



ADVISORY PANEL
Motions and Rationale
December 5-8, 2023 - Anchorage, AK

REPORT

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The Advisory Panel met Tuesday, December 5, through Friday, December 8, 2023, at the Hilton Hotel, in Anchorage, AK. The following members were present for all or part of the meetings (absent members are ~~stricken~~):

Briggie, Tamara
~~Edson, Jesse~~
Gudmundsson, Gretar
Heuker, Tim
Johnson, Jim
Johnson, Mellisa

Kavanaugh, Julie
Laitinen, Rick
Mann, Heather
Howard, Lauren (Co-VC)
O'Donnell, Paddy
O'Neil, Megan

Price, Landry
Radell, Chelsae
Ritchie, Brian (Chair)
Wilkins, Paul (Co-VC)
Zagorski, Suzie

C1 Crab C Share Recent Participation

Motion 1

The AP recommends that the Council adopt, as their preferred alternative for final action, Alternative 2, Options 1, 2, and 3. For Option 2, include Suboption 1 with a 25-million-pound threshold and implement via Method 1 (restart). For Option 3, clarify that crew time tendering in Alaska should count towards '30 days of fishing' for active participation.

The AP supports the NMFS recommendation to clarify the definition of a fishing trip.

The AP supports the NFMS recommendation for a regulatory change clarifying that C share holders are exempt from active participation requirements if they hold QS in only closed CR crab fisheries.

Motion passed 15/0

Rationale in Favor of Motion:

- *This motion supports Alternative 2 which maintains active participation requirements for c-share holders in the BSAI Crab Rationalization Program while building in some flexibility in times of low quota or closed fisheries like the fishery has been experiencing in recent years.*
- *Within Alternative 2, Option 1 restarts the clock and reissues revoked quota, improving fairness for those that could not make a fishing trip in recent years due to COVID or low quotas with few boats fishing.*

- *Alternative 2, Option 2, Sub-option 1 sets a threshold at 25 Mlb combined TAC for Bristol Bay red king crab, snow crab, and Bering Sea Tanner crab, below which active participation is suspended. 25Mlb was selected as the threshold because these combined fisheries have never been below that TAC in the history of the crab fishery until the 21/22 season.*
- *This motion supports implementing Alternative 2, Option 2 via Method 1 which would restart the clock for all c-share holders for all 3 crab species (BBR, BSS, BST) whenever the combined threshold is below 25 Mlb. This would be the most liberal implementation method for c-share holders as well as the least onerous on the agency to implement.*
- *Alternative 2, Option 3 levels the playing field for new entrants to be able to have the same flexibility and requirements to maintain c-shares as initial issuees. In other words, both new entrants and initial issuees can maintain active participation within a three-year period by either participating in a BSAI crab trip or by fishing in either a federal or state commercial fishery off Alaska for 30 days.*
- *This motion clarifies that tendering should count towards the '30-days of fishing' requirement. Tendering is considered an "operation at sea in support of" fishing, consistent with the definition of fishing in the Magnuson-Stevens Act at 50 CFR 600.10 subparagraph (4).*
- *This action meets the purpose and need and is responsive to public comment – 8 of the 11 written comments asked for some form of relief without identifying a specific alternative.*
- *Retains initial intent of C shares to be transferable as recipients or those who have purchased quota age out of the fishery, but does provide flexibility to face the unprecedented conditions of covid and closed crab fisheries.*
- *Meets National Standard 5 on efficiency, National Standard 6 on variations and contingencies and Nation Standard 8 on sustained participation of communities.*
- *Some discussion as to the necessity of options 1,2 and 3 under alternative 2, but testimony of the organization representing 80% of the C share holders felt it was important to have all three options.*
- *Clarification was provided for rationale that the regulation for clarifying the definition of a "Fishing Trip" as recommended by NMFS reads: "The beginning period of when harvest of crab has commenced and ending when any processed or unprocessed crab has been offloaded or transferred from that vessel."*
- *The closure of crab season(s) made this situation unavoidable and the motion rectifies the circumstances where quota has been revoked.*
- *This motion is reflective of the motion passed by the PNCIAC that supported active participation of c-share holders and reissuing shares for the time being as we move past covid and the current low stocks for many crab species. The additions of the NMFS recommendation to update the definition of 'fishing trip' gets to their point on active participation.*
- *The AP supports the addition of tendering in fishing participation requirements. Tendering is an important diversification for crab boats and also important to participants of salmon fisheries.*
- *When Amendment 31 went into effect, the Council intended that C shares benefit 'at-sea participants.' The Crab Rationalization program has 3% QS specifically for active participants in the fishery. If participation requirements were completely removed, C share holders would have no incentive to divest and the shares would remain in the hands of those no longer participating in the fishery. Once the active participation requirements are removed from the program, it would be extremely difficult or impossible to build back into the program; it's important to maintain the ability for those working in the fishery to have access to and maintain their C shares.*
- *A significant "issue" with rationalization programs that is often vocalized by participants in the Council process is that rationalization prevents or excludes the participants who are crew from being able to have a larger stake in the fishery in the future. Keeping the at sea requirements, holds the program to its initial intent.*

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C2 Crab Facility Use Cap - Final Action

Motion:

The AP recommends Council take Final Action and select it's preliminary preferred alternatives, Alternatives 2 and 3, as it's final preferred alternatives (shown below).

Alternatives:

Alternative 2. Remove the EAG and WAI processing facility use caps at 50 CFR 680.7(a)(9).

Alternative 3. Exempt custom processing of BSS IPQ with a south-region designation, BBR IPQ, and WAG IPQ processed east of 174° W longitude from the PQS/IPQ and processing facility use caps under the program. Regionalization would still apply.

Motion Passed 14/0 (1 abstained)

Rationale in Favor of Motion:

- *All six written public comments and both oral comments were in support of moving forward with final action and Alternatives 2 & 3. In October there was also no opposition to moving forward and the Council chose Alternatives 2 & 3 as their preliminary preferred alternatives*
- *While fishermen prefer more processors and more competition, in this case there is more risk to leaving crab unprocessed, increasing inefficiency, and increasing the carbon footprint of the fishery in current operations – the benefit of moving forward with this action outweigh any risks of consolidation. This action meets national standards 1, 5, 6, 7 and 8.*
- *The PNCIAC supported alternative 2 and 3 and noted that the recent Bristol Bay Red king crab fishery had difficulties meeting caps that would have benefited from Alternative 3 and made the fishery more profitable for harvesters. In the past we have heard that some participants of the Aleutian golden king crab fishery cannot access the more profitable live market without alternative 2.*
- *While processing caps can serve an important function in preventing processor consolidation in some fisheries, there are currently a multitude of existing issues that are forcing processor consolidation for other reasons. In this particular fishery, the processing cap is unwarranted and has the potential to strand quota.*
- *The AP appreciated that Regional Staff were looking at efficient ways to get this to rulemaking; given the likelihood of quota being stranded in future years, the AP expressed concern that this should be implemented as quickly as possible.*

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C3 BSAI Groundfish Specifications

Motion:

The AP has reviewed the 2023 Ecosystem Report for the EBS and AI. The AP greatly appreciates the work put into this detailed report each year.

The AP recommends the Council approve the 2023 BSAI Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report.

The AP recommends the Council approve the final 2024 and 2025 BSAI groundfish specifications for OFLs and ABCs as recommended by the SSC, and the TACs as shown in the attached Table 1. The Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Pacific Cod TACs have been adjusted for the State Water cod fisheries. Additionally, the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands TACs for sablefish has been reduced in the BSAI(combined) by 5% to accommodate the State Water GHF fishery.

The AP recommends the Council approve no reduction from maxABC for the 2024 and 2025 ABC Flatfish Reserves. (NO TABLE Associated)

The AP recommends the Council approve the 2024 and 2025 PSC limits and apportionments as assigned to their respective target fisheries as provided in Tables 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 (below) with adjustments to Tables 15, 16, 17.

The AP recommends the Council approve the halibut discard mortality rates for 2024 and 2025 as shown in Table 19 (below).

Amendment 1: add an additional TAC column to Table 1

The AP proposes to add an additional TAC column in Table 1 for the Council to consider that would reflect the changes below.

- a. **BS Pollock** – change from 1,300,000 MT to **1,320,000 MT**, an increase of 20,000 MT
- b. **Yellowfin Sole** – change from 195,000 MT to **180,000 MT**, a reduction of 15,000 MT
- c. **Arrowtooth Flounder** – change from 14,000 MT to **13,500 MT**, a reduction of 500 MT
- d. **Flathead Sole** – change from 35,500 MT to **35,000 MT**, a reduction of 500 MT
- e. **Alaska Plaice** – change from 21,000 MT to **19,000 MT** a reduction of 2,000 MT
- f. **Northern Rockfish** – change from 16,000 MT to **14,000 MT**, a reduction of 2,000 MT

Amendment passed: 15/1

Amendment 2: The AP proposes the following adjustment to the TAC columns in Table 1

Bering Sea Sablefish - change from 9500 MT to **7996 MT**

Amendment passed: 9/7

Amendment 3:

The AP recommends to increase Plaice by 752 MT and increase Northern Rockfish by 752 MT into both TAC columns to bring the total to 2,000,000

Amendment passed: 16/0

Amended Main Motion passed: 16/0

Rationale in Favor of Amendment 1:

- *Given that this is a science driven process, the science says we can support a higher pollock TAC. If there are people who can harvest and sell the fish and it is at sustainable levels they should have that opportunity.*
- *The 2018 year-class of Bering Sea Pollock is still a large portion of the fishery but will be ageing out in the next several years due to natural mortality. Not increasing the Bering Sea pollock TAC and leaving those fish in the water does not result in a clear conservation benefit to the pollock stock.*
- *Each pollock sector has a different product mix, markets, and operations, and thus differential desire for particular Bering Sea pollock TAC levels. This amendment is consistent with public testimony by the catcher processor sector, which appears to prosecute nearly 50 % of the fishery through sector and CDQ allocations.*
- *Putting forth both scenarios is responsive to public comment. It retains the 1,300,000 MT that some would like to see and it includes the 1,320,000 MT that other stakeholders would like to see. Both are supported by the data and presented with balanced TAC sheets.*
- *The best scientific information available does not support the assertion that a reduction in the pollock TAC would measurably increase salmon escapement to Western Alaska. Pollock catches have remained relatively consistent from year to year since 2011, while Chinook and chum bycatch has varied widely without a clear correlation. Reducing or increasing the pollock TAC year to year may not measurably change in-river harvest opportunities. This may be due in part to strict Chinook bycatch limits and Incentive Plan Agreement tools that reduce salmon bycatch at all levels of pollock allocation.*
- *The suggested TAC changes in this amendment, which differs from the original motion in Bering Sea pollock and in several species utilized primarily by the Amendment 80 sector, is consistent with public testimony from that sector which stated there was flexibility in the TAC for several of the species associated with their operations.*

Rationale in Opposition to Amendment 1:

- *An AP member felt there are BSAI ecosystem wide concerns with 1.32MMT given the mixed productivity in the pelagic and benthic zones of the EBS and the thinness of pollock that has been observed in past years.*
- *Setting the BSAI Pollock TAC at 1.3 MMT will provide stability for the fleets, crew, and the coastal economies.*

Rationale in Favor of Amendment 2:

- *The Council has tasked the sablefish stock assessment authors with exploring alternative harvest objectives and strategies, including maximizing value instead of volume and treating fully mature year classes differently than partially mature year classes in the model. That work has just begun and this additional science will possibly help when looking at TAC adjustments for socio-economic factors. In the absence of this data it is important to take a conservative approach in TAC setting.*
- *The SSC also recognized the lack of socio-economic data for the sablefish fishery, but acknowledged that there are socio economic factors at play affecting the directed fishery. Without alternative harvest control rules or another framework for making adjustments, there is no alternative “science” available to make any changes at this time. While the Council awaits this framework it is prudent to be conservative in the TAC setting process.*
- *The stock assessment notes a number of concerning factors in the stock: the evenness of the age distribution of sablefish has dropped rapidly as has the diversity in the ages contributing to the overall SSB; the model projects that the 2014 – 2020 year classes comprise over 75% of total SSB in 2024, despite none of these cohorts being fully mature; they expressed concern at the lack of sablefish greater than 10 years of age, which is the age when sablefish are greater than 90% mature.*
- *The continued increase of pressure on immature, non spawning sablefish in the BS and AI has been detrimental to the economics of the directed fishery. Since 2016, the sablefish TAC has been quadrupled yet captains and crew in the directed IFQ fishery are reporting an over 60% decrease in ex-vessel value. They are catching more fish yet barely able to make a profit. A lot of IFQ sablefish was stranded this season when processors stopped buying sablefish due to saturated markets. Processors have expressed concern about not buying sablefish at the beginning of next season and/or putting vessels on trip limits and delivery schedules. This could drive the directed fishery back to derby days where delivery on a schedule could force a vessel to fish in weather that is unsafe for their vessel. National standard 10, safety of life at sea, was a driving factor in the creation of the sablefish IFQ program.*
- *Many IFQ sablefish quota holders paid high premiums for their quota and have large annual loan payments. Those payments persist regardless of the ability to prosecute the fishery. If processors further decrease ex-vessel prices and/or do not buy sablefish, many vessels will remain tied to the dock and potentially bankrupt. Capital required to prosecute alternative fisheries will not be available and for many who are diversified, such as in salmon, the weak markets for other fish species may not help make up the difference.*

- *There have been large increases in the TAC for the BS and AI in recent seasons to accommodate the influx of sablefish and the increased interaction in the trawl fisheries. As these TAC's have been increased, the trawl fisheries have had less occurrences of discards and this season have not reached their full sablefish allocation in the BS or AI. According to the survey data, the biomass for the BS is down 8% as are the RPW and RPN. As the recent large recruitment classes grow up and move from the BS to the GOA, there is potential for less sablefish interaction in the BS.*
- *There were numerous market concerns over sablefish in many parts of Alaska expressed in public comment and discussed at the AP. Overall, leaving the TAC flat from 2023 could send a signal to the market that there will not be an increase in available sablefish in 2024 and could help stabilize the current prices and market. The directed fishery does not expect a miracle nor a large market rebound, but hope to just be able to fish next season and have an ex-vessel price that is not much worse than the lows reached in 2023.*
- *Sablefish is a coastwide stock and activities in the BS affect the fishery throughout Alaska. Sablefish is a long lived, slow maturing and bankable species. Staff comments in regards to setting preferred pollock TAC indicated that lower TAC setting for pollock incorporates social and economic elements, and the AP heard socio-economic concerns in multiple public testimonies regarding sablefish.*

Rationale in Opposition to Amendment 2:

- *The GPT report noted a reduction in BS sablefish RPN but an overall increase in the coastwide ABC. Risk table indicators are low. The current ABC allocation scheme then dictated an increase in the BS ABC. Despite this seemingly contradictory information, the GPT and SSC did not then suggest an additional buffer below the BS ABC, indicating that the calculated ABC was acceptable.*
- *There was a 43% increase in BS sablefish ABC from 2023 to 2024 but only 19% increase in the proposed 2024 TAC provided in the main motion. The proposed BS TAC in the main motion does reflect an increase over 2023, but one that is considerably lower than the BS ABC approved by the SSC.*
- *Market concerns appeared to be a driving factor for the amendment proposer, but markets vary for companies and are driven by many factors. Holding TACs low to restrain trade for specific participants may not help specific harvesters.*
- *AP members expressed concern that a perception of "oversupply" can be solved by not increasing TAC by a small amount. There is a 300% increase in West Coast sablefish TAC which could further impact the market and it seems unlikely that a decision by the Council will impact a global market. The market knows there are a lot of sablefish.; there are better ways to work on improving market conditions than adding constraints to other fisheries that are not supported by science.*
- *There was very little input from BS fixed gear sablefish fishermen on this issue. A better understanding of whether others may have supported a stable or decreased TAC may have made supporting the amendment easier.*

- *There was a recommendation from the GPT to continue looking at how to incorporate socioeconomics into the Sablefish stock assessment, in light of recent coast-wide market conditions, and it is important for the Council to support that. But at this stage, A BS sablefish TAC at too low a level could result in discards in pollock and Amendment 80 directed fisheries, while a higher TAC may allow retention and sale in those fisheries.*
- *There was hope that a multiple scenario option would have been brought forward to show both the increase recommended by the available science and the static number asked for in public comment. Presenting the change as an up or down vote made the amendment unpalatable.*
- *The best available science indicates that significant reductions in TAC relative to ABC are unnecessary. Some AP members noted concern about the precedent of setting TACs based on perceptions of how science, fisheries, and market conditions interplay. Once that precedent is set, it becomes more complicated for the Council to decide how to set future TACs.*

Rationale in Favor of Amendment 3:

- *Industry members supported splitting the amount that was reduced from the Bering Sea Sablefish TAC (1,504 MT, subsequent to Amendment 2) by increasing the Alaska Plaice TAC by 752 MT and the Northern Rockfish TAC by 752MT.*
- *Due to increased overall ABC in the BSAI, it's appropriate to balance the TAC Table back up to 2.0 MMT after the reduction from Sablefish passed in Amendment 2.*

Rationale in Favor of Amended Main Motion:

- *Flatfish TACs for directed and bycatch species are similar to last year, but in some cases have been adjusted down to accommodate pollock, cod and several other fisheries (e.g., Atka mackerel and skates).*
- *The POP TAC recommendations are set to ABC, but consistent with past years and industry's recommendation, the WAI POP TAC has been set below the ABC as a means to reduce blackspotted/rougheye catch in the western Aleutians.*
- *Atka mackerel TAC recommendations are up slightly in the BS/541 and down slightly in 542 and 543 as a result of ABC reductions. Consistent with Steller Sea Lion regulations, the WAI Atka mackerel TAC has been decreased by 35% for Steller Sea Lion Measures.*
- *The skate TAC (11%) has been adjusted up slightly for 2024 to account for the increase in BS Pacific Cod TAC (15%) where most of the skate incidental catch occurs.*
- *The adjustments to Tables 15, 16, and 17 reflect slightly adjusted herring and halibut PSC apportionments made in collaboration by the industry to not exceed the total PSC limit. On Table 15, 20MT of herring PSC was moved from the Yellowfin sole fishery category to the Rock sole/flathead sole/Alaska plaice/other flatfish fishery category. On Table 16 and 17, 15MT of Halibut mortality was moved from Yellowfin sole fishery to Total Pacific cod fisheries.*
- *The majority (all but one sector) of the industry voiced their support for the column of TACs with 1.3MMT of pollock and collaborated to balance Table 1 2024 TACs among all groundfish species and sectors. Collaboration of the groundfish industries is key to this process, especially when some of the sectors and associations have members in multiple fisheries. The collaboration includes harvesters, motherships, and processors.*

Table 1–SSC recommended 2024-2025 Overfishing Level (OFL), Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC), with AP recommended Total Allowable Catch (TAC)

[Amounts are in metric tons]

Species	Area	2023				2024				2025		
		OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch as of 11/25/23	OFL	ABC	TAC alt. 1	TAC alt. 2	OFL	ABC	TAC
Pollock ⁴	BS	3,381,000	1,910,000	1,300,000	1,310,189	3,162,000	2,313,000	1,300,000	1,320,000	3,449,000	2,401,000	1,325,000
	AI	52,383	43,413	19,000	3,706	51,516	42,654	19,000	19,000	53,030	43,863	19,000
	Bogoslof	115,146	86,360	300	118	115,146	86,360	250	250	115,146	86,360	250
Pacific cod ⁵	BS	172,495	144,834	127,409	124,413	200,995	167,952	147,753	147,753	180,798	150,876	132,726
	AI	18,416	13,812	8,425	3,299	18,416	12,431	8,080	8,080	18,416	12,431	8,080
Sablefish ⁶	Alaska-wide	47,390	40,502	n/a	n/a	55,084	47,146	n/a	n/a	55,317	47,350	n/a
	BS	n/a	8,417	7,996	5,392	n/a	11,450	7,996	7,996	n/a	11,499	9,500
	AI	n/a	8,884	8,440	2,384	n/a	13,100	8,440	8,440	n/a	13,156	8,440
Yellowfin sole ⁷	BSAI	404,882	378,499	230,000	111,638	305,298	265,913	195,000	180,000	317,932	276,917	195,000
Greenland turbot	BSAI	4,645	3,960	3,960	1,274	3,705	3,188	3,188	3,188	3,185	2,740	2,740
	BS	n/a	3,338	3,338	795	n/a	2,687	2,687	2,687	n/a	2,310	2,310
	AI	n/a	622	622	479	n/a	501	501	501	n/a	430	430
Arrowtooth flounder	BSAI	98,787	83,852	15,000	7,217	103,280	87,690	14,000	13,500	104,270	88,548	14,000
Kamchatka flounder	BSAI	8,946	7,579	7,579	6,946	8,850	7,498	7,498	7,498	8,687	7,360	7,360
Rock sole ⁷	BSAI	166,034	121,719	66,000	27,129	197,828	122,091	66,000	66,000	264,789	122,535	66,000
Flathead sole ⁸	BSAI	79,256	65,344	35,500	8,946	81,605	67,289	35,500	35,000	82,699	68,203	35,500
Alaska plaice	BSAI	40,823	33,946	17,500	15,228	42,695	35,494	21,752	19,752	45,182	37,560	20,000
Other flatfish ⁹	BSAI	22,919	17,189	4,500	3,019	22,919	17,189	4,500	4,500	22,919	17,189	4,500
Pacific ocean perch	BSAI	50,133	42,038	37,703	35,007	49,010	41,096	37,626	37,626	48,139	40,366	37,181
	BS	n/a	11,903	11,903	10,196	n/a	11,636	11,636	11,636	n/a	11,430	11,430
	EAI	n/a	8,152	8,152	7,544	n/a	7,969	7,969	7,969	n/a	7,828	7,828
	CAI	n/a	5,648	5,648	5,460	n/a	5,521	5,521	5,521	n/a	5,423	5,423
	WAI	n/a	16,335	12,000	11,807	n/a	15,970	12,500	12,500	n/a	15,685	12,500
Northern rockfish	BSAI	22,776	18,687	11,000	10,322	23,556	19,274	16,752	14,752	22,838	18,685	15,000
Blackspotted/Rougheye rockfish ¹⁰	BSAI	703	525	525	529	761	569	569	569	813	607	607
	BS/EAI	n/a	359	359	213	n/a	388	388	388	n/a	412	412
	CAI/WAI	n/a	166	166	316	n/a	181	181	181	n/a	195	195
Shortraker rockfish	BSAI	706	530	530	243	706	530	530	530	706	530	530
Other rockfish ¹¹	BSAI	1,680	1,260	1,260	1,188	1,680	1,260	1,260	1,260	1,680	1,260	1,260
	BS	n/a	880	880	624	n/a	880	880	880	n/a	880	880
	AI	n/a	380	380	564	n/a	380	380	380	n/a	380	380
Atka mackerel	BSAI	118,787	98,588	69,282	65,961	111,684	95,358	72,987	72,987	99,723	84,676	66,165
	EAI/BS	n/a	43,281	27,260	24,210	n/a	41,723	32,260	32,260	n/a	37,049	30,000
	CAI	n/a	17,351	17,351	17,210	n/a	16,754	16,754	16,754	n/a	14,877	14,877
	WAI	n/a	37,956	24,671	24,541	n/a	36,882	23,973	23,973	n/a	32,750	21,288
Skates	BSAI	46,220	38,605	27,441	25,183	45,574	37,808	30,519	30,519	44,203	36,625	30,361
Sharks	BSAI	689	450	250	321	689	450	400	400	689	450	400
Octopuses	BSAI	4,769	3,576	400	151	6,080	4,560	400	400	6,080	4,560	400
TOTAL		4,859,585	3,155,268	2,000,000	1,769,803	4,609,077	3,454,204	2,000,000	2,000,000	4,946,241	3,527,996	2,000,000

Note: Regulatory areas and districts are defined at § 679.2 (BSAI=Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands)

- ¹ These amounts apply to the entire BSAI management area unless otherwise specified. With
- ² Except for pollock, the portion of the sablefish TAC allocated to hook-and-line and pot gear,
- ³ For the Amendment 80 species (Atka mackerel, flathead sole, rock sole, yellowfin sole, Pacific
- ⁴ Under § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A), the annual BS pollock TAC, after subtracting first for the CDQ
- ⁵ The BS Pacific cod TAC is set to account for the 12 percent, plus 45 mt, of the BS ABC for
- ⁶ The sablefish OFL and ABC are Alaska-wide and include the Gulf of Alaska. The Alaska-
- ⁷ “Rock sole” includes *Lepidopsetta polyxystra* (Northern rock sole) and *Lepidopsetta bilineata*
- ⁸ “Flathead sole” includes *Hippoglossoides elassodon* (flathead sole) and *Hippoglossoides*
- ⁹ “Other flatfish” includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), Alaska
- ¹⁰ “Blackspotted/Rougheye rockfish” includes *Sebastes melanostictus* (blackspotted) and
- ¹¹ “Other rockfish” includes all Sebastes and Sebastolobus species except for dark rockfish,

TABLE 14—PROPOSED 2024 AND 2025 APPORTIONMENT OF PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES TO NON-TRAWL GEAR, THE CDQ PROGRAM, AMENDMENT 80, AND THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTORS

PSC species and area and zone ¹	Total PSC	Non-trawl PSC	CDQ PSQ reserve ²	Trawl PSC remaining after CDQ PSQ	Amendment 80 sector ^{3,4}	BSAI trawl limited access sector	BSAI PSC limits not allocated to Amendment 80 ³
Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	3,166	710	315	n/a	1,396	745	n/a
Herring (mt) BSAI	2,535	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Red king crab (animals) Zone 1	97,000	n/a	10,379	86,621	43,293	26,489	16,839
<i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBLZ	4,350,000	n/a	465,450	3,884,550	1,909,256	1,248,494	726,799
<i>C. bairdi</i> crab (animals) Zone 1	980,000	n/a	104,860	875,140	368,521	411,228	95,390
<i>C. bairdi</i> crab (animals) Zone 2	2,970,000	n/a	317,790	2,652,210	627,778	1,241,500	782,932

¹ Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of areas and zones.

² The PSQ reserve for crab species is 10.7 percent of each crab PSC limit.

³ The Pacific Cod Trawl Cooperative Program (PCTC) reduced the Pacific cod PCTC PSC limit for halibut by 12.5 percent in 2024 and 25 percent in 2025. The Amendment 80 Program reduced apportionment of the trawl PSC limits for crab below the total PSC limit. These reductions are not apportioned to other gear types or sectors.

⁴ Under Amendment 123 and its implementing regulations, the BSAI halibut PSC limit for the Amendment 80 sector would be determined annually based on the most recent halibut abundance estimates from the IPHC setline survey index and the NMFS AFSC Eastern Bering Sea shelf trawl survey index (87 FR 75570, December 9, 2022).

TABLE 15-PROPOSED 2024 AND 2025 HERRING AND RED KING CRAB SAVINGS SUBAREA PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES FOR ALL TRAWL SECTORS

Fishery categories	Herring (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1
Yellowfin sole	127	n/a
Rock sole/flathead sole/Alaska plaice/other flatfish ¹	94	n/a
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder	8	n/a
Rockfish	8	n/a
Pacific cod	13	n/a
Midwater trawl pollock	2,256	n/a
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ^{2,3}	30	n/a
Red king crab savings subarea non-pelagic trawl gear ⁴	n/a	24,250
Total trawl PSC	2,535	97,000

¹“Other flatfish” for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), Alaska plaice, arrowtooth flounder, flathead sole, Greenland

²Pollock other than midwater trawl pollock, Atka mackerel, and “other species” fishery category.

³“Other species” for PSC monitoring includes skates, sharks, and octopuses.

⁴In December 2024, the Council recommended and NMFS approves that the red king crab bycatch limit for non-pelagic trawl fisheries within the RKCSS be limited to 25 percent of the red king crab PSC allowance (see § 679.21(e)(3)(ii)(B)(2)).

Note: Species apportionments may not total precisely due to rounding.

TABLE 16—PROPOSED 2024 PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTOR

BSAI trawl limited access sector fisheries	Prohibited species and area ¹				
	Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1	<i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBLZ	<i>C. bairdi</i> (animals)	
				Zone 1	Zone 2
Yellowfin sole	250	23,337	1,192,179	346,228	1,185,500
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish ²	-	-	-	-	-
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish	-	-	-	-	-
Rockfish April 15-December 31	5	-	1,006	-	1,000
Total Pacific cod ³	315	2,955	50,281	60,000	50,000
AFA CP Pacific Cod	6	278	4,726	5,640	4,700
PCTC Program Pacific Cod, A and B season	257	1,653	28,130	33,567	27,973
Trawl CV Program, C season	15	134	2,278	2,718	2,265
PCTC Program unallocated reduction	37	890	15,147	18,075	15,062
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ⁴	175	197	5,028	5,000	5,000
Total BSAI trawl limited access sector PSC	745	26,489	1,248,494	411,228	1,241,500

¹ Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of areas and zones.

² “Other flatfish” for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), Alaska plaice, arrowtooth flounder, flathead sole, Greenland turbot, Kamchatka flounder, rock sole, and yellowfin sole.

³ With the implementation of the PCTC Program, the BSAI trawl limited access sector Pacific cod PSC limits will be split between AFA CPs, PCTC Program A and B-season, and trawl CV open access C-season. The PCTC crab PSC limit will be reduced by 35 percent beginning in 2024. In the first year of the PCTC Program, NMFS will apply a 12.5 percent reduction to the A and B season trawl CV sector halibut PSC apportionment in the annual harvest specifications after the Council recommends and NMFS approves the BSAI trawl limited access sector's PSC limit apportionments to fishery categories. In the second year of the PCTC Program and every year thereafter, NMFS will apply a 25 percent reduction to the A and B season trawl CV sector halibut PSC apportionment. Any amount of the PCTC Program PSC limit remaining after the B season may be reapportioned to the trawl CV C-season. Because the annual halibut PSC limit for the PCTC Program is not a fixed amount established in regulation and, instead, is determined annually through the harvest specification process, NMFS must apply the reduction to the A and B season apportionment of the trawl CV sector apportionment to implement the overall PSC reductions under the PCTC Program.

⁴ “Other species” for PSC monitoring includes skates, sharks, and octopuses

Note: Species apportionments may not total precisely due to rounding.

TABLE 17—PROPOSED 2025 PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTOR

BSAI trawl limited access sector fisheries	Prohibited species and area ¹				
	Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1	<i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBLZ	<i>C. bairdi</i> (animals)	
				Zone 1	Zone 2
Yellowfin sole	250	23,337	1,192,179	346,228	1,185,500
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish ²	-	-	-	-	-
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish	-	-	-	-	-
Rockfish April 15-December 31	5	-	1,006	-	1,000
Total Pacific cod ³	315	2,955	50,281	60,000	50,000
AFA CP Pacific Cod	6	278	4,726	5,640	4,700
PCTC Program Pacific Cod, A and B season	220	1,653	28,130	33,567	27,973
Trawl CV Program, C season	15	134	2,278	2,718	2,265
PCTC Program unallocated reduction	73	890	15,147	18,075	15,062
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ⁴	175	197	5,028	5,000	5,000
Total BSAI trawl limited access sector PSC	745	26,489	1,248,494	411,228	1,241,500

¹ Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of areas and zones.

² “Other flatfish” for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), Alaska plaice, arrowtooth flounder, flathead sole, Greenland turbot, Kamchatka flounder, rock sole, and yellowfin sole.

³ With the implementation of the PCTC Program, the BSAI trawl limited access sector Pacific cod PSC limits will be split between AFA CPs, PCTC Program A and B-season, and trawl CV open access C-season. The PCTC crab PSC limit will be reduced by 35 percent beginning in 2024. In the first year of the PCTC Program, NMFS will apply a 12.5 percent reduction to the A and B season trawl CV sector halibut PSC apportionment in the annual harvest specifications after the Council recommends and NMFS approves the BSAI trawl limited access sector's PSC limit apportionments to fishery categories. In the second year of the PCTC Program and every year thereafter, NMFS will apply a 25 percent reduction to the A and B season trawl CV sector halibut PSC apportionment. Any amount of the PCTC Program PSC limit remaining after the B season may be reapportioned to the trawl CV C-season. Because the annual halibut PSC limit for the PCTC Program is not a fixed amount established in regulation and, instead, is determined annually through the harvest specification process, NMFS must apply the reduction to the A and B season apportionment of the trawl CV sector apportionment to implement the overall PSC reductions under the PCTC Program.

⁴ “Other species” for PSC monitoring includes skates, sharks, and octopuses

Note: Species apportionments may not total precisely due to rounding.

Table 18—Final 2024 And 2025 Halibut Prohibited Species Bycatch Allowances for Non-Trawl Fisheries

Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI				
Non-trawl fisheries	Seasons	Catcher/processor	Catcher vessel	All Non-Trawl
Pacific cod	Total Pacific cod	648	13	661
	January 1-June 10	388	9	n/a
	June 10-August 15	162	2	n/a
	August 15-December 31	98	2	n/a
Non-Pacific cod non-trawl- Total	May 1-December 31	n/a	n/a	49
Groundfish pot and jig	n/a	n/a	n/a	Exempt
Sablefish hook-and-line	n/a	n/a	n/a	Exempt
Total for all non-trawl PSC	n/a	n/a	n/a	710

Note: Seasonal or sector allowances may not total precisely due to rounding.

Table 19–2024 and 2025 Pacific Halibut Discard Mortality Rates (DMR) for the BSAI

Gear	Sector	Halibut discard mortality rate (percent)
Pelagic trawl	All	100
Non-pelagic trawl	Mothership and catcher/pro	85
Non-pelagic trawl	Catcher vessel	63
Hook-and-line	Catcher/processor	7
Hook-and-line	Catcher vessel	7
Pot	All	26

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C4 GOA Groundfish Specs

Motion:

The AP has reviewed the 2023 Ecosystem Status Report for the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) and appreciates the thoroughness of the work by all contributors.

The AP recommends that the Council approve the 2023 Gulf of Alaska Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report.

The AP recommends that the Council approve the Final 2024 and 2025 Gulf of Alaska groundfish specifications for OFLs and ABCs as recommended by the SSC, and the TACs as shown in the attached Table 1. The TACs for both GOA Pacific cod and pollock have been adjusted to account for the State water Guideline Harvest Level fisheries. The GOA Pacific cod adjustments are shown in Table 2 in the action memo.

The AP recommends that the Council set the final 2024 and 2025 Pacific halibut PSC limits, allowances and apportionments in the GOA as shown in Tables 3 – 5 in the action memo.

The AP recommends the Council approve the updated halibut discard mortality rates for 2024 and 2025 as shown in Table 6.

Motion passed: 14/0

Motion in Support of Rationale

- Table 1 reflects the SSC's adjustments to the pollock, shortraker rockfish, blackspotted/rougheye rockfish, and other rockfish ABCs relative to the Plan Team's recommendations.
- The AP set the sablefish TACs equal to the ABC for the WGOA, CGOA, and SEO; the WGOA was the only area that had an increase (226 mt) for 2024. Given that the WGOA increase was a small amount of the Alaska-wide TAC, there was no discussion at the AP table about lowering the WGOA TAC relative to ABC.
- The AP heard public testimony about the significant struggles in Kodiak in 2023 with the loss of pollock markets and processor constraints. Over 13,000 mt of GOA pollock went unharvested in 2023 and with the significant increase in GOA Pollock TAC for 2024, even more is likely to go unharvested. The motionmaker felt that despite this, it was still important to set the TAC equal to ABC since the best available science indicated this was appropriate. Setting a TAC does not require that it be harvested.

Advisory Panel

C4 Motion

December 2023

- The AP heard in public testimony and at the table that it's important for the WGOA to receive pollock surveys more consistently like the CGOA; the WGOA is often the first area to be dropped when there are logistical, crew, or weather issues but also can have the most variable biomass. It would also be helpful if the WGOA stock was included more specifically in presentations and when considering drops in Gulf-wide ABC. Given the small apportionment that the WGOA receives, it is more impacted by reductions than other areas of the GOA. The WGOA pollock fishery has not had enough quota for an A season fishery since 2020 via catch share only; the last A season race fishery was in 2017. It is helpful if the plan teams and SSC have information to consider whether concerns are GOA-wide or different between the WGOA and CGOA.
- The AP noted and thanked everyone involved for providing us a thorough, statistically sound specification process which provides us the ability to make decisions on the best available science. AP members also noted that they were looking forward to more socioeconomic data to be included in the specification process.

Additional Tables for GOA Groundfish Final Harvest Specifications 2024-2025

Note: Tables 3-6 will correspond to Tables 14-17 in the final rule for harvest specifications, to be published in 2024.

Table 2 -- GOA TAC and GHL for State Waters Pacific Cod based on Plan Team recommendations for ABC/OFLs.

Final 2024 GOA Pacific cod ABCs, TACs, and State GHLS (mt)

Specifications	Western	Central	Eastern	Total
ABC	8,745	20,590	2,937	32,272
State GHL	2,624	5,148	734	8,506
(%)	30%	25%	25%	
Federal TAC	6,121	15,442	2,203	23,766

Note: The Federal TAC is designated for Federal fisheries only and does not include the State GHL.

Final 2025 GOA Pacific cod ABCs, TACs, and State GHLS (mt)

Specifications	Western	Central	Eastern	Total
ABC	7,638	17,981	2,565	28,184
State GHL	2,291	4,495	641	7,427
(%)	30%	25%	25%	
Federal TAC	5,347	13,486	1,924	20,757

Note: The Federal TAC is designated for Federal fisheries only and does not include the State GHL.

Table 3 -- Final 2024 and 2025 Pacific Halibut PSC Limits, Allowances, and Apportionments
[Values are in metric tons]

Trawl gear			Hook-and-line gear ¹				
			Other than DSR			DSR	
Season	Percent	Amount ²	Season	Percent	Amount	Season	Amount
January 20 - April 1	30.5%	520	January 1 - June 10	86%	220	January 1 - December 31	9
April 1 - July 1	20%	341	June 10 - September 1	2%	5		
July 1 - August 1	27%	460	September 1 - December 31	12%	31		
August 1 - October 1	7.5%	128					
October 1 - December 31	15%	256					
Total		1,705			256		9

¹ The Pacific halibut PSC limit for hook-and-line gear is allocated to the demersal shelf rockfish (DSR) fishery and fisheries other than DSR. Since 1995, the Council recommended and NMFS proposed that the hook-and-line sablefish fishery and the pot and jig gear groundfish fisheries be exempt from halibut PSC limits.

² PSC limits published in the Final Harvest Specifications (88 FR 13238, March 2, 2023) had rounding errors. The values presented in this table correct these rounding errors and will be published accordingly in the Proposed and Final 2024 and 2025 Harvest Specifications.

Table 4 -- Final 2024 and 2025 Apportionment of the Pacific Halibut PSC Limits Apportioned Between the Trawl Gear Shallow-Water and Deep-Water Species Fisheries

[Values are in metric tons]

Season	Shallow-water	Deep-water ¹	Total ³
January 20 - April 1	384	135	520
April 1 - July 1	85	256	341
July 1 - August 1	121	341	460
August 1 - October 1	53	75	128
Subtotal January 20 - October 1	643	807	1,449
October 1 - December 31 ²	n/a	n/a	256
Total	n/a	n/a	1,705

¹ Vessels participating in cooperatives in the Rockfish Program will receive 191 mt of the third season (July 1 – August 1) deep-water species fishery Halibut PSC apportionment.

² There is no apportionment between trawl shallow-water and deep-water species fisheries during the fifth season (October 1 through December 31).

³ PSC limits published in the Final Harvest Specifications (88 FR 13238, March 2, 2023) had rounding errors. The values presented in this table correct these rounding errors and will be published accordingly in the Proposed and Final 2024 and 2025 Harvest Specifications.

Table 5 -- Final 2024 and 2025 Apportionments of the “Other Hook and Line Fisheries” Halibut PSC Allowance Between the Hook-and-Line Gear Catcher Vessel and Catcher/Processor Sectors

[Values are in metric tons]

Hook-and-Line gear (Other than DSR) Annual PSC Amount	Hook-and-line Sector	Annual Amount	Season	Seasonal Percentage	Seasonal Amount
256	CV	149	A	86%	128
			B	2%	3
			C	12%	18
	CP	107	A	86%	92
			B	2%	2
			C	12%	13

Table 6 -- Final 2024 and 2025 Discard Mortality Rates for Vessels Fishing in the Gulf of Alaska [Values are percent of halibut assumed to be dead]

Gear	Sector	Groundfish fishery	Halibut discard mortality rate (percent)
Pelagic trawl	Catcher vessel	All	100
	Catcher/processor	All	100
Non-pelagic trawl	Catcher vessel	Rockfish Program	56
	Catcher vessel	All others	69
	Mothership and catcher/processor	All	83
Hook-and-line	Catcher/processor	All	11
	Catcher vessel	All	10
Pot	Catcher vessel and catcher/processor	All	26

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C5 EFH FMP Amendments- Final Action

The Advisory Panel recommends Alternative 2 for final action as indicated below. Changes from the Council's February 2023 motion based on staff recommendation are indicated in strikethrough and underline.

Alternatives 2 (Preferred)

Amend the Council's FMPs to incorporate the updated EFH information based on the new and best available science information identified in the 2023 EFH 5-year Review.

- **EFH component 1 (descriptions and identification)**, Amend 4 FMPs to update EFH descriptions and maps, including up to EFH Level 3 information on habitat-related vital rates. Add or revise the EFH text descriptions and add or replace the maps for—
 - 41 species or complexes in the BSAI FMP,
 - 46 species or complexes in the GOA FMP,
 - all five species in the Crab FMP, and
 - all three species in the Arctic FMP.

For all five species in the Salmon FMP, amend the Salmon FMP by replacing the distribution maps with the EFH maps.

- **EFH component 2 (fishing effects)**. Update the fishing effects (FE) information in the BSAI, GOA, and Crab FMPs to reflect updates to the FE model, analysis, and evaluation for the 2023 EFH 5-year Review.
- **EFH component 4 (non-fishing effects)**. Revise the EFH appendices in the BSAI, GOA, Crab, and Arctic, ~~and Salmon~~ FMPs where conservation recommendations for non-fishing activities are described.
- **EFH component 7 (prey of EFH species)**. Revise text or habitat description table information for two species of BSAI sharks, BSAI pollock, GOA Pacific cod, and BSAI red king crab in the BSAI, GOA, and Crab FMPs.
- **EFH component 9 (research and information needs)**. Revise the EFH appendices with updated research and information needs in the BSAI, GOA, Crab, and Arctic, ~~and Salmon~~ FMPs.

Motion passed 14/0 (1 abstained)

Rationale in Favor of Motion:

- *Based on the EFH 5-year Review, the Council determined that new habitat and life history information is available to revise many of the EFH descriptions and maps in the FMPs. The proposed amendments to the EFH provisions in the Council's FMPs would not substantively change the impacts of EFH as analyzed in the 2005 EFH environmental impact statement. The 2023 EFH 5-year Review concluded that no change to the conclusions of the evaluation of fishing effects on EFH is currently warranted. Amending the FMPs to reflect the new updates from the EFH 5-year Review help provide the Council with the best available science when making future management decisions.*
- *Non-fishing impacts and research needs for the salmon FMP were not analyzed during this review as recommended by the EFH team and supported by the SSC, AP, and Council. These issues are prioritized for review at the next 5-year review.*
- *As detailed in the analysis beginning on page 11, multiple review documents helped to inform the current proposal. This analysis is the culmination of years of work, beginning in 2019 and with at least 7 or 8 meetings since, with multiple opportunities for input and discussion.*
- *At the February 2023 Council meeting there was an extensive discussion on EFH, including on the fishing effects analysis. None of the Fishing Effects evaluations concluded that fishing effects were more than minimal and temporary and HAPCs were not recommended for elevation to the Council for possible mitigation to reduce fishing effects to EFH. The SSC agreed as did the individual stock assessment authors.*

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C6 Crab FMP Housekeeping Amendment- Final Action

The AP recommends the Council take final action and select Alternative 2 as its' preferred alternative. This action would replace the current BSAI KTC FMP with the revised version.

Alternative 2: Replace the BSAI KTC FMP with a revised version to include: updated contents on the status of stocks and fishing communities and allow for formatting consistent with other North Pacific FMPs.

Motion passed 15/0

Rationale in Favor of Motion:

- *The revised BSAI KTC FMP provides a substantial update of the contents of the BSAI KTC FMP to appropriately describe the status of stocks, fishing communities and allows for an updated organizational structure of the document. The proposed revision to the BSAI KTC allows for increased accessibility and readability of the document and organization, which is consistent with other FMPs off of Alaska.*
- *This amendment presents no major substantive changes, just necessary updates to provide the council with an accurate FMP document and the best available science when making future management decisions.*
- *The AP appreciated the time and work that Council Staff put into completing the update, especially since it had been sitting in the batter's box for a significant length of time.*

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C7 2024 Charter Halibut Management Measures - Final Action

The AP recommends the following harvest measures for the IPHC Regulatory Area 2C and IPHC Regulatory Area 3A guided recreational halibut fisheries in 2024:

Area 2C

All allocations shown below include a daily bag limit of one halibut and a reverse slot size limit where the upper limit is fixed at O80 (halibut 80 inches or longer may be retained).

- 1) If the allocation is equal to or greater than 0.943 Mlb:
 - begin with a lower size limit of U40 (retained halibut must be less than or equal to 40 inches in length) and increase this limit until the allocation is reached, as indicated in **Table 2C.4 (page 20)** of the ADF&G analysis.
- 2) If the allocation is less than 0.943 Mlb but greater than or equal to 0.863 Mlb:
 - To remain within the allocation, implement a lower size limit of U40 and close consecutive Fridays as needed from the end of the season, but extending no earlier than July 12th, as indicated in **Table 2C.4 (page 20)** in combination with **Table 2C.5f (page 26)** of the ADF&G analysis.
- 3) If the allocation is less than 0.863 Mlb but greater than or equal to 0.813 Mlb:
 - Change from a U40 lower size limit to a U36 lower size limit on July 15, and close consecutive Fridays as needed from the end of the season to remain within allocation, but extending no earlier than July 12th, as indicated in **Table 2C.6 (page 28)** in combination with **Table 2C.5f (page 26)** of the ADF&G analysis.
- 4) If the allocation is less than 0.813 Mlb but greater than or equal to 0.766 Mlb:
 - The lower size limit is U37, and close consecutive Fridays as needed from the end of the season, to remain within allocation but extending no earlier than July 12th, as indicated in **Table 2C.5f (page 26)** of the ADF&G analysis.
- 5) If the allocation is less than .766 Mlb but greater than or equal to .738 Mlb:
 - The lower size limit is U36, and close consecutive Fridays as needed from the end of the season, to remain within allocation but extending no earlier than July 12th, as indicated in **Table 2C.5f (page 26)** of the ADF&G analysis.

Area 3A

All allocations shown below include, unless otherwise specified: a daily bag limit of 2 halibut; one fish of any size and one fish with a maximum size limit; 1 trip per charter vessel per day with retention of halibut; 1 trip per charter halibut permit per day; and closed Wednesdays.

- 1) If the allocation is greater than or equal to 1.880Mlb:
 - Increase the size of the second fish until the projected charter harvest removals meet the allocation.
- 2) If the allocation is less than 1.880 Mlb, but greater than 1.590 Mlb:
 - In addition to all closed Wednesdays and a second halibut 28 inches or less, close as many Tuesdays as needed to keep the charter harvest removals within the Area 3A allocation, as indicated in **Table 3A.10 (page 32)** of the ADF&G analysis.
- 3) If the allocation is less than 1.590 Mlb, but greater than 1.513 Mlb:
 - In addition to closing all Tuesdays and Wednesdays, lower the size of the second fish to as low as 26 inches, until the projected charter harvest removals meet the allocation as indicated in **Table 3A.11 (page 33)** of the ADF&G analysis.
- 4) If the allocation is less than 1.513 Mlb:
 - Then select a 4-fish annual limit of halibut which then would bring the projected yield to 1.460 Mlb as indicated in **Table 3A.14. (page 36)** of the ADF&G analysis. If possible, adjust the number of Tuesday closures to remain within the allocation.

Motion passed: 15/0

Rationale in Favor of Motion

- *For Area 2C, measures were focused on regulations which would equitably share the burdens felt during times of lower halibut abundance. Given this, Area 2C committee members opted to not include measures like annual limits as those measures may have disproportionate effects on different operations.*
- *Committee members and public testimony supported consistency in management measures, and stated that they were a large part of the strategy in creation of the motion. Consistent measures support ADFG projections and also are desirable from a business and marketing standpoint.*
- *The maker of the motion noted that the proposed management measures were focused on being a simple set of tools projected to keep the sector within its expected potential range of allocations set at the IPHC.*

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D2 BS FEP CCTF

The AP commends the important work of the Climate Change Task Force and recommends moving forward with the Council staff recommendations for the 2024 Climate Scenario Planning Workshop:

- Workshop should be held in conjunction with the June Council meeting in Kodiak.
- Align scope and timing with current Council and activities and initiatives (i.e. IRA funding, PEIS NOI, SCS8 preparation).
- 2-day workshop
- Report from workshop to represent final output from the Climate Change Task Force
- Suggest the workshop occur mid-meeting in June so SSC, AP, stakeholders and Council can participate
- Include virtual participation in listen-only mode but allow public comment for virtual participants.

Motion Passed 15/0

Rationale in Favor of Motion:

- *The AP supports the recommendations of Council Staff and supports both the ability to accommodate for maximum participation from all sectors and organizations both in person as well as virtually.*

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E Staff Tasking

Motion 1:

~~The AP requests the Council initiate a discussion paper to explore changes that would allow for necessary flexibilities and cost efficiencies for Gulf of Alaska (GOA) trawl catcher vessels. (1) The AP requests the Council initiate a discussion paper to explore the following changes that allow for necessary flexibilities and cost efficiencies for Gulf of Alaska (GOA) trawl catcher vessels.~~

This includes:

1. Modifications to the GOA Catcher Vessel 300,000 Harvest Limit for Pollock:
 - a. Impacts of a trip limit that ranges between 300,000 - 450,000 pounds
 - i. This could include, but is not necessarily limited to, trip limits of 350,000 and 400,000 and 450,000 pounds of pollock compared to the status quo of 300,000 pounds of pollock.
2. GOA Chinook Salmon PSC Management:
 - a. Impacts of reducing CGOA pollock catcher vessel chinook limit from 18,316 chinook to a range of 16,316 - 17,000 chinook and reapportioning:
 - i. A range of at least 1,000 chinook to the CGOA Rockfish Program (RP) catcher vessels for a new cap above the existing cap of 1,200 chinook.
 - ii. A range of at least 500 chinook to the C/WGOA non-Rockfish Program trawl catcher vessels for a new cap above the existing cap of 3,030 chinook.
 - iii. All ranges explored should not exceed the current GOA chinook cap.

Amendment 1 passed: 12/0

Amended Main Motion passed: 12/0

Rationale in Favor of Motion:

- *The AP heard public testimony and comment by AP members in earlier agenda items about the current struggles being felt by trawl catcher vessels and processors in the Gulf of Alaska due to poor market conditions and an increasing burden in regulatory constraints. The sector has been asking for management tools such as rationalization for decades to improve their fishery conditions and has still not been provided those tools.*

Advisory Panel

E Motion

December 2023

- *AP members felt there may be smaller management measures that could provide necessary flexibilities and cost efficiencies for the fleet, including adjustments to the 300,000 lb harvest trip limit for pollock and adjustments to GOA Chinook salmon PSC management.*
- *The original intent of the GOA trip limit was to keep the GOA a smaller, primarily locally owned and operated catcher vessel community. The goal of this motion and the resulting discussion would be to keep the original intent of the trip limit, while exploring options for more economic stability.*
- *There was agreement among AP members that costs such as fuel and insurance continue to rise while the pollock price has gone down, and the industry has had to travel farther to catch quota because of Steller Sea Lion and crab closure areas, the profit margins on trips are diminishing.*
- *The Pelagic Pollock Trawl EM EFP has provided some relief with the GOA pollock trip limit by allowing vessels to utilize a 4-trip average under the industry-managed performance standard on pelagic pollock EM trips. This will also be the case when the regulated program goes into effect in 2025. However, this only applies to pelagic pollock trips; Kodiak trawl is a multi-species fishery and without a directed cod fishery the pollock fleet needs to opt out of EM to be able to top off on Pacific cod to help provide economic stability. Unfortunately, that increases the risk of enforcement action and fines on non-EM trips. Even within the EM program and the industry managed performance standard (the 4 trip average) some feel the 300,000 trip limit is too low for economic stability.*
- *There was discussion about whether the fleet was in full agreement of supporting an increase in pollock trip limit. There has not been consensus or thorough discussion about this and there will likely be differing opinions but there have been multiple requests to raise the limit to keep the fishery functioning; this is why a discussion paper is being requested.*
- *The CGOA Rockfish Program shoreside primarily rockfish quota has nearly tripled from 8,279 mt in 2011 to 22,177 mt in 2023, but the hard cap of 1,200 chinook has remained the same. NMFS catch accounting manages the fishery's chinook harvest relative to the cap using the data from extrapolated, at-sea basket samples. This may provide instability in estimates and requires the fleet to have cooperative management measures such as strict stand-downs based on the chinook bycatch rate in their deliveries which vary in length and rate limit depending on the time of the season.*
- *The industry is exploring a Rockfish EM program which will operate under another pilot year in 2024 before hopefully moving towards an EFP in 2025. As it moves forward the program will need to shift to the actual number of chinook delivered to the processor, but the actual chinook harvest is greater than the at-sea catch accounting data shows. In order for the program to function and be able to provide better monitoring for both pelagic and non-pelagic gear, the sector would need to have additional chinook to prevent exceeding their 1,200 chinook hard cap.*
- *There are some concerns about increasing pollock TACs while decreasing available chinook which is why the particular range of numbers was selected. Recognizing that in the current environment asking for additional chinook is a sensitive issue, the AP felt that the possibility of reallocating existing chinook to where it is more critically needed was worth discussion.*

- *Exploring whether additional chinook could also be reallocated to the C/WGOA non-pollock non-RP trawl CV allocation which is a single chinook cap shared by CVs in the Western and Central gulf fishing primarily cod and flatfish, would also help prosecute those fisheries where a larger number of vessels share that cap.*
- *Although seemingly separate topics, both are management issues for GOA CVs so a single discussion paper was requested to consolidate staff effort into a single paper. The AP left it to the discretion of the Council to decide whether if moving these issues forward they should be left combined into a single paper or separated.*
- *Although other management measures could also benefit GOA trawl CVs, given that the MRA paper is already scheduled for the April meeting and the intent to minimize burden on staff time, the AP felt it was best to narrow the requests to these two topics.*

Motion 2:

The AP approved the October 2023 report.

Motion Passed unanimously