



# **C2 GOA Pollock and Pacific Cod Season Allocations**

June 2019

## **Action Memo**

Staff: Sara Cleaver and Sam Cunningham  
Other Presenters: Bridget Mansfield (NMFS AKRO)  
Action Required: Review analysis and consider recommendation of preferred alternatives

## **BACKGROUND**

At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to review the public review draft of an analysis of action alternatives that would modify seasonal TAC allocations of pollock and Pacific cod in the GOA trawl CV fisheries. The Council's purpose for action is to reduce inefficiency in the harvest and management of the pollock and Pacific cod fisheries and to promote opportunities to harvest the resource at times when it is most valuable and accessible. The action alternatives could increase flexibility in the timing of the fishery, potentially increasing yield and, in some cases, providing the fleet with an enhanced ability to minimize encounters with prohibited species (Chinook salmon and Pacific halibut). The alternatives developed by the Council were specifically designed to avoid redistribution of fishing opportunities between management areas or harvest sectors (e.g., non-trawl sectors). Finally, the Council recognizes that the alternatives could have implications for Steller sea lion management measures; the document provides the background information that would be necessary to begin a consultation on impacts to Steller sea lions, should that be warranted.

The Council identified preliminary preferred alternatives (PPA) at its December 2018 meeting. The Council identified Alternative 2 (pollock) and Alternative 3 (Pacific cod) as the PPA. The alternatives are not mutually exclusive.

Alternative 2 would combine the GOA pollock A and B seasons into a single season (January 20 through May 31) and combine the C and D seasons into a single season (August 25 through November 1). Each combined season would receive 50% of the annual TAC for GOA subareas 610, 620, and 630. Apportionment across areas within a season would continue to be specified according to seasonal biomass distribution. The Council also identified the option to Alternative 2 as part of the PPA. That option would increase the cap on the rollover of unharvested pollock in one season to the subsequent season. The existing cap is set at 20% of the subsequent season's TAC; the option would increase this amount to 25%. Though not specified in the PPA, the Council requested information that would support consideration of changing the C season start date from August 25 to September 1. The Council could review the information provided, as well as public testimony, and potentially include that change in its preferred alternative.

Alternative 3 would modify the trawl CV sector's seasonal allocation of Pacific cod TAC in the Central and Western GOA by shifting available catch from the B season (September 1 through November 1) to the A season (January 20 through June 10). The alternative is structured such that seasonal allocations to other gear/operational-type sectors would not be altered, but the area-wide seasonal allocation ratio would be modified from the status quo of 60% in the A season and 40% in the B season.

An addendum to the analysis is posted on the agenda. This addendum includes additional data on annual pollock trawl landings by area and season for GOA management areas 610, 620, and 630 from 2003-2019. This is a supplement to Section 4.5.1.2 of the RIR. The figures in the addendum provide a longer temporal scale to identify any changes in harvest patterns from 2003 to 2019 that may have implications on prey availability for Steller sea lions.