheries

BACKGROUND:

This amendment package evaluates management measures to address Chinook salmon prohibited species catch (PSC) in the Central and Western Gulf of Alaska (GOA) non-pollock trawl fisheries. The analysis evaluates an alternative to create a prohibited species catch limit which, once reached, would close the affected fisheries. The package also evaluates an amendment requiring full retention of all salmon species. The Council has not identified a preliminary preferred alternative for this action.

Four potential PSC limits are considered, ranging from a maximum of 5,000 to 12,500 Chinook salmon per year. The Council may choose to apply a Chinook salmon PSC limit to the Western and Central GOA as a whole, or to apportion the selected PSC limit either by regulatory area, by operational type (catcher vessels and catcher/processor), or by operational type within each regulatory area. The selected PSC limit for the GOA non-pollock fisheries could be apportioned according to either historical Chinook salmon PSC usage or non-pollock groundfish harvest; apportionment could be based on either a 10-year or a 5-year historical period.

The Council may choose to limit the percentage of the annual Chinook PSC limit that can be taken before June 1st; the document analyzes pre-June PSC caps of 50% and 66% of the annual cap. If such a seasonal limit is selected and the pre-June cap is not met, the unused portion of the pre-June cap would remain available for the rest of the year.

Finally, the Council may choose to set aside a portion of the annual Chinook PSC limit for use in the Central GOA Rockfish Program. The document analyzes setting aside between 1,500 and 3,500 Chinook PSC for this purpose, with an option to further apportion Rockfish Program PSC by operational type. The Council could choose to make a portion of the unused Rockfish Program PSC available to other GOA non-pollock trawl fisheries on October 1.

A public review draft of the analysis was mailed to the Council in mid-May 2013. The Executive Summary is attached as Item C-4(1).