

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Management Report

to the NPFMC

October 5, 2005



NOAA Fisheries

National Marine Fisheries Service



Status of FMP Amendments
September 27, 2005

FMP Amendment Status: <u>Actions Since June 2005 Council Meeting</u>	Date of Council Action	Start Regional Review	Transmittal Date of Action to NMFS HQ for Review	Proposed FMP Amendment Notice of Availability Published	Proposed Rule Published in Federal Register	Final Rule Published in Federal Register
Amendment 10 (Scallop) – Change dredge restrictions for LLP <u>Approved: June 22, 2005</u>		PR: 11/3/04	PR: March 16, 2005	March 24, 2005 70 FR 15063 <u>Comment period ended May 23, 2005</u>	April 13, 2005 70 FR 19409 <u>Comment period ended May 31, 2005</u>	July 11, 2005 70 FR 39964 Effective August 10, 2005
Amendments 62/62: Single Geographic Location and AFA housekeeping	Oct 2002	PR: 10/15/04				
Amendments 65/78 (BSAI) 65/73 (GOA) 12/16 (KTC) 7/9 (SCAL) 8/7 (SAL) – Habitat Areas of Particular Concern and Essential Fish Habitat	February 2005	PR: 4/20/05				
Amend. 71a (BSAI): CDQ non-fisheries investments	June 2002	PR: 9/12/04				
Amend. 71b (BSAI): CDQ oversight	June 2002					
Amendment 72 (GOA): Remove flatfish IR/IU provisions	April 2003					
Amendment 79 (BSAI): Groundfish Retention Standard <u>Approved August 31, 2005</u>	June 2003	PR: 3/30/05	PR: May 26, 2005	June 2, 2005 70 FR 32287 <u>Comment period ended August 1, 2005</u>	June 16, 2005 70 FR 35054 <u>Comment period ended August 1, 2005</u>	
Amendments 83/75 Fishery Management Plan housekeeping <u>Approved: June 13, 2005</u>	December 2004	NOA: 2/8/05	NOA: March 15, 2005	March 24, 2005 70 FR 15067 <u>Comment period ended May 23, 2005</u>		

Status of Regulatory Amendments
September 27, 2005

Regulatory Amendment Status: <u>Actions Since June 2005 Council Meeting</u>	Date of Council Action	Start Regional Review of Rule	Transmittal Date of Rule to NMFS Headquarters	Proposed Rule in <i>Federal Register</i>	Final Rule Published in <i>Federal Register</i>
Groundfish Regulations					
Revise species codes (Table 2)	NMFS	PR: 10/10/03	PR: June 17, 2005	September 1, 2005 70 FR 52060 <u>Comment period ends October 3, 2005</u>	
Revise requirements for facilitation of observer data transmission, improving support of observers (ATLAS 2)	NMFS	PR: 5/24, /2005 FR:6/26/05	PR: June 6, 2005	August 8, 2005 70 FR 45638 <u>Comment period ended September 7, 2005</u>	
MMPA Regulations					
MMPA List of Fisheries for 2005	NMFS			December 2, 2004 69 FR 70094 August 25, 2005 70 CR 49902 <u>Extension of comment period through October 24, 2005</u>	

Status of Regulatory Amendments
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Halibut Regulations					
Halibut charter boat IFQ	April 2001; October 2001	PR: 2/23/05	PR: July 20, 2005		
Area 4CD Quota Share Allowance	December 2004	PR: 3/4/05	PR: April 14, 2005	May 5, 2005 70 FR 23829 <u>Comment period ended June 6, 2005</u>	July 27, 2005 70 FR 73328 Effective on July 22, 2005
Crab Regulations					
Implement industry fee system for fishing capacity reduction program for BS KTC fishery	Headquarters Action			July 28, 2005 70 FR 43673 <u>Comment period ended August 29, 2005</u>	September 16, 2005 70 FR 54652 <u>Fee collection will start on October 17, 2005</u>

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands

Bering Sea pollock

Sixteen catcher/processors (c/ps), 8 shore plants using 84 catcher vessels, and 3 motherships caught 93% or 1,215,807 mt of the 1,307,573 mt directed fishery allocations. The allocations remaining are: 18,000 mt for c/ps, 7,800 mt for motherships, and 65,700 mt for the shoreside fleet. In August, NMFS moved 7,000 mt from the incidental catch account (ICA) to the directed fisheries. In June, NMFS reallocated 14,500 mt of the Aleut Corporation's and ICA pollock and 1,900 mt of Community Development Quota (CDQ) pollock from the Aleutian Islands to the Bering Sea directed fishing allowances. The CDQ fishery has taken 98% of their 149,750 mt. The chinook salmon savings area closed September 1 and the chum salmon savings area remains open.

Trawl catcher/processor flatfish and Pacific cod

In 2005, 22 non-American Fisheries Act (AFA) and 5 AFA c/ps fished using non-pelagic trawl gear. On August 18, except for Atka mackerel and CDQ, the BSAI closed for non-pelagic trawl gear when the fleet reached the flatfish and Pacific cod halibut mortality limits. "Other flatfish" and rock sole went to bycatch status in July due to reaching the TAC and Alaska plaice went to PSC status in May due to exceeding the TAC.

In 2005, the non-AFA trawl c/ps discarded 22% of the 280,000 mt of groundfish total catch. This compares to discards of 33% out of 300,000 mt and 31% out of 278,000 mt of total groundfish catch in 2004 and 2003, respectively. The total amount retained increased from 201,429 mt in 2004 to 217,745 mt in 2005. Monthly discard rates for the BSAI in all targets for the 22 non-AFA H&G trawl vessels are displayed in the attached graph.

Atka mackerel

Ten c/ps registered for the B season harvest limitation area (HLA) fisheries. The c/ps reached 94% of the 542 HLA limit and 19% mt of the 543 HLA limit. The Central Aleutian District directed fishery closed September 22 and the Western Aleutian District is projected to close during the first week of October. Northern rockfish catch in the Aleutian Islands Atka mackerel target decreased from 4,235 mt in 2003, to 3,896 mt in 2004 and so far 2,535 mt in 2005. Retention rates have increased from 3% in 2003, to 6% in 2004, and 19% in 2005.

Pacific cod

Hook-and-line catcher/processors

The hook-and-line catcher/processor fishery opened August 15. About 13,400 mt remains of their current 77,344 mt Pacific cod allocation. The B season weekly catch averages 3,160 mt from 37 c/ps. In 2004, 38 c/ps participated during August/September and averaged 3,050 mt a week. NMFS plans to reallocate 17,064 mt from trawl gear and 1,611 mt from jig gear to hook-and-line c/ps. Another Pacific cod reallocation may occur in 2005 depending on the activity of other fisheries.

Pot catcher vessels

If the fleet has a strong showing after the October red king crab fishery, they may take the remaining 2,396 mt of their 14,502 mt annual allocation. NMFS plans to reallocate 736 mt from trawl gear to pot catcher vessels. So far in 2005 a total of 56 catcher vessels targeting Pacific cod delivered about 12,100 mt. This compares to 2004 when 72 catcher vessels delivered about 14,000 mt of Pacific cod.

Pot catcher/processors

Catcher/processors caught 2,400 mt of Pacific cod catch so far in 2005 out of the 3,190 mt allocation. NMFS plans to reallocate 162 mt from trawl gear to pot catcher/processors. In 2004, 3 c/ps caught 3,235 mt of Pacific cod.

Trawl catcher vessels and catcher/processors

Both catcher vessels and c/ps took about 80% of their annual allocations of 46,779 mt each. Most of this catch occurred during January to April with the A season taking 99% and the B season 1%. About 64 catcher vessels participated in the directed fishery with only 4 of those vessels active during the B season. In the combined trawl allocations about 19,288 mt of Pacific cod was left. The remaining trawl Atka mackerel and pollock fisheries need 1,250 mt for incidental Pacific cod catch. NMFS plans to reallocate 17,962 mt to the catcher/processor hook-and-line and pot gear components as noted above.

Hook-and-line catcher vessels

Seventy percent of the 290 mt quota has been taken. Seven of the 10 hook-and-line vessels that participated are less than 60 feet. The catch from vessels less than 60 feet is deducted from this category until it closes. Then the less than 60 feet vessels can continue to fish under the following fishery allocation.

Hook-and-line and pot catcher vessels less than 60 ft length overall

Seventeen vessels caught about 2,200 mt of Pacific cod. Thirty six percent of the catch was by hook-and-line gear and the remainder by pot gear. Activity was relatively strong in March to early May and in mid June through July with minimal landings through August and late September. The annual allocation of 1,416 mt was increased from the jig gear allocation in April with 1,150 mt, in May with 350 mt, and in August with 500 mt.

Jig gear

Nineteen catcher vessels caught 116 mt of Pacific cod. The fishery started in January, but most catch occurred in May and June when weekly catch rates averaged 10 mt. Deliveries from jig vessels stopped the end of July except for a small amount in September. In 2004, 16 vessels caught 231 mt and in 2003, 15 vessels caught 156 mt.

Greenland turbot

A total of about 2,000 mt has been taken in the Bering Sea subarea of the 2,295 mt TAC. Seventy four percent was taken in the directed fishery by 8 hook-and-line c/ps mostly in July. Currently, some c/ps targeting Pacific cod are retaining turbot. The trawl fisheries account for the remaining catch.

Total catch and optimum yield

In recent years the total catch of groundfish in the BSAI has increased. The attached graph shows the percentage of the 2,000,000 mt OY cap taken in 2003-2005. The 2005 data includes projections for catch in October through December.

Gulf of Alaska

Skates

Big skate total catch is 840 mt of which 54 mt was taken in the skate directed fishery by hook-and-line catcher vessels. Longnose skate total catch is 1,089 mt of which 141 mt was taken in the directed fishery by hook-and-line and trawl catcher vessels. For both big and longnose skate catch, 32% was taken by hook-and-line and 66% by non-pelagic trawl gear. The "other skates" category catch is 658 mt with no catch taken in a directed fishery. The "other skates" catch by gear is 53% by non-pelagic trawls and 46% by hook-and-line gear. The decreased effort in the 2004 and 2005 directed fisheries compared to 2003 may be attributed to lower price. Also increased retention of skates as incidental catch may be meeting the markets volume demand.

Pacific cod

The B season fisheries for inshore and offshore Pacific cod, in the Western and Central GOA, opened September 1 and they remain open for hook-and-line, pot and jig gear.

Western GOA

Inshore Pacific cod

The total catch to date is 11,023 mt leaving 2,915 mt. During the B season the average weekly catch is 215 mt and a total of 847 mt has been taken. The B season catch by gear type breaks out as: 13 pot vessels taking 92%, 21 trawl vessels taking 3%, and 11 hook-and-line or jig vessels taking 5%.

Offshore Pacific cod

A total of 430 mt of the 1,569 mt annual TAC has been caught. Currently, 3 hook-and-line c/ps are targeting Pacific cod.

Central GOA

Inshore Pacific cod

Out of the 22,577 mt TAC 3,167 mt remains. The B season catch by gear type breaks out as: 27 pot vessels taking 30%, 34 vessels using non-pelagic trawl gear taking 53%, and 55 vessels using hook-and-line gear taking 17%.

Offshore Pacific cod

The total catch for the year is 361 mt of a 2,508 mt TAC. Currently, no vessels are participating in this fishery.

Rockfish

The GOA trawl rockfish season opened July 5 when the third seasonal trawl halibut mortality apportionments became available.

Western GOA

Eight c/ps took 2,271 mt of Pacific ocean perch and 509 mt of northern rockfish during the July fishery. Shoreside effort remains low. The Pacific ocean perch fishery closed July 16 and northern rockfish closed July 19.

Central GOA

In July 2005, 8,021 mt of Pacific ocean perch was taken compared to 8,329 mt in 2004. Sector percentages are consistent between 2004 and 2005 with 42% from 7 c/ps and 58% from 25 catcher vessels (32 in 2004). The Pacific ocean perch fishery closed on July 14 and northern rockfish closed on August 30.

Pollock

The C season for pollock opened across the Western and Central GOA on August 25. The D season opened on October 1.

Area 610

The C season fishery closed on September 3 after 9 days. Twenty-one vessels harvested 9,111 mt with an average daily catch rate of 1,100 mt. Both effort and catch rates were higher than the March fishery. During 2003 and 2004 D seasons, daily pollock catch rates average 1,300 mt. At this rate, the remaining TAC of 11,583 mt should last 9 days. The fishery may be shorter or longer depending on effort and weather conditions.

Area 620

The C season fishery had 4 separate openings. Fourteen catcher vessels participated. Area 620 has 6,700 mt remaining of the annual TAC of 34,404 mt. The length of the D season fishery depends on when the fleet starts fishing in 620 since initial D season effort focuses on the 630 fishery.

Area 630

The C season fishery also had 4 separate openings. Twenty six catcher vessels participated. Area 630 has 6,986 mt remaining of the annual TAC of 18,718 mt. Catch data from previous years indicates the October fishery can have highly accelerated rates compared to the September and August fisheries which averaged 1,000 mt a day in 2005.

Flatfish

So far in 2005, non-pelagic trawl gear took about 25,800 mt of flatfish. Trawl gear closed September 4, so this represents most of the 2005 catch. The 2005 flatfish catch increased from 21,300 mt in 2004 and remains lower than 42,000 mt in 2003. The largest difference is from c/p arrowtooth flounder where catch in 2005 (16,549 mt) is less than half of 2003 (30,577 mt). These reductions are due to reduced effort in August to maximize the amount of halibut mortality available for the September 1 Pacific cod opening. Also in 2004 and 2005, the flatfish fisheries did not occur in late September and October as the halibut mortality in the September 1 Pacific cod fishery closed trawl gear for the remainder of the year.

Halibut bycatch mortality

Trawl gear

Trawling for both the shallow water and deep water species complexes opened July 5. The deep-water fishery closed gulf-wide July 24. Rockfish and rex sole were the primary targets in July. The shallow water complex closed August 19. Both shallow and deep water fisheries opened September 1 to 4 and the fleet targeted Pacific cod and arrowtooth flounder. During the September Pacific cod opening, the fleet took 521 mt of the 2,000 mt total trawl halibut mortality limit. Eventually all trawling closed for the year due primarily to the extremely high halibut bycatch rates in the Pacific cod fishery.

Hook-and-line gear

The hook-and-line fishery for groundfish remains open. The B season weekly halibut mortality averages 15 mt. With 108 mt of halibut mortality remaining the fishery will remain open for about 7 weeks.

Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Catch Report
(excludes CDQ except as noted)
Through: 24-SEP-05

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



Bering Sea

Sea- sons	Account	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Other Rockfish	153	426	273	36%	2
	Pacific Ocean Perch	628	1,190	562	53%	5
	Sablefish (Hook-and-Line and Pot)	434	976	542	45%	32
	Sablefish (Trawl)	270	1,037	767	26%	1
	Greenland Turbot	2,016	2,295	279	88%	9
X	Pollock, AFA Inshore	589,847	653,787	63,940	90%	16,355
X	Pollock, AFA Catcher Processor	504,862	523,029	18,167	97%	11,368
X	Pollock, AFA Mothership	122,921	130,757	7,836	94%	5,308
	Pollock, Incidental Catch, non-Bogoslof (includes CDQ)	35,092	37,577	2,485	93%	111
	Pollock, Incidental Catch, Bogoslof (includes CDQ)	0	10	10	0%	0

Aleutian Islands

Sea- sons	Account	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Other Rockfish	246	502	256	49%	7
	Pacific Ocean Perch, Eastern	2,445	2,849	404	86%	0
	Pacific Ocean Perch, Central	2,080	2,808	728	74%	62
	Pacific Ocean Perch, Western	3,375	4,703	1,328	72%	94
X	Atka Mackerel, Eastern (Other Gear)	5,541	6,868	1,327	81%	40
	Atka Mackerel, Eastern (Jig)	0	69	69	0%	0
X	Atka Mackerel, Central	32,630	32,838	208	99%	3,979
X	Atka Mackerel, Western	7,592	18,500	10,908	41%	2,043
	Sablefish (Hook-and-Line and Pot)	992	1,572	580	63%	0
	Sablefish (Trawl)	98	557	459	18%	0
	Greenland Turbot	372	680	308	55%	4
X	Pollock	195	1,200	1,005	16%	0
X	Pollock, Incidental Catch (includes CDQ)	1,279	1,400	121	91%	25

Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Catch Report
(excludes CDQ except as noted)
Through: 24-SEP-05

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



Bering Sea Aleutian Islands

Sea- sons	Account	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Alaska Plaice	11,095	6,800	-4,295	163%	0
	Arrowtooth Flounder	12,667	13,200	533	96%	132
	Flathead Sole	14,785	16,575	1,790	89%	104
	Northern Rockfish	2,830	4,625	1,795	61%	165
	Other Flatfish	4,237	4,375	138	97%	13
	Other Species	18,258	24,650	6,392	74%	849
X	Pacific Cod, Catcher Processor (Trawl)	34,682	44,779	10,097	77%	166
X	Pacific Cod, Catcher Vessel (Trawl)	35,599	44,779	9,180	80%	111
X	Pacific Cod, Catcher Processor (Hook-and-Line)	64,355	77,344	12,989	83%	2,769
X	Pacific Cod, Catcher Vessel (Hook-and-Line)	202	290	88	70%	0
X	Pacific Cod, Catcher Processor (Pot)	2,423	3,190	767	76%	114
X	Pacific Cod, Catcher Vessel (Pot)	10,878	14,502	3,624	75%	687
X	Pacific Cod (Jig)	116	1,811	1,695	6%	0
	Pacific Cod (Hook-and-Line and Pot < 60 ft)	2,201	3,354	1,153	66%	0
	Pacific Cod, Incidental Catch (Hook-and-Line and Pot)	507	500	-7	101%	75
	Rock Sole	35,403	35,275	-128	100%	12
	Rougheye Rockfish	82	207	125	40%	0
	Shortraker Rockfish	149	552	403	27%	0
	Squid (includes CDQ)	1,120	1,084	-36	103%	40
	Yellowfin Sole	87,297	87,383	86	100%	77
Total:		1,651,957	1,810,905	158,948	91%	44,757

This report includes CDQ total catch of squid and ICA pollock. The remaining CDQ allocated catch may be found in the reports with CDQ.

Other gear in the Atka mackerel fishery includes all authorized gear types except jig.

Other flatfish: all flatfish species, except for Pacific halibut, flathead sole, Greenland turbot, rock sole, yellowfin sole, arrowtooth flounder, and Alaska plaice.

Other rockfish: all Sebastes and Sebastolobus species except for Pacific ocean perch, northern, shortraker, and rougheye rockfish.

Other species: sculpins, sharks, skates and octopus.

**Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Seasonal Catch Report
(excludes CDQ)**

Through: 24-SEP-05

Account: ALL

**National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting**



Bering Sea

Pollock, AFA Inshore

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	20-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	257,235	257,215	-20	100%
B	10-JUN-05	01-NOV-05	332,612	396,572	63,960	84%
Total:			589,847	653,787	63,940	90%

Pollock, AFA Catcher Processor

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	20-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	205,578	205,772	194	100%
B	10-JUN-05	01-NOV-05	299,285	317,258	17,973	94%
Total:			504,862	523,030	18,168	97%

Pollock, AFA Mothership

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
	20-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	51,398	51,443	45	100%
B	10-JUN-05	01-NOV-05	71,523	79,314	7,791	90%
Total:			122,921	130,757	7,836	94%

Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Seasonal Catch Report
(excludes CDQ)

Through: 24-SEP-05
Account: ALL

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



Aleutian Islands

Atka Mackerel, Eastern (Other Gear)

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	20-JAN-05	15-APR-05	828	3,434	2,606	24%
Between A and B	15-APR-05	01-SEP-05	2,602	0	-2,602	0%
B	01-SEP-05	01-NOV-05	2,111	3,434	1,323	61%
After B	01-NOV-05	31-DEC-05	0	0	0	0%
Total:			5,541	6,868	1,327	81%

Atka Mackerel, Central

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	20-JAN-05	15-APR-05	16,502	16,419	-83	101%
Between A and B	15-APR-05	01-SEP-05	102	0	-102	0%
B	01-SEP-05	01-NOV-05	16,027	16,419	392	98%
After B	01-NOV-05	31-DEC-05	0	0	0	0%
Total:			32,630	32,838	208	99%

Atka Mackerel, Western

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	20-JAN-05	15-APR-05	2,661	9,250	6,589	29%
Between A and B	15-APR-05	01-SEP-05	8	0	-8	0%
B	01-SEP-05	01-NOV-05	4,922	9,250	4,328	53%
After B	01-NOV-05	31-DEC-05	0	0	0	0%
Total:			7,592	18,500	10,908	41%

Pollock

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	20-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	195	1,000	805	19%
B	10-JUN-05	01-NOV-05	0	200	200	0%
Total:			195	1,200	1,005	16%

Pollock, Incidental Catch (includes CDQ)

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	01-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	736	600	-136	123%
B	10-JUN-05	31-DEC-05	543	740	197	73%
Total:			1,279	1,340	61	95%

Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Seasonal Catch Report
(excludes CDQ)

Through: 24-SEP-05

Account: ALL

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



Bering Sea Aleutian Islands

Pacific Cod, Catcher Processor (Trawl)

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	20-JAN-05	01-APR-05	22,333	22,390	57	100%
B	01-APR-05	10-JUN-05	5,826	13,434	7,608	43%
C	10-JUN-05	01-NOV-05	6,523	8,956	2,433	73%
After C	01-NOV-05	31-DEC-05	0	0	0	0%
Total:			34,682	44,780	10,098	77%

Pacific Cod, Catcher Vessel (Trawl)

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	20-JAN-05	01-APR-05	31,217	31,345	128	100%
B	01-APR-05	10-JUN-05	3,105	4,478	1,373	69%
C	10-JUN-05	01-NOV-05	1,277	8,956	7,679	14%
After C	01-NOV-05	31-DEC-05	0	0	0	0%
Total:			35,599	44,779	9,180	80%

Pacific Cod, Catcher Processor (Hook-and-Line)

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	01-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	46,136	46,407	271	99%
B	10-JUN-05	31-DEC-05	18,219	30,938	12,719	59%
Total:			64,355	77,345	12,990	83%

Pacific Cod, Catcher Vessel (Hook-and-Line)

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	01-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	176	174	-2	101%
B	10-JUN-05	31-DEC-05	26	116	90	22%
Total:			202	290	88	70%

Pacific Cod, Catcher Processor (Pot)

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	01-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	1,892	1,914	22	99%
Between A and B	10-JUN-05	01-SEP-05	0	0	0	0%
B	01-SEP-05	31-DEC-05	531	1,276	745	42%
Total:			2,423	3,190	767	76%

**Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Seasonal Catch Report
(excludes CDQ)**

Through: 24-SEP-05
Account: ALL

**National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting**



Bering Sea Aleutian Islands

Pacific Cod, Catcher Vessel (Pot)

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	01-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	8,701	8,701	0	100%
Between A and B	10-JUN-05	01-SEP-05	0	0	0	0%
B	01-SEP-05	31-DEC-05	2,178	5,801	3,623	38%
Total:			10,878	14,502	3,624	75%

Pacific Cod (Jig)

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	01-JAN-05	30-APR-05	23	24	1	94%
B	30-APR-05	31-AUG-05	94	762	668	12%
C	31-AUG-05	31-DEC-05	0	1,524	1,524	0%
Total:			116	2,310	2,194	5%

This report does not include the CDQ allocated catch.

Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Prohibited Species Report
(excludes CDQ fisheries except as noted)

Through: 24-SEP-05

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



Chinook Salmon

Trawl Gear

Sea- sons	Account	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	BS Pollock (Pelagic)	Count	41,177	26,825	-14,352	154%	1,764
	AI Pollock (Pelagic)	Count	43	647	604	7%	0
Total:			41,220	27,472	-13,748	150%	1,764

Halibut Mortality

Non-Trawl Gear

Sea- sons	Account	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
X	Pacific Cod (Hook-and-Line)	MT	289	775	486	37%	19
	Non-Pacific Cod (Hook-and-Line)	MT	13	58	45	22%	0
Total:			302	833	531	36%	19

Trawl Gear

Sea- sons	Account	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Pacific Cod	MT	1,334	1,434	100	93%	0
	Rockfish	MT	17	69	52	25%	0
X	Rock Sole, Flathead Sole, Other Flatfish (Trawl)	MT	1,004	779	-225	129%	0
	Pollock, Atka Mackerel, Other Species	MT	159	232	73	69%	11
X	Yellowfin Sole (Trawl)	MT	653	886	233	74%	0
	Turbot/Sablefish/Arrowtooth Flounder	MT	195	0	-195	0%	0
Total:			3,362	3,400	38	99%	11

Herring (includes CDQ fisheries)

Trawl Gear

Sea- sons	Account	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Pacific Cod	MT	14	27	13	52%	0
	Rockfish	MT	0	10	10	0%	0
	Rock Sole, Flathead Sole, Other Flatfish	MT	7	27	20	24%	0
	Pollock, Atka Mackerel, Other Species	MT	174	192	18	91%	0
	Pollock Pelagic	MT	416	1,562	1,146	27%	9
	Yellowfin Sole	MT	58	183	125	32%	0
	Greenland Turbot, Arrowtooth, Sablefish	MT	0	12	12	0%	0
Total:			670	2,013	1,343	33%	9

Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Prohibited Species Report
(excludes CDQ fisheries except as noted)

Through: 24-SEP-05

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



Opilio (Tanner) Crab - COBLZ

Trawl Gear

Sea- sons	Account	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Pacific Cod	Count	31,865	139,331	107,466	23%	0
	Rockfish	Count	0	44,945	44,945	0%	0
	Rock Sole, Flathead Sole, Other Flatfish	Count	197,151	1,082,528	885,377	18%	0
	Pollock, Atka Mackerel, Other Species	Count	1,545	80,903	79,358	2%	59
	Yellowfin Sole	Count	3,008,058	3,101,915	93,857	97%	0
	Greenland Turbot, Arrowtooth, Sablefish	Count	0	44,946	44,946	0%	0
Total:			3,238,619	4,494,568	1,255,949	72%	59

Bairdi Crab, Zone 1

Trawl Gear

Sea- sons	Account	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Pacific Cod	Count	85,616	183,112	97,496	47%	0
	Rock Sole, Flathead Sole, Other Flatfish	Count	139,026	365,320	226,294	38%	0
	Pollock, Atka Mackerel, Other Species	Count	166	17,224	17,058	1%	0
	Yellowfin Sole	Count	6,831	340,844	334,013	2%	0
Total:			231,639	906,500	674,861	26%	0

Bairdi Crab, Zone 2

Trawl Gear

Sea- sons	Account	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Pacific Cod	Count	47,640	324,176	276,536	15%	0
	Rockfish	Count	0	10,988	10,988	0%	0
	Rock Sole, Flathead Sole, Other Flatfish	Count	300,605	596,154	295,549	50%	0
	Pollock, Atka Mackerel, Other Species	Count	750	27,473	26,723	3%	5
	Yellowfin Sole	Count	99,946	1,788,459	1,688,513	6%	0
Total:			448,941	2,747,250	2,298,309	16%	5

Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Prohibited Species Report
(excludes CDQ fisheries except as noted)

Through: 24-SEP-05

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



Red King Crab, Zone 1

Trawl Gear

Sea- sons	Account	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Pacific Cod	Count	1,816	26,563	24,747	7%	0
	Rock Sole, Flathead Sole, Other Flatfish	Count	45,987	121,413	75,426	38%	0
	Pollock, Atka Mackerel, Other Species	Count	0	406	406	0%	0
	Yellowfin Sole	Count	48,846	33,843	-15,003	144%	0
Total:			96,649	182,225	85,576	53%	0

This report does not include the CDQ allocated catch.

"Other flatfish" for PSC monitoring: all flatfish species, except for Pacific halibut (a prohibited species), flathead sole, Greenland turbot, rock sole, yellowfin sole, arrowtooth flounder.

COBLZ: C. Opilio Crab Bycatch Limitation Zone. 50 CFR 679.21(e) and Figure 13.

Zone 1: Federal Reporting Areas 508, 509, 512, 516.

Zone 2: Federal Reporting Areas 513, 517, 521.

Data is based on observer reports, extrapolated to total groundfish harvest. Estimates for all weeks may change due to incorporation of late or corrected data.

Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Seasonal Prohibited Species Report (excludes CDQ fisheries)

Through: 24-SEP-05
Account: ALL

**National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting**



Non-Chinook Salmon, CVOA

Trawl Gear

Season	Begin	End	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken
Non-Chinook Salmon CVOA	15-AUG-05	14-OCT-05	Count	28,968	38,850	9,882	75%
Total:				28,968	38,850	9,882	75%

Halibut Mortality

Pacific Cod (Hook-and-Line)

Season	Begin	End	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken
1st Season	01-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	MT	141	320	179	44%
2nd Season	10-JUN-05	15-AUG-05	MT	3	0	-3	0%
3rd Season	15-AUG-05	31-DEC-05	MT	146	455	309	32%
Total:				289	775	486	37%

Rock Sole, Flathead Sole, Other Flatfish (Trawl)

Season	Begin	End	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken
1st Season	20-JAN-05	01-APR-05	MT	528	448	-80	118%
2nd Season	01-APR-05	05-JUL-05	MT	221	164	-57	135%
3rd Season	05-JUL-05	31-DEC-05	MT	255	167	-88	153%
Total:				1,004	779	-225	129%

Yellowfin Sole (Trawl)

Season	Begin	End	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken
1st Season	20-JAN-05	01-APR-05	MT	257	262	5	98%
2nd Season	01-APR-05	21-MAY-05	MT	167	195	28	86%
3rd Season	21-MAY-05	05-JUL-05	MT	23	49	26	46%
4th Season	05-JUL-05	31-DEC-05	MT	206	380	174	54%
Total:				653	886	233	74%

This report does not include the CDQ allocated catch.

CVOA: Catcher Vessel Operational Area. 50 CFR 679.22(a)(5) and Figure 2.

Other flatfish for PSC monitoring: all flatfish species, except for Pacific halibut (a prohibited species), flathead sole, Greenland turbot, rock sole, yellowfin sole, arrowtooth flounder.

Data is based on observer reports, extrapolated to total groundfish harvest. Estimates for all weeks may change due to incorporation of late or corrected data.

Bering Sea Aleutian Islands
Seasonal Non-Sideboard Prohibited Species Report
(excludes CDQ fisheries)

Through: 24-SEP-05
Account: ALL

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



Red King Crab, RKCSS

Trawl Gear

Season	Begin	End	Units	Total Catch	Limit	Remaining	% Taken
Rock Sole, Flathead Sole, Other	20-JAN-05	31-DEC-05	Count	96,649	42,495	-54,154	227%
Flatfish (Non Pelagic)				96,649	42,495	-54,154	227%
Total:							

RKCSS: Red king crab savings subarea. 50 CFR 679.22(a)(3) and Figure 11.

Gulf of Alaska Catch Report

Through: 24-SEP-05

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



Western, Central Pollock

Sea- sons	Account	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
X	Pollock, 610 Shumagin	18,797	30,380	11,583	62%	0
X	Pollock, 620 Chirikof	27,704	34,404	6,700	81%	85
X	Pollock, 630 Kodiak	11,782	18,718	6,936	63%	1,132

Western Gulf

Sea- sons	Account	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Arrowtooth Flounder	2,349	8,000	5,651	29%	4
	Deep Water Flatfish	4	330	327	1%	0
	Shallow Water Flatfish	104	4,500	4,396	2%	0
	Flathead Sole	587	2,000	1,413	29%	0
	Rex Sole	574	1,680	1,106	34%	0
	Pacific Ocean Perch	2,339	2,567	228	91%	0
	Rougeye Rockfish	51	188	137	27%	0
	Shortraker Rockfish	68	155	87	44%	0
	Thornyhead Rockfish	183	410	227	45%	0
	Pelagic Shelf Rockfish	116	377	261	31%	1
	Northern Rockfish	567	808	241	70%	0
	Other Rockfish	78	40	-38	194%	0
X	Pacific Cod, Inshore	11,227	14,118	2,891	80%	306
X	Pacific Cod, Offshore	425	1,569	1,144	27%	38
	Sablefish (Hook-and-Line)	1,655	2,032	377	81%	19
	Sablefish (Trawl)	93	508	415	18%	0
	Big Skate	26	727	701	4%	0
	Longnose Skate	15	66	51	23%	0

Gulf of Alaska Catch Report

Through: 24-SEP-05

National Marine Fisheries Service Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries Catch Accounting



Central Gulf

Sea- sons	Account	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Arrowtooth Flounder	15,468	25,000	9,532	62%	95
	Deep Water Flatfish	394	3,340	2,946	12%	0
	Shallow Water Flatfish	4,516	13,000	8,484	35%	1
	Flathead Sole	1,844	5,000	3,156	37%	10
	Rex Sole	1,563	7,340	5,777	21%	1
	Pacific Ocean Perch	8,145	8,535	390	95%	0
	Rougheye Rockfish	117	557	440	21%	0
	Shortraker Rockfish	220	324	104	68%	0
	Pelagic Shelf Rockfish	1,843	3,067	1,224	60%	1
	Northern Rockfish	4,208	4,283	75	98%	0
	Thornyhead Rockfish	385	1,010	625	38%	1
	Other Rockfish	536	300	-236	179%	5
X	Pacific Cod, Inshore	19,417	22,577	3,160	86%	301
X	Pacific Cod, Offshore	361	2,509	2,148	14%	0
	Sablefish (Hook-and-Line)	5,297	5,800	503	91%	37
	Sablefish (Trawl)	999	1,450	451	69%	0
	Big Skate	755	2,463	1,708	31%	1
	Longnose Skate	936	1,972	1,036	47%	1

Eastern Gulf

Sea- sons	Account	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Rougheye Rockfish	118	262	144	45%	1
	Shortraker Rockfish	193	274	81	70%	1
	Thornyhead Rockfish	127	520	393	24%	1
	Pacific Cod, Inshore	13	3,294	3,281	0%	0
	Pacific Cod, Offshore	0	366	366	0%	0
	Big Skate	60	809	749	7%	0
	Longnose Skate	132	780	648	17%	0

Gulf of Alaska Catch Report

Through: 24-SEP-05

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



West Yakutat

Sea- sons	Account	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Arrowtooth Flounder	21	2,500	2,479	1%	0
	Deep Water Flatfish	4	2,120	2,116	0%	0
	Shallow Water Flatfish	0	2,030	2,030	0%	0
	Flathead Sole	0	3,000	3,000	0%	0
	Rex Sole	0	1,340	1,340	0%	0
	Pacific Ocean Perch	872	841	-31	104%	0
	Pelagic Shelf Rockfish	215	211	-4	102%	0
	Other Rockfish	70	130	60	54%	0
	Pollock	1,879	1,688	-191	111%	0
	Sablefish (Hook-and-Line)	1,710	2,273	563	75%	29
	Sablefish (Trawl)	60	307	247	19%	0

Southeast

Sea- sons	Account	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Arrowtooth Flounder	30	2,500	2,470	1%	0
	Deep Water Flatfish	3	1,030	1,027	0%	0
	Shallow Water Flatfish	6	1,210	1,204	0%	0
	Flathead Sole	0	390	390	0%	0
	Rex Sole	0	2,290	2,290	0%	0
	Pacific Ocean Perch	0	1,632	1,632	0%	0
	Pelagic Shelf Rockfish	3	898	895	0%	0
	Other Rockfish	35	200	165	18%	0
	Pollock	0	6,520	6,520	0%	0
	Demersal Shelf Rockfish	172	410	238	42%	1
	Sablefish (Hook-and-Line)	3,082	3,570	488	86%	68

Entire Gulf

Sea- sons	Account	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
	Atka Mackerel	872	600	-272	145%	2
	Other Skates	656	1,327	671	49%	11
	Other Species	3,134	13,871	10,737	23%	17
Total:		159,217	291,297	132,080	55%	2,171

Deep water flatfish: Dover sole, Greenland turbot, and deepsea sole.

Shallow water flatfish: flatfish not including deep water flatfish, flathead sole, rex sole, or arrowtooth flounder.

Gulf of Alaska Catch Report

Through: 24-SEP-05

**National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting**



Other rockfish in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas and in the West Yakutat District: slope rockfish and demersal shelf rockfish.

Other rockfish in the Southeast Outside District: slope rockfish.

Slope rockfish: aurora, blackgill, bocaccio, chilipepper, darkblotch, greenstriped, harlequin, pygmy, redbanded, redstripe, sharpchin, shortbelly, silvergrey, splitnose, stripetail, vermilion, and yellowmouth.

In the Eastern GOA only, "slope rockfish" also includes northern rockfish.

Demersal shelf rockfish: canary, china, copper, quillback, rosethorn, tiger, and yelloweye.

Pelagic shelf rockfish: dusky, widow, and yellowtail.

Other species: sculpins, sharks, squid, and octopus.

Gulf of Alaska Seasonal Catch Report

Through: 24-SEP-05
Account: ALL

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



Western, Central Pollock
Pollock, 610 Shumagin

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	20-JAN-05	10-MAR-05	7,316	5,035	-2,281	145%
B	10-MAR-05	01-JUN-05	2,251	5,035	2,784	45%
Between B and C	01-JUN-05	25-AUG-05	118	0	-118	0%
C	25-AUG-05	01-OCT-05	9,111	10,155	1,044	90%
D	01-OCT-05	01-NOV-05	0	10,155	10,155	0%
After D	01-NOV-05	31-DEC-05	0	0	0	0%
Total:			18,797			

Pollock, 620 Chirikof

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	20-JAN-05	10-MAR-05	13,117	11,692	-1,425	112%
B	10-MAR-05	01-JUN-05	13,771	13,820	49	100%
Between B and C	01-JUN-05	25-AUG-05	6	0	-6	0%
C	25-AUG-05	01-OCT-05	809	4,446	3,637	18%
D	01-OCT-05	01-NOV-05	0	4,446	4,446	0%
After D	01-NOV-05	31-DEC-05	0	0	0	0%
Total:			27,703			

Pollock, 630 Kodiak

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	20-JAN-05	10-MAR-05	4,677	4,148	-529	113%
B	10-MAR-05	01-JUN-05	3,850	2,021	-1,829	190%
Between B and C	01-JUN-05	25-AUG-05	270	0	-270	0%
C	25-AUG-05	01-OCT-05	2,979	6,274	3,295	47%
D	01-OCT-05	01-NOV-05	0	6,275	6,275	0%
After D	01-NOV-05	31-DEC-05	0	0	0	0%
Total:			11,776			

Gulf of Alaska Seasonal Catch Report

Through: 24-SEP-05
Account: ALL

**National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting**



Western Gulf

Pacific Cod, Inshore

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	01-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	10,293	8,471	-1,822	122%
Between A and B	10-JUN-05	01-SEP-05	63	0	-63	0%
B	01-SEP-05	31-DEC-05	870	5,647	4,777	15%
Total:			11,227	14,118	2,891	80%

Pacific Cod, Offshore

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	01-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	123	941	818	13%
Between A and B	10-JUN-05	01-SEP-05	63	0	-63	0%
B	01-SEP-05	31-DEC-05	239	628	389	38%
Total:			425	1,569	1,144	27%

Central Gulf

Pacific Cod, Inshore

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	01-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	12,674	13,547	873	94%
Between A and B	10-JUN-05	01-SEP-05	1,521	0	-1,521	0%
B	01-SEP-05	31-DEC-05	5,222	9,031	3,809	58%
Total:			19,417	22,578	3,161	86%

Pacific Cod, Offshore

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Quota	Remaining Quota	% Taken
A	01-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	91	1,505	1,414	6%
Between A and B	10-JUN-05	01-SEP-05	193	0	-193	0%
B	01-SEP-05	31-DEC-05	77	1,003	926	8%
Total:			361	2,508	2,147	14%

Gulf of Alaska Halibut Mortality Report

Through: 24-SEP-05

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting



Trawl Fisheries

Deep Water Species Complex

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Limit	Limit Remaining	% Taken
1st Season	20-JAN-05	01-APR-05	152	100	-52	152%
2nd Season	01-APR-05	05-JUL-05	255	300	45	85%
3rd Season	05-JUL-05	01-SEP-05	349	400	51	87%
4th Season	01-SEP-05	30-SEP-05	38	0	-38	0%
Total:			795	800	5	99%

Shallow Water Species Complex

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Limit	Limit Remaining	% Taken
1st Season	20-JAN-05	01-APR-05	164	450	286	37%
2nd Season	01-APR-05	05-JUL-05	275	100	-175	275%
3rd Season	05-JUL-05	01-SEP-05	255	200	-55	127%
4th Season	01-SEP-05	30-SEP-05	521	150	-371	348%
Total:			1,216	900	-316	135%

Year-To-Date

Account	Total Catch	Limit	Limit Remaining	% Taken	Last Wk Catch
Trawl Fishery	2,010	2,000	-10	101%	0

Other Hook-and-Line Fisheries

Season	Begin	End	Total Catch	Limit	Limit Remaining	% Taken
1st Season	01-JAN-05	10-JUN-05	126	250	124	50%
2nd Season	10-JUN-05	01-SEP-05	1	5	4	19%
3rd Season	01-SEP-05	31-DEC-05	57	35	-22	162%
Total:			183	290	107	63%

Deep-water species complex: sablefish, rockfish, deep-water flatfish, rex sole and arrowtooth flounder. Shallow-water species complex: pollock, Pacific cod, shallow-water flatfish, flathead sole, Atka mackerel, and 'other species'.

No apportionment between shallow-water and deep-water fishery complexes during October 1 to December 31 (300 mt allocated).

Other hook-and-line fisheries means all hook-and-line fisheries except sablefish and demersal shelf rockfish in the Southeast District.

Halibut mortality for the demersal shelf rockfish fishery, Southeast District is not listed due to insufficient observer coverage.

Gulf of Alaska Halibut Mortality Report

Through: 24-SEP-05

National Marine Fisheries Service
Alaska Region, Sustainable Fisheries
Catch Accounting

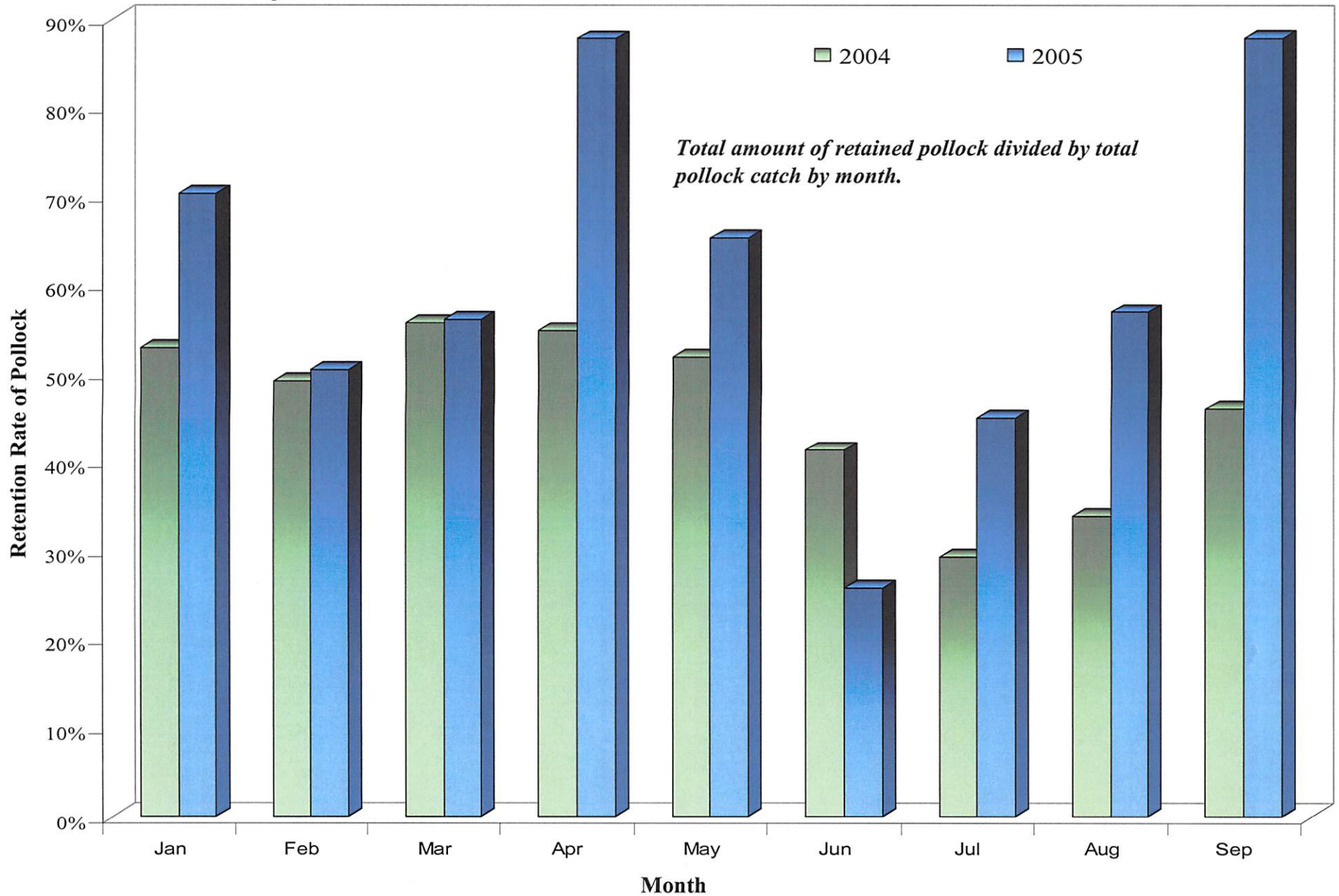


Data is based on observer reports, extrapolated to total groundfish harvest. Estimates for all weeks may change due to incorporation of late or corrected data.

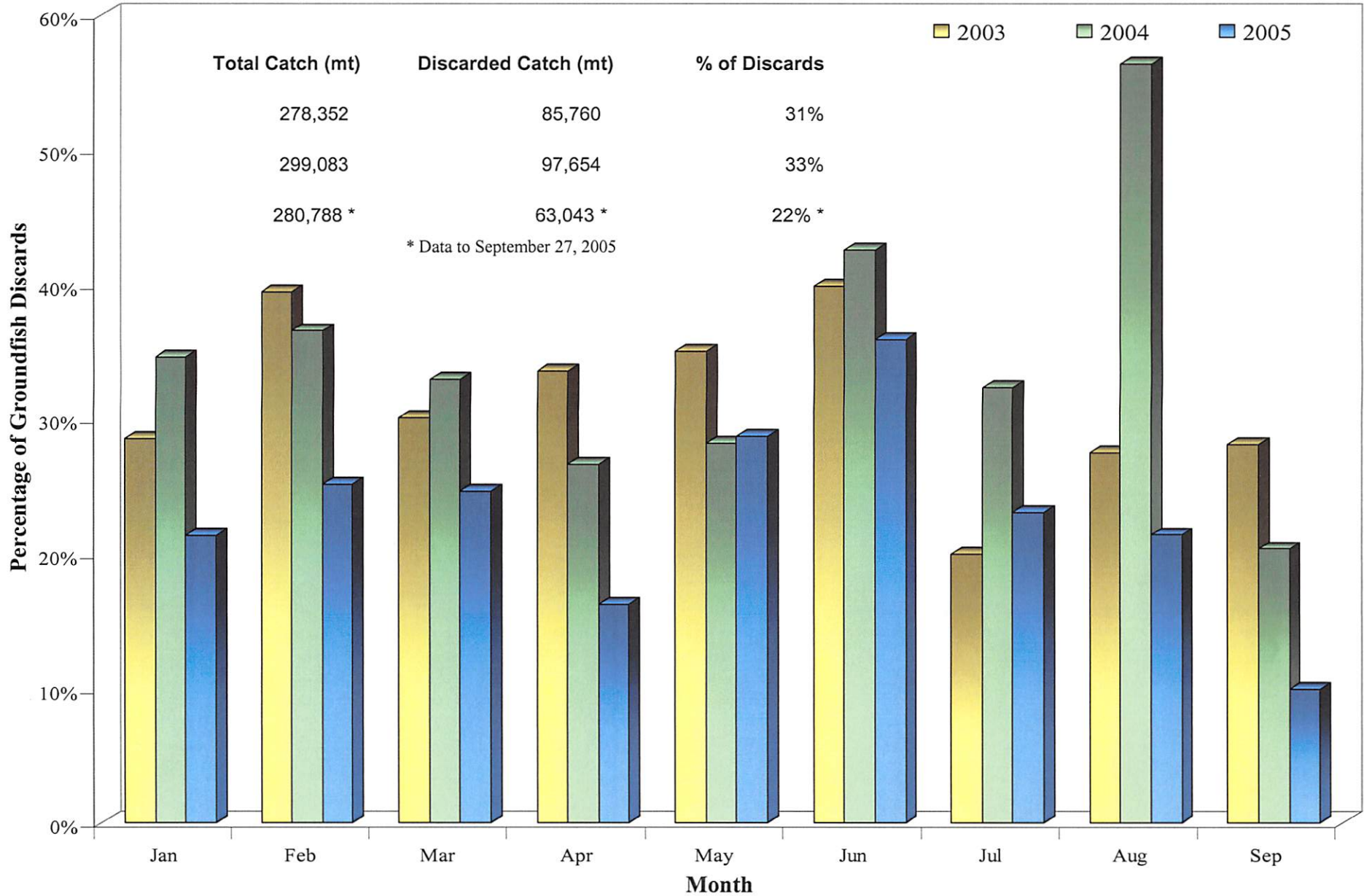
Note: All weights are in metric tons.

Page 2
Report run on September 30, 2005 6:17 AM

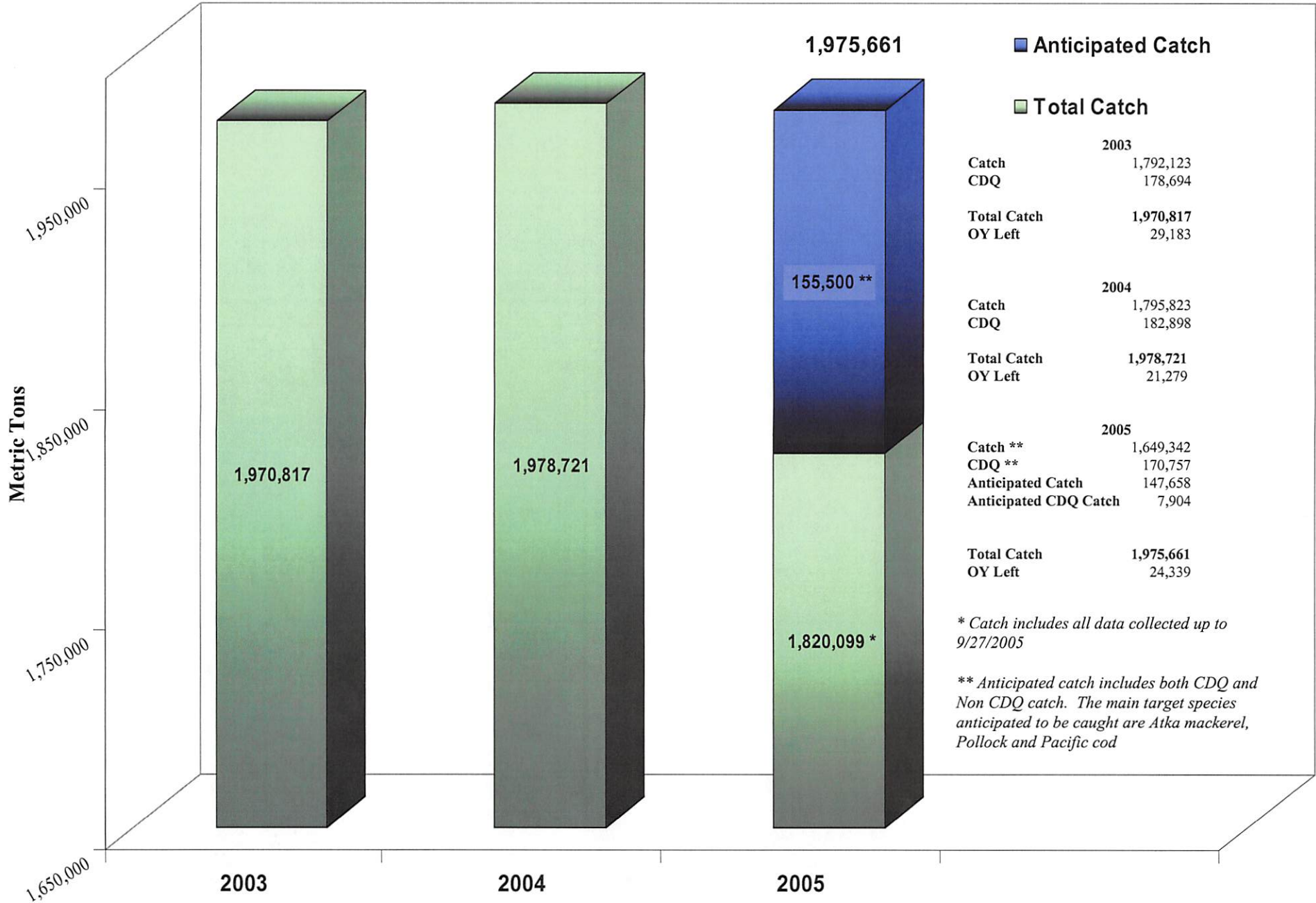
2004/2005 Retention Rate of Pollock by Non-AFA Listed Catcher Processors



2003 - 2005 Discard Rates in the BSAI by Non-AFA Listed Catcher Processors



Total Catch in the BSAI



THE CRAB GROUP OF INDEPENDENT HARVESTERS

COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION - P. O. Box 2684, Kodiak, Alaska 99615

NPFMC TESTIMONY OF KALE GARCIA – OCTOBER 5, 2005

Agenda Item B-2 NMFS Management Reports

Madam Chair and members of the North Pacific Council, my name is Kale Garcia and I am president of the Crab Group of Independent Harvesters. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in regard to the crab rationalization program which has just been implemented in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands.

The Crab Group is an organization of independent crab quota share holders and has been active throughout the process of the crab rationalization program.

As you are aware, crab rationalization is the most complex fisheries management program in the world. As harvesters, we are suddenly overwhelmed with new regulations and requirements governing the use of our quota share and IFQ. The 90/10 split for processor shares has led to a lot of additional regulations and issues to consider.

I am here today to address concerns we have in regard to the binding arbitration program.

The regulations provide for harvesters to commit their IFQ to an eligible processor in a couple of ways. One is through the lengthy season agreement and the other is through share matching. The problem is that it seems there is disconnect between the intent and the actual regulations.

Since the red king crab and opilio fisheries have not yet opened, I will use our experience in the brown king crab fishery to give you an example of our concern.

The TAC was announced on July 29 and IFQ was issued on August 11, only four days prior to the opening. Processing quota was not released until August 15, the day the season opened.

The processors did not provide information to the third party data provider regarding available IPQ until August 23, a full eight days after the season opened.

The way that the share match program is supposed to work is that harvesters can review the list of available IPQ and then notify a processor that they wish to match. The regulations require that all share matching be completed before the season begins. You cannot begin share matching until the uncommitted IPQ is posted, which can't be tabulated until IPQ is actually issued by RAM.

As you can see, the season was well under way before the uncommitted IPQ was available to harvesters and the ability to share match was restricted.

It is likely that we will experience some delays for the red king crab, tanner and opilio fisheries this year, as well. The TAC was released by ADF&G last week and RAM has mailed out the IFQ and IPQ permits. We don't know how long it will take the processors to complete their own internal calculations in order to provide information on their uncommitted IPQ and in some cases, harvesters aren't even sure yet how to access the information. While the opportunity to use the share matching provision began in September, the information has not been available for harvesters to attempt such matches.

We understand that our frustration about the binding arbitration program is shared by the processors, as well.

The members of the Crab Group believe this issue needs immediate attention and a correction for the next season. While there are other issues that we are tracking and will be addressing in future months, we believe this is the most pressing and important issue to begin working on at this time.

Since this is such a complicated and detailed program, we feel it is important for all options and alternatives to be considered. The industry should play a key role in developing the ideas for a Council discussion. The Crab Group recommends that the Council and National Marine Fisheries Service provide an opportunity for the harvesters, processors and binding arbitration organizations to meet and develop some ideas on ways to make the binding arbitration more efficient and user friendly for all participants. Members of our board and those of the independent cooperatives would welcome the opportunity to participate in this discussion.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important matter.