

ADVISORY PANEL
Motions and Rationale
October 4-7, 2022 - Anchorage, AK

C3 Trawl EM

The AP recommends the Council select Alternative 2 (electronic monitoring implemented on pelagic trawl pollock catcher vessels and tenders delivering to shoreside processors in the BS and GOA) as its preferred alternative for final action. The AP also supports the following elements as final policy decisions for the program:

- Use of the partial coverage 1.65% fee to pay for EM costs for those vessels that only participate in the GOA pollock fishery;
- Use of the partial coverage 1.65% fee to pay for housing and food for shoreside observers during deployments at processors to monitor partial coverage pollock deliveries from GOA vessels using EM;
- Implementation of industry-managed incentive plans that provide a framework to meet the goal of avoiding exceedance of maximum retainable amounts (MRA) and GOA pollock trip limits; and
- Adoption of the revised (hybrid) annual opt-in approach, as presented by analysts, that allows for maximum flexibility for GOA vessels participating in the EM program.
- ~~**¹Independent specification and enumeration of crab at the plant for any EM deliveries**~~

Amendment 1 - failed 7-8

Main Motion passed 15-0

Rationale in Favor of Main Motion:

- *This action will create an effective EM program in the United States' largest fishery by volume, which will incorporate a diverse group of participants and management structures across the two different regions. Implementation of a fully regulated pelagic pollock trawl EM program will provide multiple benefits to the fishery and its participants, including greatly improving data quality and overall monitoring cost efficiency. Under this program there will be more precise PSC accounting of salmon, crab, and halibut measurements as well as improved bycatch verifications and no at-sea discard rates. This improved data will benefit management of all fisheries beyond just the pollock fishery.*
- *There has been an unprecedented level of stakeholder, agency, and private sector commitment and collaboration that has worked for several years to consistently adjust and adapt the various components of this program to meet the compliance monitoring objectives and needs of the fishery.*
- *The first two bullets are recommended to provide equitable treatment across partial coverage fishery participants (fixed and trawl gear EM participants) so that GOA trawl participants who will continue to be assessed the 1.65% fee are not financially burdened when other partial coverage participants are not. Not only will this address equity, but it will also allow for cost efficiencies when using the same EM system across multiple partial coverage fisheries.*

Additionally, GOA processors currently contribute half of the 1.65% partial observer coverage fee and will continue to do so under a regulated program. GOA processors are also making substantial investment into monitoring costs through the existing fee.

- *The third bullet reflects what is currently happening under EFP with industry being in the best position to manage MRAs and the GOA pollock trip limit for EM and non-EM vessels.*
- *Regarding the final bullet, this reflects creative, dedicated, and a simplified approach (when compared to the threshold approach) to make an annual opt-in more feasible for GOA vessels. These vessels want to continue the practice of opting in and out of EM on a trip-by-trip basis as they were allowed under the EFP as this provides vessels with the flexibility they need to carry out their fishing plan. The CGOA fleet is composed of two distinct vessel groupings – vessels that do mixed species/gear trips and vessels that primarily fish pelagic pollock.*

Rationale in Opposition to Amendment 1:

- *Under the pollock catcher vessel EM program, all crab PSC incidentally taken by an EM vessel are fully retained and delivered to the processing plant. At the plant, all crab in a delivery undergo independent speciation and enumeration by the processor staff, verified by the plant observer, and included (accounted for) on the elandings ticket data and within the CAS.*
- *There is a possibility that incorporating full enumeration and speciation of crab under the shoreside observer duties could increase the workload to a point of needing another observer at the plant. As such, consideration of modifying priorities of shoreside to incorporate crab should be considered for all groundfish deliveries.*
- *Crab stocks in the Eastern Bering Sea (red king crab, snow and Tanner crab) are at historic low levels of abundance, snow crab is currently overfished and Bristol Bay Red king crab is approaching an overfished status. Any and all crab removals are increasingly important to track with absolute certainty. Fully enumerated and identified to species. Crab should be given the same priority and treatment as other PSC such as halibut and salmon, which are fully enumerated by the shoreside observer, not just verified by “spot checking” as outlined in this analysis. We heard in public testimony that pollock CVs do not deliver many crab (from staff 27 last year) and all were counted, not sure if they were identified so this should not be an excess burden on the plant observers and should be mandated and not optional, and is especially warranted given the current status of crab stocks.*

Rationale in Support of Amendment 1:

- *At this time crab are not independently enumerated by an observer at the shoreside observing level. Crab should be given the same priority and treatment as other PSC, such as salmon and halibut, which are fully enumerated by the shoreside observer, not just verified. Staff confirmed that the crab count is the lowest priority for the shoreside observer at this time because they are accounted for on the elandings data at the plant level.*