



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

April 4, 2014

Agenda B-2: NMFS Management Report

Status of Actions Report online

Status of Actions report is provided in **Attachment 1** and online at:

<http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/status/amendments.pdf>.

Progress on Rulemaking

Highlights on progress since the December 2013 meeting include:

- Final Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) harvest specifications.
BSAI -- March 4, 2014: <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/frules/79fr12108.pdf>
GOA – March 6, 2014: <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/frules/79fr12890.pdf>
- Final annual halibut management measures – includes commercial catch quotas and charter halibut management measures in Areas 2C and 3A.
Effective March 7, 2014: <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/frules/79fr13906.pdf>
- Final rule for Amendment 102 to the BSAI Fishery Management Plan (FMP) – Adak Community Quota Entity and Area 4B halibut “fish up”.
Effective March 17, 2014: <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/frules/79fr8870.pdf>
- Final rule for halibut and sablefish IFQ minimum vessel ownership standards for use of a hired master – the “12/20” rule.
Effective March 23, 2015: <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/frules/79fr9995.pdf>
- Final Rule implementing Amendment 95 to the Gulf of Alaska FMP (GOA FMP), reductions in halibut bycatch (PSC) limits.
Effective March 24, 2014: <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/frules/78fr75844.pdf>
- Final Rule to remove requirement for vessel name on fishing gear marker buoys.
Effective May 5, 2014: <http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/frules/79fr18655.pdf>
- And... a lot of progress on rulemaking in progress (see **Attachment 1**).



Update on Specific Rulemaking – Amendment 45 and Steller Sea Lions

Amendment 45 – Removing specific Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod sideboard limits: We have included a letter to the Council (see your B-2 Agenda for additional detail) noting that additional review indicates that 2 more vessels could be subject to this proposed action than were identified when the Council took action. We do not believe that this substantively changes the effect of the proposed rule or analysis, or requires additional action by the Council, but we wanted to provide a heads-up.

Steller Sea Lions – SEIS and Proposed Rule to Implement Alternative 5 (Preferred Alternative): Proposed changes recommended by the Council to fishing restrictions in the Aleutian Islands are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of endangered western population of Steller sea lions or adversely modify their habitat according to our April 2, 2014 biological opinion. (<http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/protectedresources/stellers/esa/biop/2014/final0414.pdf>). Consistent with court order (Case: 3:10-cv-00271-TMB *State of Alaska v. Lubchenco et al.*), NMFS will issue a new final rule to establish Steller sea lion protection measures for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area groundfish fisheries by December 31, 2014. We anticipate a proposed rule being available for public comment in summer.

Inseason Management Report

Fleets are progressing with similar catch and harvests patterns in 2014 over the same time period in 2013 with some notable exceptions.

- Chinook Salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery is higher in 2014 than 2013 by 2,714 Chinook salmon compared to this time last year. Bycatch rates are slightly higher this year.
- Chinook salmon bycatch and bycatch rates in the GOA are lower in 2014 compared to 2013.
- The Bering Sea Pacific cod trawl catcher vessel A season fishery remained open until the B season start date of April 1, 2014 compared to the 2013 A season closure March 11, 2013.
- BSAI trawl halibut PSC is higher in 2014 mostly due to higher rates in the C/P flatfish fisheries.
- GOA trawl halibut PSC is lower in 2014 mostly due to less targeting of flatfish.
- Overages in the Hook-and-line and pot less than 60' length overall sector are a continuing issue.
- An important new inseason management issue for this year is the management of Pacific cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. With the split in the TAC between the Aleutian Islands and the Bering Sea, NMFS has closed the Aleutian Islands to directed fishing to ensure the A season allocation is not exceeded. See **Attachment 2** for more detail.

Disaster Relief Funding

In response to a fishery disaster request by the Governor of Alaska and the Alaska Federation of Natives, on September 12, 2012, the Secretary of Commerce determined a Chinook salmon fishery resource disaster for the Yukon-Kuskokwim and Cook Inlet regions. In 2014, Congress appropriated \$75M to provide relief for six commercial fishery failures throughout the United States and its Territories. Of this amount, NMFS directed \$20.8M to Alaska to aid impacted fishermen and fishing communities. NMFS is seeking public comment on: the representative organizations that will serve as a voice for the affected regions in developing a spending plan; the appropriate organization to administer disaster funds; and public input on disaster relief activities to be supported by the \$20.8M. Public comment is accepted through **April 25, 2014**. More information is available on the NMFS Alaska Region webpage at:

<http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/omi/grants/dfunds/salmon.htm>

Staffing Changes

Michael Camacho who was with Sustainable Fisheries for slightly more than a year left Sustainable Fisheries to pursue a career with the Department of Transportation in his hometown of Boston. We wish Michael well.

Melanie Brown, the head of our Ecosystem and Bycatch Branch, will be leaving the Alaska Region and saying “Aloha” to the Pacific Islands Region Sustainable Fisheries Division as the head of their regulatory and analytical branch. Melanie has been with SF in the Alaska Region for nearly 14 years and in that time has been a leader on untold challenging and complicated issues. A snapshot includes: heading up SF’s role in Steller sea lion analytical documents and rulemaking (over and over and over again), shepherding the Arctic FMP to completion, leading revisions to our harvest specification process, and ensuring the completion of numerous habitat protection measures, exempted fishing permits, and endangered species consultations. Melanie’s expertise, get-‘er-done attitude, and dedication to her staff will be sorely missed. We have some big shoes (metaphorically) to fill.

SF currently has 8 positions to backfill (9 with Melanie’s departure). This represents about 30% of our total staff positions. Our budget and hiring operations have improved somewhat, and SF anticipates being able to fill some vacancies in the near future. We are currently advertising for two positions.

The first position will provide additional analytical and technical quantitative expertise to support analytical needs. The application period is open through **April 9, 2014**, a link to the position is here: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/365724600>.

The second position will provide additional support to our regulatory and management branches. This application period is open through **April 10, 2014**, a link to the position is here: <https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/366389100>

We anticipate another regulatory position being available in the near future. We will work to continue to backfill positions (particularly Melanie's position) as soon as possible, pending approval and funding.

Electronic Monitoring and Observer Update

Martin Loefflad from the Observer Program (FMA) will provide the Council with an update on progress on Electronic Monitoring cooperative research and a review of current issues related to observers. See letter under your B-2 Agenda.

Attachment 1: Status of Actions

FMP Amendment Status	Lead Council and SF Staff	Date of Council Final Action	Start Regional Review	Received by GCAK	Transmittal Date of Action to NMFS HQ for Review	Proposed FMP Amendment Notice of Availability Published in <i>Federal</i>	Proposed Rule Published in <i>Federal Register</i>	Final Rule or Notice of Approval Published in <i>Federal Register</i>
Amendment 31 (KTC) - C-Share Active Participation and CR Application Deadline Modification	Fina Palmigiano	April 2008	PR: 08/22/11	PR: 09/13/11				
Amendment 43 (KTC) and Amendment 103 (BSAI) Pribilof Blue King Crab rebuilding	Stram Ellgen	June 2012	PR: 03/25/13	PR: 04/08/13				
Amendment 44 (KTC) BSAI crab ROFR	Palmigiano	February 2013						
Amendment 45 (KTC) GOA Pacific cod non-AFA Crab Sideboards FLL	McCracken Kelly	June 2013						
Amendment 95 (GOA) Halibut PSC management Approved: November 27,	DiCosimo Davis	June 2012	PR: 04/24/13 FR: 01/02/14	PR: 04/29/13 FR: 01/07/14	PR: 08/22/13 FR: 01/31/14	Aug 29, 2013 78 FR 53419 EOC: 10/28/13	Sep 17, 2013 78 FR 57106 EOC: 10/17/13	Feb 20, 2014 79 FR 9625 Effective: 03/24/14
Amendment 96 (GOA) - ability for CQE to buy small blocks of QS	Cunningham Murphy	April 2013	PR: 03/05/14	PR: 03/06/14				
Amendment 97 (GOA) Chinook PSC management measures for non-pollock fisheries trawl	Cunningham Hartman	December 2013	PR: 03/06/14	PR: 03/07/14				

Attachment 1: Status of Actions

FMP Amendment Status	Lead Council and SF Staff	Date of Council Final Action	Start Regional Review	Received by GCAK	Transmittal Date of Action to NMFS HQ for Review	Proposed FMP Amendment Notice of Availability Published in <i>Federal Register</i>	Proposed Rule Published in <i>Federal Register</i>	Final Rule or Notice of Approval Published in <i>Federal Register</i>
Amendment 102 (BSAI) CQE Program in Area 4B and Area 4B "Fish Up" Approved: January 29, 2014	DiCosimo Murphy	April 2012	PR: 03/19/13	PR: 05/10/13 FR: 01/10/14	PR: 10/28/13 FR: 01/27/14	Nov 1, 2013 78 FR 65602 EOC: 12/31/13	Nov 14, 2013 78 FR 68390 EOC: 12/16/13	Feb 14, 2014 79 FR 8870 Effective: 03/17/14
Amendment 104 (BSAI) HAPC skate sites	Witherell Olson	February 2013						
Amendment 105 (BSAI) Flatfish Specifications Flexibility	Evans Kelly	April 2013	PR: 01/31/14	PR: 02/07/14				
Amendment 106 (BSAI) AFA vessel replacement	McCracken McKeen	April 2013	PR: 11/13/13	PR: 11/20/13				
Amendments 100 (BSAI) and 91 (GOA) Management of Grenadiers	DiCosimo Harrington	February 2014	PR: 04/01/14	PR: 04/01/14				

Attachment 1: Status of Actions

Regulatory Amendment Status	Lead Council and SF Staff	Date of Council Final Action	Start Regional Review	Received by GCAK	Transmittal Date of Action to NMFS HQ for Review	Proposed Rule Published in Federal Register	Final Rule Published in Federal Register
At-Sea Scales Regulatory Amendments	Watson		PR: 03/13/14	PR: 03/20/14			
BSAI 2014-2015 Harvest Specifications	DiCosimo Whitney	October 2013	PR: 10/24/13 FR: 01/03/14	PR: 11/15/13 FR: 01/13/14	PR: 11/27/13	Dec 10, 2013 78 FR 74063 EOC: 01/09/14	Mar 4, 2014 79 FR 12108 Effective: 03/04/14
Cost recovery for AFA, Amendment 80, Rockfish Program, and CDQ Program	Palmigiano						
Federal Fisheries Permit and Federal Processor Permit revisions	Bearden		PR: 05/30/13	PR: 06/25/13	PR: 03/31/14		
GOA 2014 and 2015 Harvest Specifications	Stram Davis	October 2013	PR: 10/23/13 FR: 01/15/14	PR: 10/30/13 FR: 01/16/14	PR: 11/26/13 FR: 02/21/2014	Dec 10, 2013 78 FR 74079 EOC: 01/09/14	Mar 6, 2014 79 FR 12890 Effective: 03/06/14
GOA trawl data collection	Brannan Hartman	October 2013					
Remove requirement for vessel name on fishing gear marker buoys	Bibb		PR: 10/25/13 FR: 02/28/14	PR: 10/29/13 FR: 02/28/14	PR: 12/17/13 FR: 03/21/2014	Jan 3, 2014 79 FR 381 EOC: 02/03/14	Apr 3, 2014 79 FR 18655 Effective: 05/05/14
Steller Sea Lion protection measures	MacLean Grady	October 2013					

Attachment 1: Status of Actions

Regulatory Amendment Status	Lead Council and SF Staff	Date of Council Final Action	Start Regional Review	Received by GCAK	Transmittal Date of Action to NMFS HQ for Review	Proposed Rule Published in Federal Register	Final Rule Published in Federal Register
Halibut Annual Management Measures 2014	DiCosimo Scheurer	December 2013	FR: 02/21/14	FR: 02/21/14	FR: 02/27/2014	Feb 6, 2014 79 FR 7156 EOC: 02/21/14	Mar 12, 2014 79 FR 13906 Effective: 03/07/14
Halibut IFO - Establish new minimum vessel ownership criteria for using hired skipper of 12 months and 20% interest	DiCosimo McKeen	December 2007	PR: 01/20/12 FR: 05/14/13	PR: 02/03/12 FR: 05/16/13	PR: 10/12/12 FR: 01/29/2014	Oct 31, 2012 77 FR 65843 EOC: 11/30/12	Feb 24, 2014 79 FR 9995 Effective: 03/23/15
Halibut/sablefish IFO - revise hired skipper provisions	DiCosimo Murphy	April 2011	PR: 10/19/12 FR: 08/08/13	PR: 10/31/12 FR: 08/09/13	PR: 03/19/13	Apr 26, 2013 78 FR 24707 EOC: 05/28/13	
Revise Definition of a Fishing Guide	DiCosimo Scheurer	February 2014					

Attachment 2: Catch Report and Inseason Management

2014 catch (metric tons) is through March 29 2014, and 2013 catch is through March 30, 2013. Additional information from daily catch reports and information bulletins are available at: <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/catchstats.htm>

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands

Bering Sea Pollock

Sixteen American Fisheries Act (AFA) catcher/processors (C/Ps) (15 in 2013), and 55 catcher vessels (CVs) delivering shoreside (69 in 2013) have targeted pollock. NMFS reallocated 1,900 mt of CDQ and 7,750 mt Aleut Corporation Aleutian Islands pollock TAC to the Bering Sea directed fisheries.

Bering Sea sector	2014 A season allocation	2014 A season catch	Percent taken
Inshore	221,856	192,229	87
C/P	177,485	176,530	99
Mothership	44,371	44,295	100
CDQ	51,440	51,304	100
Total	495,152	464,358	94

Salmon in the Bering Sea pollock fishery

Salmon bycatch and rates are higher in 2014 than in 2013. The pollock catch also is higher by 67,700 mt for non-CDQ and 731 mt for CDQ pollock.

Species	Chinook				Non-Chinook			
	2014		2013		2014		2013	
Year	#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate
Amount	#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate	#	Rate
Non-CDQ	10,018	0.022	7,524	0.019	354	0.0008	157	0.0004
CDQ	692	0.013	472	0.009	27	0.0005	15	0.0003
Total	10,710	0.021	7,996	0.018	381	0.0007	172	0.0004

Pacific cod

Aleutian Islands

NMFS closed the Aleutian Islands non-CDQ Pacific cod directed fishery March 16, 2014. Eight trawl vessels targeted Pacific cod. The total catch is 4,529 mt of the 6,248 mt non-CDQ TAC with 1,719 mt remaining for incidental catch. We anticipate needing this remaining TAC to support incidental catch throughout the year.

Bering Sea

Hook and line catcher/processors have slightly lower catch rates in 2014 relative to 2013. Catch rates and total harvests by pot vessels in 2014 is similar to 2013.

Hook-and-line Catcher/Processors		
Year	2014	2013
Total catch	37,563	46,796
A season TAC	56,108	57,462
Remaining A season TAC	18,545	10,666
Number of vessels	26	26

Pot catcher vessels (CVs) greater than or equal to 60 ft length overall		
Year	2014	2013
Total catch	9,581	9,900
A season TAC	9,678	9,911
Remaining A season TAC	97	11
A season closure	January 24	January 22
Number of vessels	29	25

Pot catcher/processors		
Year	2014	2013
Total catch	1,713	1,843
A season TAC	1,728	1,770
Remaining A season TAC	15	-73
A season closure	January 26	January 28
Number of vessels	4	3

Hook-and-line or pot gear less than 60 feet length overall

NMFS reallocated 1,700 mt of the A season jig allocation to the less than 60 ft allocation. Hook-and-line catcher vessels can continue to fish in State waters after the federal directed fishery closure because the State waters remain open to hook-and-line gear. In recent years, NMFS has been able to “cover” overages with reallocations of remaining TAC from other sectors at the end of the year. The remaining TAC to cover these overages may not always be available, and could adversely affect other fishery participants. We can provide additional briefing on request.

Year	2014	2013
Total catch	7,339 (includes 443 after closure)	6,996 (includes 443 after closure)
Annual TAC	6,218 (4,518 + 1,700 from jig)	6,427 (4,627 + 1,800 from jig)
Remaining TAC	-1,121	-569
Closure	February 4	February 7
Number of vessels	18 (5 hook-and-line, 14 pot)	22 (3 hook-and-line, 19 pot)

Trawl catcher vessels

The 2014 B season allocation of 5,512 mt became available April 1. Catch is decreasing and at the current rate the B season directed fishery will remain open until the end of April.

Year	2014	2013
Total Catch	35,602	35,712
A season TAC	37,079	37,971
Remaining TAC	1,477	2,259
A season closure	none	March 11
Number of vessels	Pacific cod target 46	Pacific cod target 49
	All targets 84	All targets 94

Flatfish

Catch for all sectors including CDQ. The 2014 total catch is similar to 2013.

Species	2014	2013
Alaska plaice	6,238	10,522
Arrowtooth flounder	1,600	1,681
Kamchatka flounder	153	186
Flathead sole	5,418	6,077
Greenland turbot	30	18
Other flatfish	631	489
Rock sole	35,771	40,836
Yellowfin sole	39,097	36,582

Halibut mortality

In 2014 compared to 2013 the total halibut mortality in the BSAI is 140 mt higher, but the rates are similar. In the GOA the total halibut mortality is 187 mt lower, and the rate also is lower.

Area	Sector	Gear	2014			2013		
			Halibut mortality	Groundfish	Rate	Halibut mortality	Groundfish	Rate
BSAI	C/P	Non-pelagic trawl	819	116,231	0.007	500	106,700	0.005
	C/P	Pelagic trawl	67	234,888	0.000	151	230,514	0.001
	CV	Non-pelagic trawl	241	43,493	0.006	312	44,376	0.007
	CV	Pelagic trawl	14	239,352	0.000	22	233,995	0.000
	C/P	Hook-and-line	122	54,078	0.002	139	64,661	0.002
	CV	Hook-and-line	3	1,414	0.002	2	784	0.003
Total			1,266	689,456	0.002	1,126	681,030	0.002
GOA	C/P	Non-pelagic trawl	9	933	0.010	45	2,598	0.017
	CV	Non-pelagic trawl	169	21,187	0.008	307	25,865	0.012
	CV	Pelagic trawl	0	67,119	0	10	48,332	0.000
	C/P	Hook-and-line	40	4,557	0.009	14	1,693	0.008
	CV	Hook-and-line	73	6,263	0.012	102	7,194	0.014
Total			291	100,059	0.003	478	89,038	0.006

Gulf of Alaska

Pacific cod

Western GOA

Sector	2014				2013			
	A season allocation	Catch Mar 29	A season closed	# of vessels	A season allocation	Catch Mar 30	A season closed	# of vessels Mar 30
Hook-and-line C/P	2,436	2,769	Mar 4	7	2,254	1,490	Apr 21	3
Hook-and-line CV	156	109	Mar 13	3	145	n/a	Apr 24	<3
Jig	344	52	n/a	6	318	35	June 10	5
Pot CV/CP	4,425	4,152	Jan 22	35	4,095	4,536	Jan 28	32
Trawl CV	6,191	6,435	Feb 23	25	5,728	5,828	Mar 3	28
Trawl C/P	201	0	Jan 20	0	186	n/a	Jan 20	<3
Total	13,753	13,517		76	12,726	11,889		68

Central GOA

Sector	2014				2013			
	A season allocation	Catch Mar 29	A season closed	# of vessels	A season allocation	Catch Mar 30	A season closed	# of vessels Mar 29
Hook-and-line C/P	1,603	1,433	Apr 4	5	1,488	n/a	June 10	<3
Hook-and-line CV <50 ft	3,636	3,445	Mar 11	53	3,375	3,400	Mar 21	49
Hook-and-line CV >=50 ft	2,189	1,225	Mar 15	23	2,032	2,085	Mar 21	23
Jig	478	166	n/a	34	444	156	June 10	32
Pot CV/CP	6,959	6,662	Feb 13	40	6,459	5,929	Feb 10	48
Trawl CV	8,249	6,610	Apr 1	56	7,657	7,664	Mar 23	50
Trawl C/P	782	182	Mar 14	3	726	454	Apr 17	3
Total	23,896	19,723		214	22,180	19,688		205

Pollock

For Area 610, 655 mt of the A season allocation was caught. Only 960 mt (20% of the B season allocation) from the remaining A season allocation rolled to the B season allocation. For Areas 620 and 630, the A season catch was slightly under the A season allocations, and all the remaining A season allocation rolled to the B season.

2014 Allocations	610	620	630	640
A season allocation	4,800	25,924	8,680	4,741 (annual)
A season catch	655	24,573	8,368	0
A season closure	March 10 by regulation			n/a
B season allocation	5,759	30,963	3,636	0
B season catch	1,921	30,461	4,217	1,283 (annual)
B season closure	n/a	n/a	March 31	n/a

Salmon

Salmon bycatch in the GOA non-pollock fisheries is lower in 2014 compared to 2013. This is due in part to the limited flatfish fishing that has occurred thus far in 2014 compared to 2013.

GOA salmon bycatch in non-pollock fisheries	2014	2013
Chinook	389	1,880
Non-Chinook	0	17

Salmon in the Western, Central, and West Yakutat pollock fisheries

In the 2014 Western and Central GOA pollock fisheries, the total Chinook salmon bycatch is 2,862 salmon compared to 4,935 salmon in 2013. The 2014 Western and Central GOA total pollock catch (71,151 mt) is 19,855 mt more than 2013 (51,296 mt). Overall PSC rates are lower in 2014 compared to 2013.