



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

Fisheries managed by the State of Alaska since the last Council report includes those for scallop, crab, and Pacific cod.

Scallops

Weather-vane scallop fisheries in Yakutat, Kodiak, Alaska Peninsula, Dutch Harbor, and the Bering Sea registration areas opened on July 1, 2014. The cumulative guideline harvest level (GHL) for the 2014/15 season is 407,500 pounds (185 mt) of shucked meats. The Prince William Sound (East Kayak Island) and the Cook Inlet Area Kamishak District will remain closed for the 2014/15 season due to declining trends in survey abundance and biomass.

Registration Area	GHL (pounds of shucked meat)	Bycatch Limits (number of crab)		
		Tanner Crab	King Crab	
YAKUTAT	Area D	120,000	N/A	N/A
	District 16	25,000	N/A	N/A
PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND (East Kayak)	<i>Closed for the 2014/15 season</i>			
COOK INLET	<i>Closed for the 2014/15 season</i>			
KODIAK	Northeast District	55,000	256,466	25
	Shelikof District	105,000	42,144	50
	Southwest District ¹	25,000	12,000	50
	Semidi District ¹	<i>Exploratory Area (Commissioner's Permit)</i>		
ALASKA	160° to 161° W. long	7,500	<i>monitored inseason</i>	
PENINSULA	Unimak Bight ¹	15,000	12,000	50
DUTCH HARBOR		5,000	5,000	10
BERING SEA		50,000	260,000	500

¹ Commissioner's Permit required to harvest scallops in these areas.

Total harvest to date is just over 294,000 pounds (72% of the combined GHLs). Fisheries are now closed in the Yakutat Area D, Kodiak Northeast District, Kodiak Shelikof District, Unimak Bight area, and Dutch Harbor area. Management precision is very good and all except one area closed within 3% of the GHL. The Shelikof District closed after 63% of the GHL had been harvested due to poor fishery performance. Remaining open areas include: Yakutat District 16, Southwest Kodiak District, Alaska Peninsula between 160° - 161° W. long., and the Bering Sea management area. Vessels are planning to conduct some additional fishing in the open areas during January and February. The fishery closes by regulation on February 15, 2015.

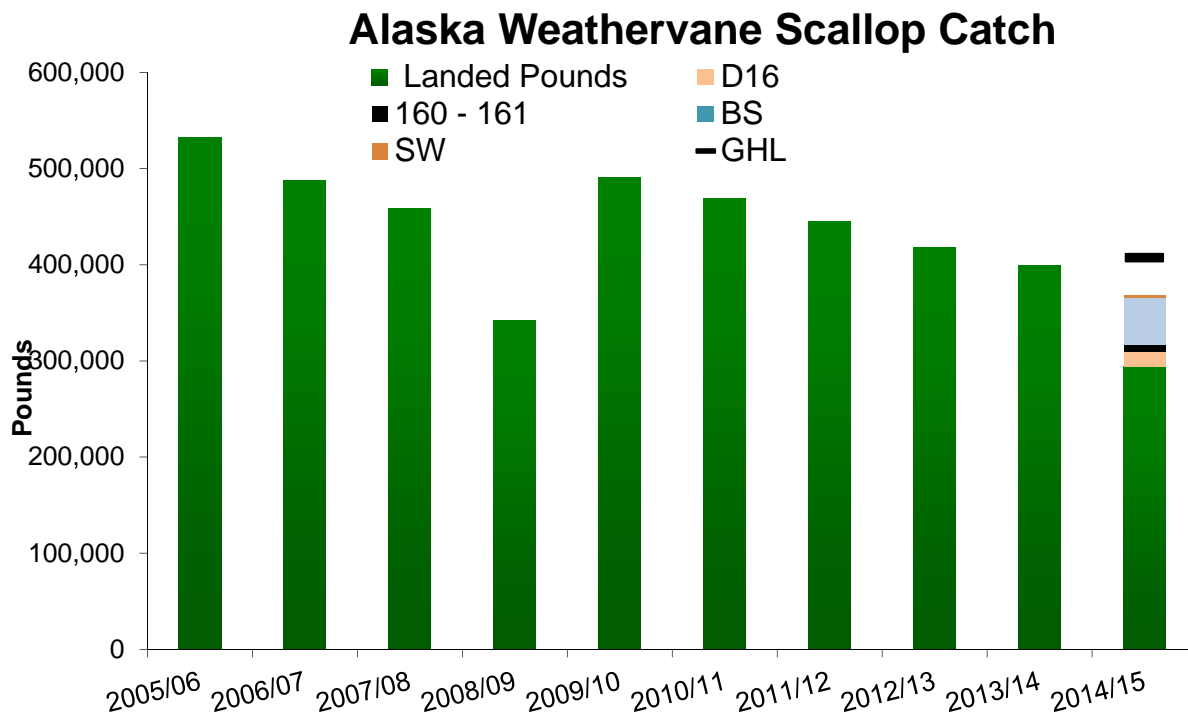


Figure 1. Statewide weathervane scallop harvest, 2005/06 – 2014/15.

Bering Sea/ Aleutian Islands crab. The BSAI crab FMP establishes a State/Federal cooperative management regime that defers crab management to the State of Alaska with Federal oversight. The SSC establishes the overfishing level (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) level. The State establishes the total allowable catch level (TAC) and manages the fisheries inseason. During the 2014/15 season, fisheries opened for golden king crab in the Aleutian Islands, blue king crab near St. Matthew Island, red king crab in Bristol Bay, as well as snow (*opilio*) and Tanner (*bairdi*) crab fisheries in the Bering Sea. Ten percent of each TAC is allocated to the community development quota (CDQ) fisheries; ten percent of the western Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery TAC is allocated to the Adak Community Allocation (ACA) fishery.

Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab

The 2014/15 Area 0 (Aleutian Islands) commercial golden king crab fishery opened August 15, 2014. The TAC is set at 6.29 million pounds (2,853 mt) by regulation and is apportioned east and west of 174° W long; the eastern TAC is 3.31 million pounds and the western TAC is 2.98 million pounds. Fishing in the eastern area concluded in mid-November and both the IFQ and CDQ quota were fully harvested. Catch rates remained strong throughout the season, with an average catch of 39 crabs per pot. Two vessels are fishing in the western area and harvest remains confidential.

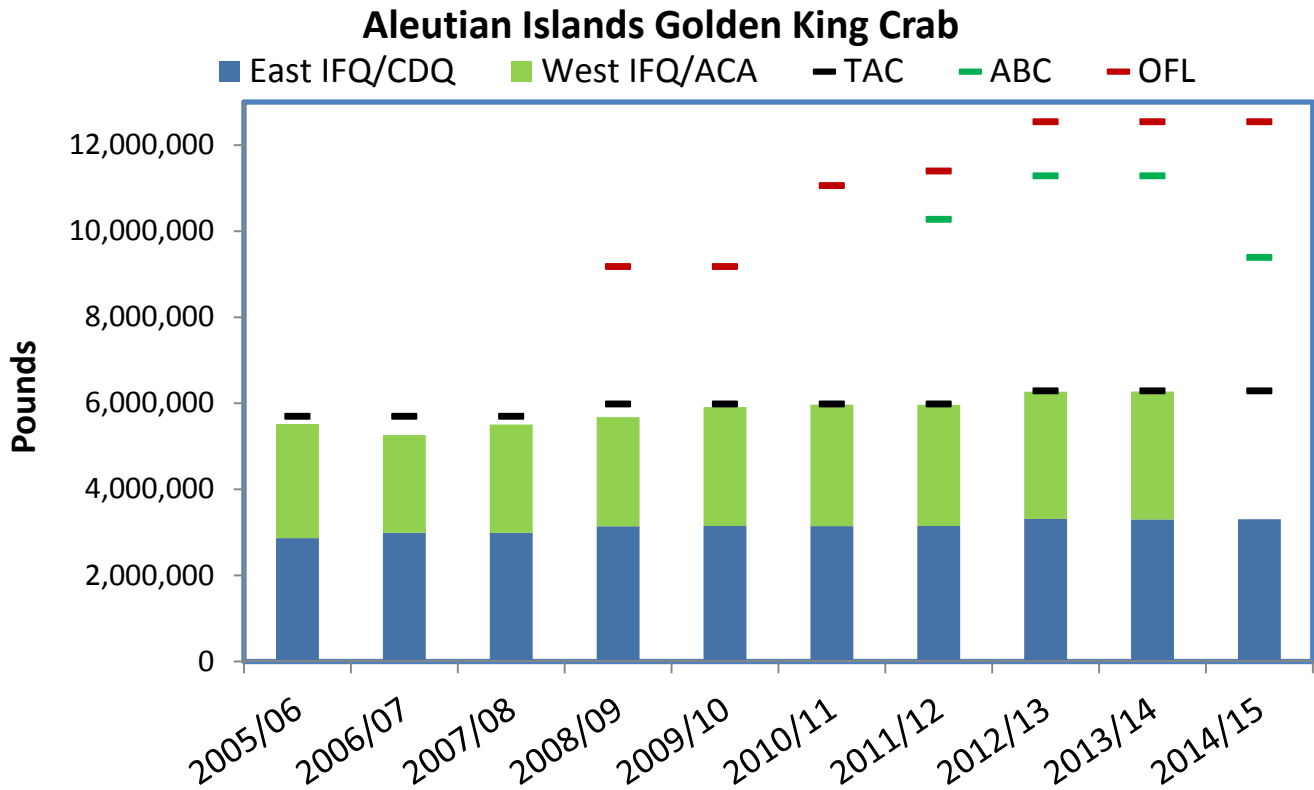


Figure 2. Aleutian Islands golden king crab harvest by area and TAC, ABC, and OFL levels, 2005/06 – 2014/15.

Bristol Bay red king crab

The 2014/15 Bristol Bay red king crab fishery opened October 15, 2014 and all harvest was complete by November 17, 2014. The total TAC was 9.986 million pounds (4,530 mt), a 16% increase from the 2013/14 TAC. Sixty-three vessels participated this season and the average catch rate was 28 crabs per pot (up from 26 crabs per pot in 2013).

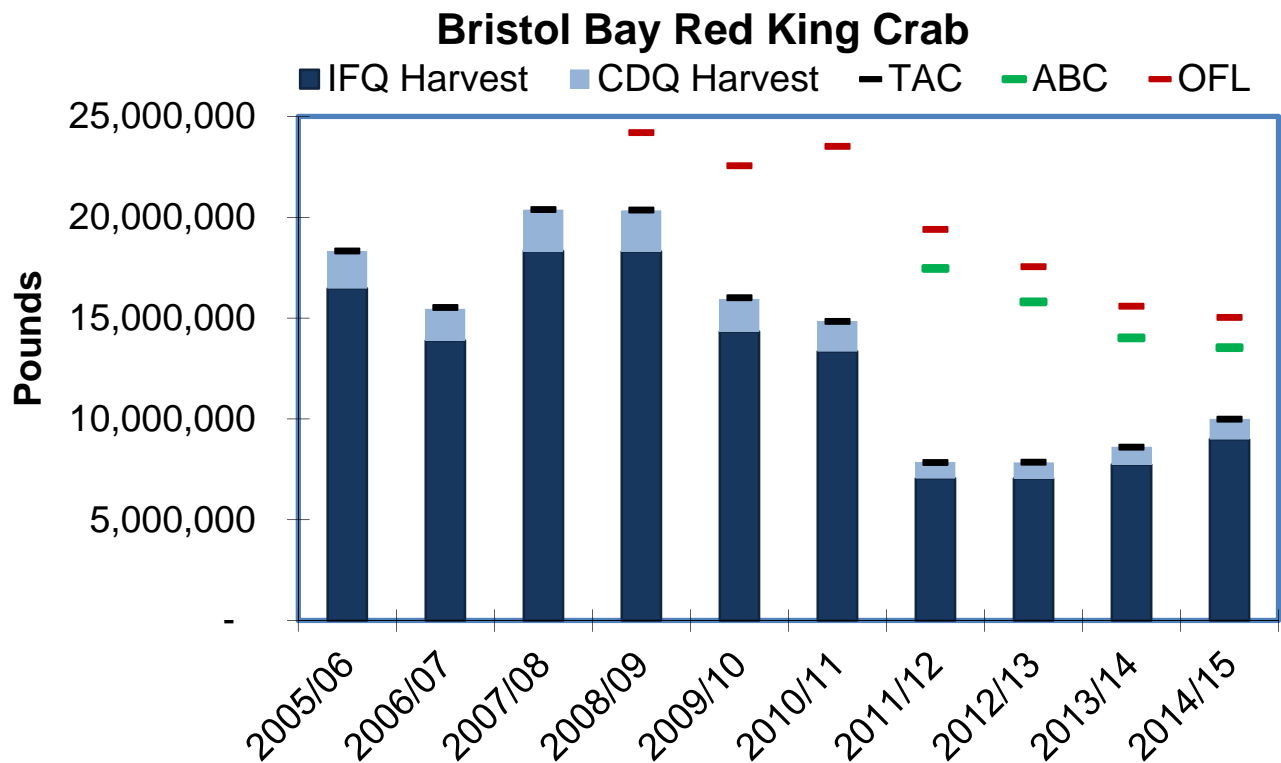


Figure 3. Bristol Bay red king crab harvest and TAC, ABC, and OFL levels, 2005/06 – 2014/15.

Bering Sea Tanner Crab

Bering Sea District Tanner crab is managed east and west of 166° W long, with a separate TAC for each area. The TACs are apportioned as follows:

	East of 166° W long (EBT)	West of 166° W long (WBT)
Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ)	7,632,000 pounds	5,962,500 pounds
Community Development Quota (CDQ)	848,000 pounds	662,500 pounds
Total	8,480,000 pounds (3,846mt)	6,625,000 pounds (3,005 mt)

The Tanner crab fishery opened on October 15, 2014, and closes by regulation on March 31, 2015. East of 166° W long, Tanner crab IFQ or CDQ may be retained up to five percent of the weight of red king crab onboard a registered vessel for Bristol Bay red king crab. West of 166° W long, Tanner crab IFQ or CDQ may be retained up to five percent of the weight of snow crab onboard a vessel registered for the Bering Sea snow crab fishery. Fishermen may not be concurrently registered for both WBT and EBT fisheries.

A total of 5,816,000 million pounds (69% of TAC) has been harvested in the eastern district by 34 vessels and five vessels have harvested a total of 256,500 pounds of Tanner crab in the western

district. Catch rates are similar in both the eastern and western districts at 50 and 45 crabs per pot, respectively.

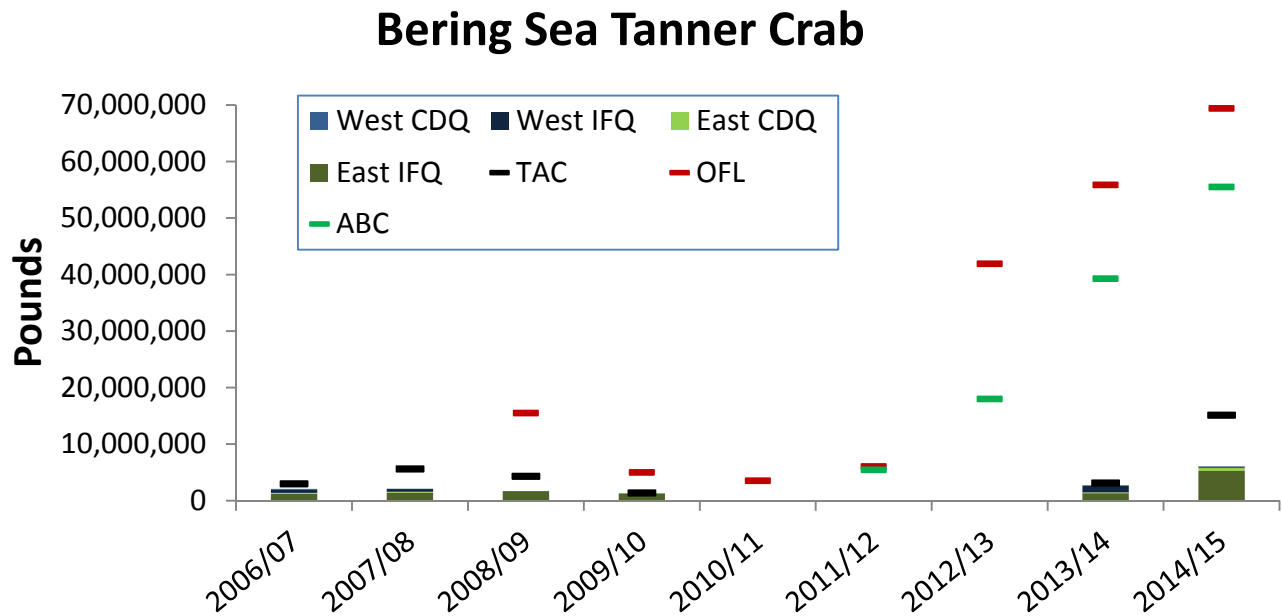


Figure 4. Bering Sea Tanner crab harvest and TAC, ABC, and OFL levels, 2006/07 – 2014/15.

St. Matthew Island blue king crab

The 2014/15 St. Matthew Island Section blue king crab fishery opened on October 15, 2014 with a total TAC of 655,000 pounds (297 mt). A total of 300,500 pounds (46% of the TAC) has been harvested by four vessels. Catch rates in October averaged 9-10 crabs per pot, in November catch rates dropped to six crabs per pot.

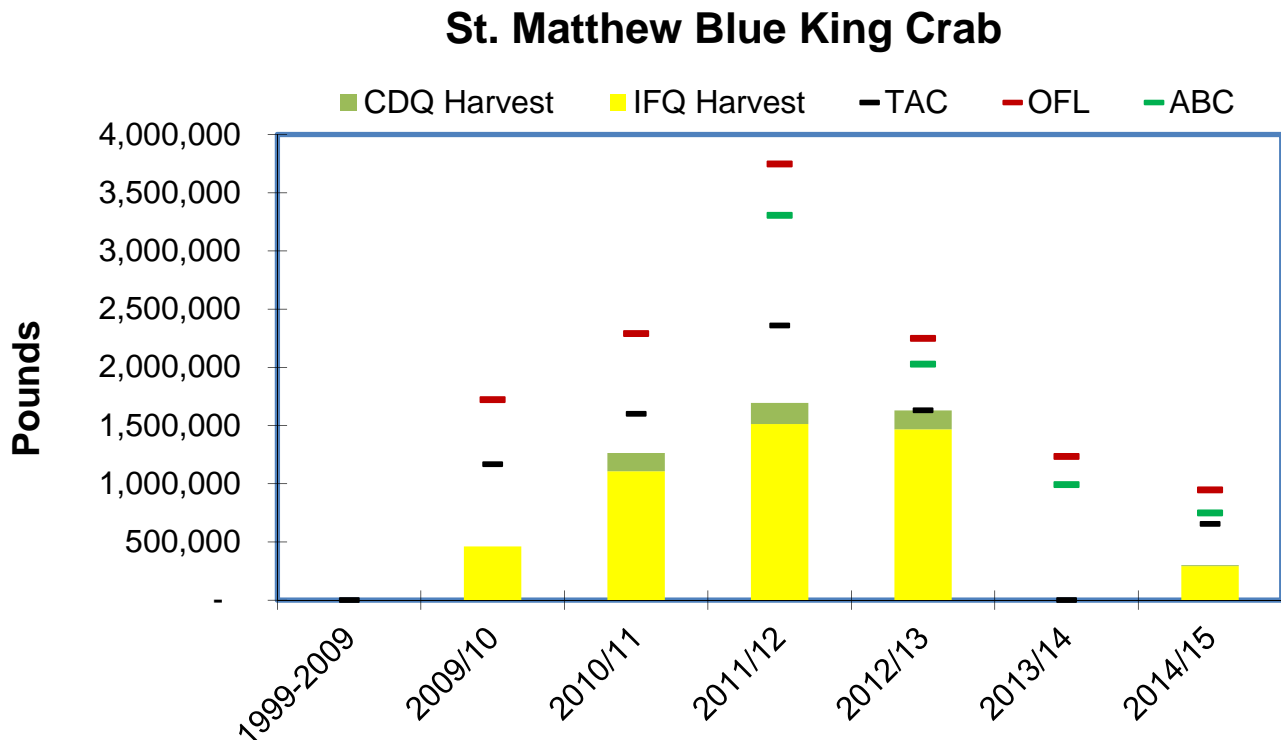


Figure 5. St. Matthew Island blue king crab harvest and TAC, ABC, and OFL levels, 1999 – 2014/15.

Pacific Cod. State-water Pacific cod fisheries are established in the Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Chignik, South Alaska Peninsula, and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands management areas. Guideline Harvest Levels are established for Pacific cod as 25% of the EGOA ABC, 25% of the CGOA ABC, 30% of the WGOA ABC, and 6% of the combined BSAI ABC (3% of the combined ABC is deducted from the AI ABC and 3% of the combined ABC is deducted from the BS ABC). Fisheries are still open in the Chignik, Kodiak, Cook Inlet, and Prince William Sound areas.

Chignik Pacific Cod

The 2014 Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod GHl was 9.59 million pounds (4,351 mt). To date, 96% of the GHl has been harvested. Unused jig-allocated GHl was made available to vessels operating pot gear on August 15, 2014. Limited pot effort occurred and the last landing was on September 29. Managers do not anticipate any additional effort this year.

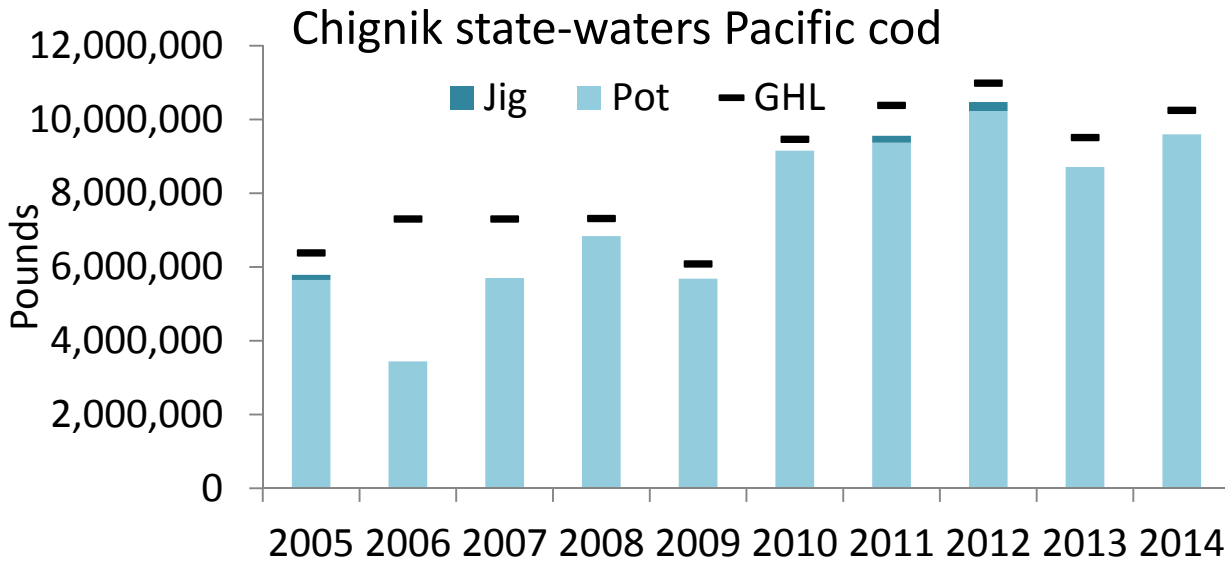


Figure 6. Harvest by gear type in the Chignik state-waters Pacific cod fishery, 2005 – 2014.

Kodiak Pacific Cod

The 2014 GHL for the Kodiak area was 11.57 million pounds (5,249 mt). The state-water Pacific cod fishery re-opened to both pot and jig gear on November 10, 2014, after the federal B-season pot sector fishery closed, with a total of 3.98 million pounds (1,805 mt) available for harvest. Nine pot boats have harvested 603,000 pounds and managers anticipate another 600,000 – 700,000 pounds will be caught between now and the end of the year.

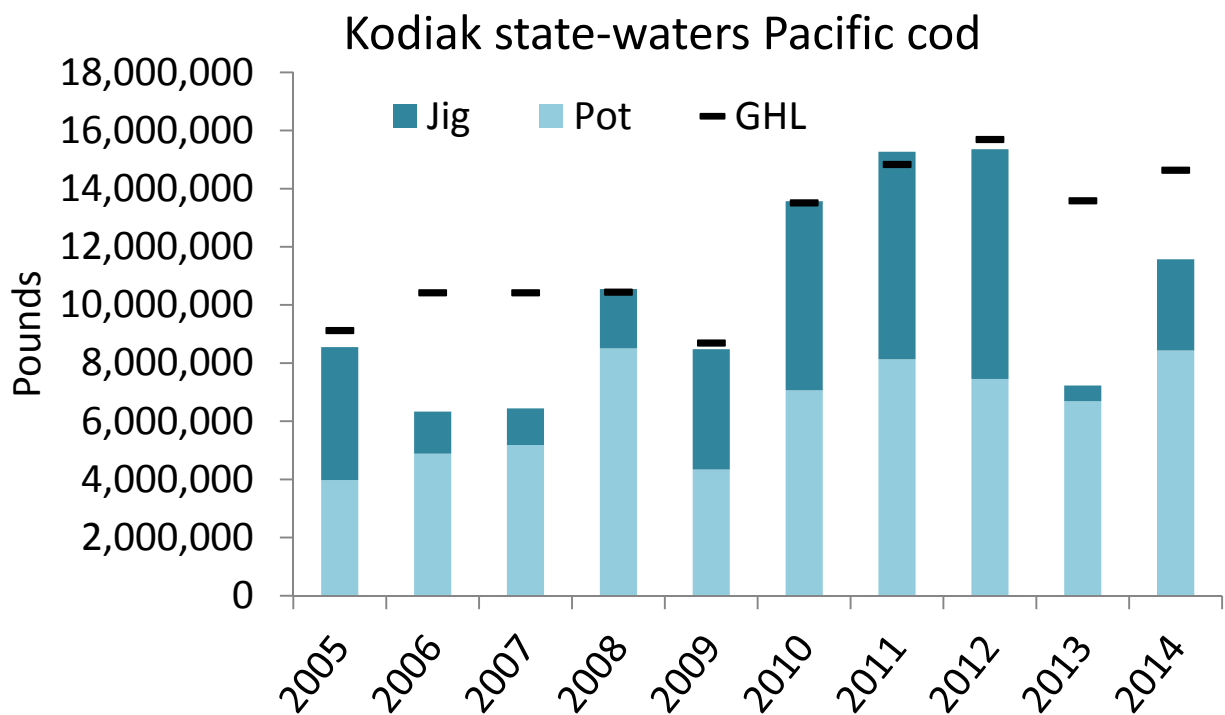


Figure 7. Harvest by gear type in the Kodiak state-waters Pacific cod fishery, 2005 – 2014.

Cook Inlet

The 2014 GHL was 4.39 million pounds (1,991 mt). The state-water fishery reopened to vessels using pot gear on November 10, 2014. Total harvest this year by 9 pot vessels is 2.99 million pounds (68% of the GHL).

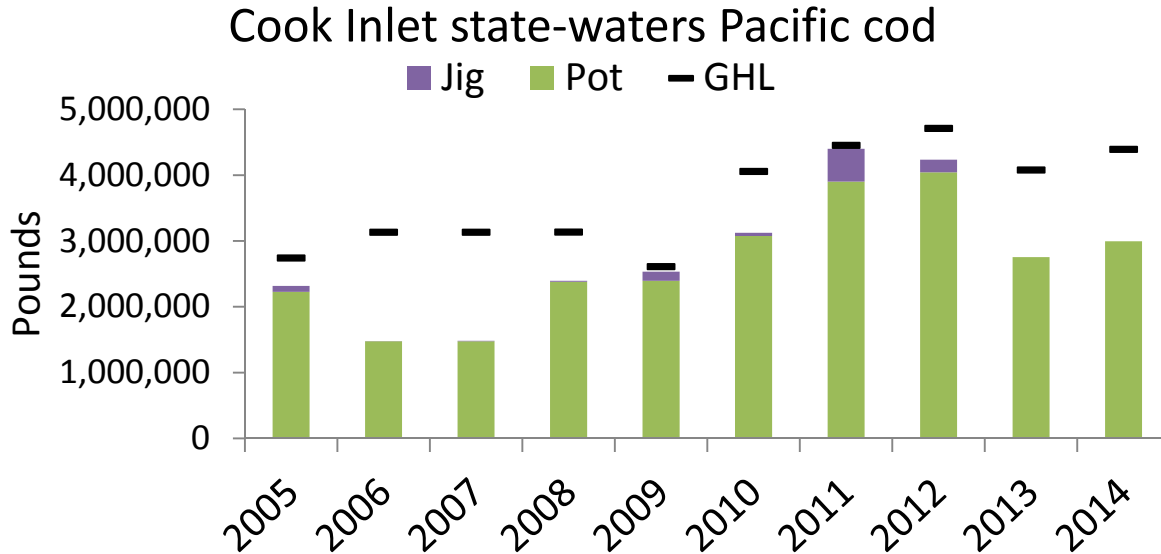


Figure 8. Harvest by gear type in the Cook Inlet state-waters Pacific cod fishery, 2005 – 2014.

Prince William Sound The 2014 GHL was 1.46 million pounds (662 mt). Harvest this year totaled 1.33 million pounds (91% of GHL); 30 longline vessels participated.

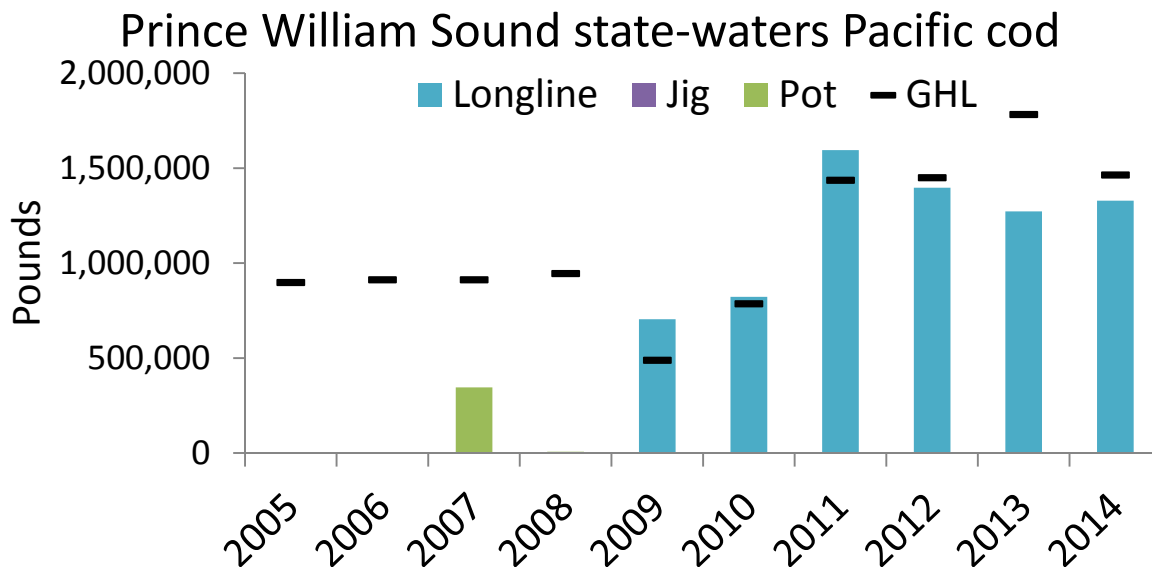


Figure 9. Harvest by gear type in the Prince William Sound state-waters Pacific cod fishery, 2005 – 2014.

Alaska Board of Fisheries

The Board considered whether to schedule out-of-cycle proposals at its October work session. Agenda Change Requests (ACRs) were received for Bering Sea crab fisheries (5 total); three for Bering Sea Tanner crab and two for Norton Sound red king crab. A failed proposal below indicates that the proposal did not meet the criteria for scheduling out of cycle. Proposals that do not meet the ACR criteria can be proposed during the regular board cycle.

ACR 1 – Carried (7-0), renamed Proposal 268: Reduce the size of exploitable legal male Tanner crab, from 5.5 inches to 5 inches carapace width, for purposes of calculating total allowable catch in waters east of 166° W longitude in the Bering Sea District (5 AAC 35.508 (g)(5)).

ACR 2 – Failed (3-4): Change the *C. bairdi* Tanner crab regulatory fishing season closure date from March 31 to May 15 in waters west of 166° W longitude of the Bering Sea District (5 AAC 35.510 (f)(1)).

ACR 3 – Failed (7-0): Increase the allowable level of incidental harvest of *C. bairdi* Tanner crab allowed while directed fishing for Bristol Bay red king crab east of 166° W longitude from the current level of 5%, up to the amount of *C. bairdi* individual fishing quota held by the vessel operator (5 AAC 35.506 (i)(2)).

ACR 4 – Carried (7-0), renamed Proposal 269: Develop a guideline harvest level for the Norton Sound red king crab winter commercial fishery (5 AAC 34.915. (a)(1)).

ACR 5 – Carried (7-0), renamed Proposal 270: Change the duration of the Norton Sound winter through-the-ice commercial king crab fishing season to be open by emergency order on or after January 15 and close April 30, unless extended by emergency order (5 AAC 34.910(d)(2)).

Two ACRs addressed Pacific cod allocations; one for the South Alaska Peninsula and one for Dutch Harbor.

ACR 24 – Failed (7-0): Increase the South Alaska Peninsula state-waters Pacific cod fishery guideline harvest level from 30% to 50% of the estimated total allowable harvest of Pacific cod for the federal Western Gulf of Alaska (5 AAC 28.577 (h)(1)).

ACR 25 – Failed (7-0): Increase the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod fishery guideline harvest level from 3% to 6% of the estimated total allowable harvest of Pacific cod for the federal Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area (5 AAC 28.648 (e)(1)).

Proposals 268 – 270 have been scheduled for the March 17 – 20, 2015 meeting in Anchorage.

GOA Pollock workgroup: A tentative meeting has been scheduled for February 18, 2015 in Anchorage.