



North Pacific Conservation and Spatial Management Areas in Alaska's Exclusive Economic Zone

Area Summaries

March 2023



The fishery management program in the North Pacific is widely considered to be among the best in the world and has resulted in over 40 years of sustainable and profitable fisheries off Alaska. Program policies and measures are developed by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council through the preparation and maintenance of fishery management plans (FMPs) for groundfish, crab, and scallop fisheries in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska, as well as for all future fisheries in the Arctic Ocean. The FMPs are frequently amended by the Council to respond to new scientific information, changes in the environment, changes in policy, and operational changes in the fisheries. The FMP amendments, together with regulatory amendments, are developed through the Council's open and transparent regulatory process and implemented by the NMFS Alaska Regional Office.

One of the many tools used by the Council to achieve sustainable fisheries has been the establishment of area-based conservation measures. There are about 200 conservation areas that have been established to conserve marine resources and biodiversity, protect vulnerable habitats and ecosystems, and support healthy coastal communities. A large portion of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska (1,026,771 nm²) is closed to bottom trawling year round. Additional areas are closed to directed fishing for important prey species (Atka mackerel, cod, and pollock) for Steller sea lions to minimize potential competition with the fishing fleet for prey, to minimize bycatch of prohibited species, and for other purposes.

In this volume, we provide summaries of the conservation areas and other spatial management areas developed by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

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This report was prepared by Clay McKean with contributions from other Council staff including David Witherell. Sarah LaBelle assisted with the layout and design. Printed 2023.

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Introduction

Fishery Management Councils and the Management Process

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (MSA) assigned Federal fisheries management authority to eight regional councils: North Pacific, Western Pacific, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico, New England, Mid-Atlantic, South Atlantic, and Caribbean. Each council was charged with preparing

and maintaining Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) that reflect both the National Standards and determine the management and conservation objectives and specifications for each region. FMPs delineate regional management priorities and are responsive to unique challenges and concerns of each region while fulfilling the goals defined in the MSA. Under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the councils are authorized to prepare and submit to the

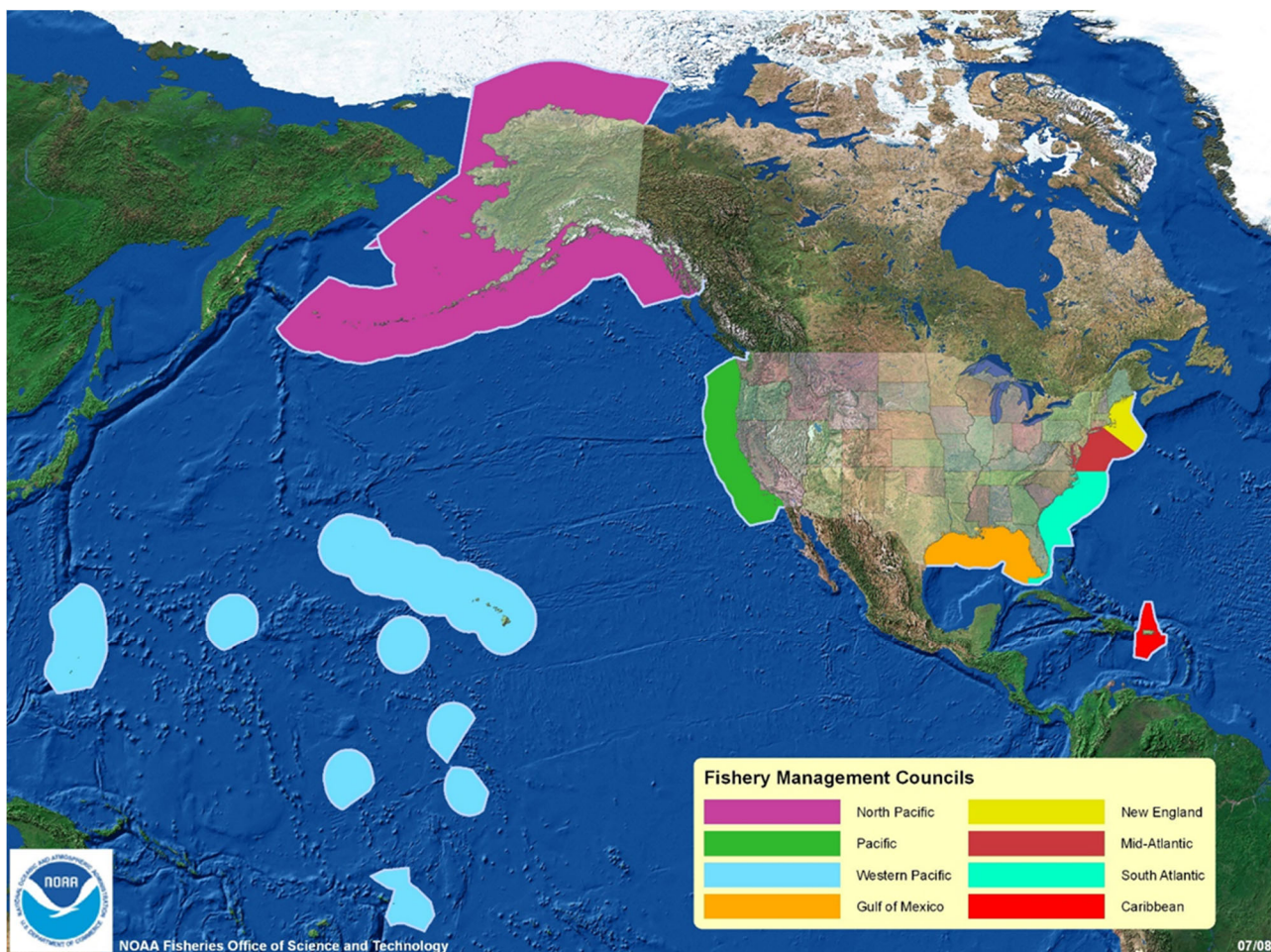
Secretary of Commerce for approval, disapproval or partial approval, a FMP and any necessary amendments, for each fishery under its authority that requires conservation and management. The Council conducts public hearings so as to allow all interested persons an opportunity to be heard in the development of FMPs and amendments, and reviews and revises, as appropriate, the assessments and specifications with respect to the

optimum yield from each fishery.

Area-Based Management

Regional fishery management councils, established under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Management Act, have the authority to develop marine protected areas restricting fishing activity in United States Federal waters (3-20 nm from the shoreline). States have the authority to develop MPA's within 3 nm of the shoreline as well as within Federal waters for fisheries managed by the state and for fisheries not subject to Federal fishery management plans.

Within the North Pacific there are three distinct Management Areas: Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BSAI), Gulf of Alaska (GOA), and Arctic. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) manages fisheries relative to the specific management area. While there are similar management objectives, different FMPs for given management areas provide the NPFMC the flexibility to tailor fishery management and conservation strategies to address area-specific challenges. As such, the FMPs prepared and maintained by the NPFMC include BSAI and GOA groundfish, BSAI king and tanner crab, and an Arctic FMP. Additionally, joint management authority with the State of Alaska is provided through an Alaska Salmon FMP and Scallop FMP.



Regional Fishery Management Councils as defined in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act



Conservation Areas in the Alaskan EEZ

The Council Coordinating Committee (CCC) Area-Based Management (ABM) Subcommittee developed a definition of a conservation area: “an, 1) established, geographically defined area, with 2) planned management or regulation of environmentally adverse fishing activities, that 3) provides for the maintenance of biological productivity and biodiversity, ecosystem function and services (including providing recreational opportunities and healthy, sustainable seafood to a diverse range of consumers).” This definition was modeled after the America the Beautiful (ATB) principles and the IUCN definition for Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs). Using these definitions, sites have been characterized under one of two categories: Ecosystem Conservation or Fishery Management. Each area has also been defined by its focus(es), consisting of: Biodiversity, Vulnerable Ecosystems, Vulnerable Species, Habitat, and Rebuilding.

This volume provides descriptions of Conservation Areas in the Alaskan EEZ recommended by the CCC ABM Subcommittee for inclusion into the American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas under the ATB effort. Summaries of each conservation area were prepared and compiled into

a reference document. This volume is intended to serve as a research tool and reference document for a general audience to describe conservation areas managed in North Pacific fisheries, describing the protections and conservation benefits of these areas. Each area summary serves as a guide to the regulatory history and area protections for a given conservation area and can be used as a stand-alone document to understand a particular area, or to look at North Pacific area protections as a whole. This document provides descriptions of conservation areas managed by the NPFMC as well as State of Alaska EEZ closures for scallop, rockfish, and herring. This volume also includes descriptions of federally regulated areas that did not meet the criteria of a conservation area and are listed here as Other Management Areas

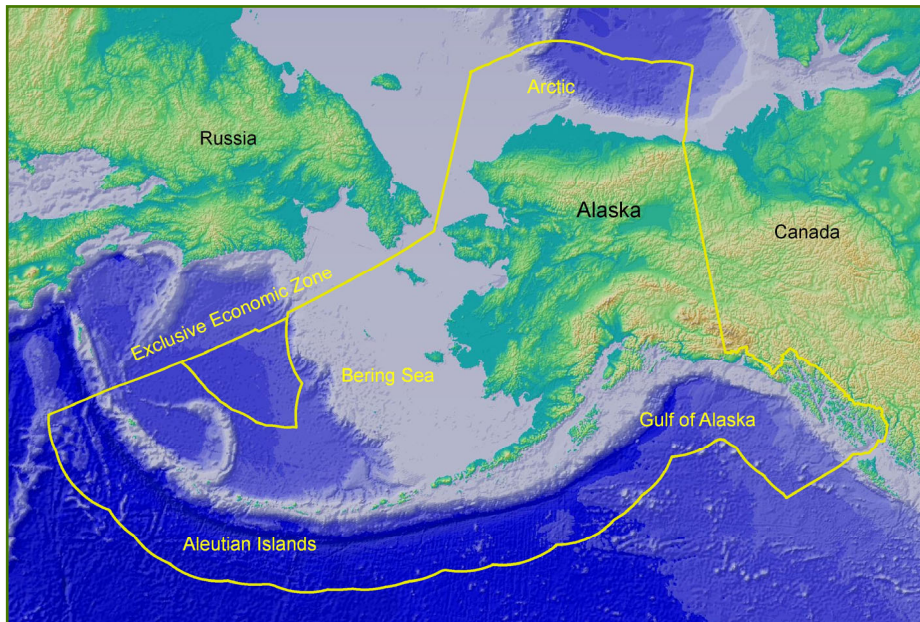
The conservation area summaries consist of five main parts: 1) the regulatory timeline of implementation including the date of Council adoption, the proposed rule, the final rule, and effective date(s) of implementation for the area(s) and associated FMP amendments ; 2) purpose and need, providing a brief background on the reason why the area was protected; 3) analytical summary, describing the analysis of impacts of the rule cre-

ating the conservation area; 4) regulatory summary, outlining regulations in place in the area; and 5) conservation value, expressing the value the area provides by being protected.

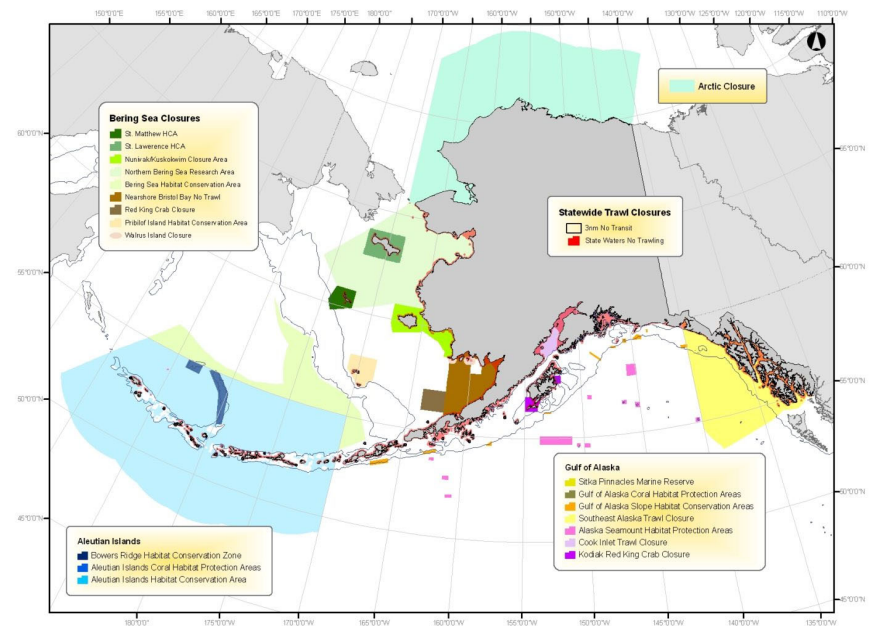
The numbers assigned to each conservation area have no special meaning; these are simply the identifiers used for each area in the CCC ABM Subcommittee report. Additional closure areas are included in this report that did not meet the conservation area definitions, and therefore are not numbered.

Area calculations are provided by PSMFC and include only that portion of an area within the EEZ.

The conservation areas in this report protect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for many species. Essential Fish Habitat is defined as “those waters and substrates necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding or growth to maturity.” EFH in Alaska is identified in Fishery Management Plans developed by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and approved by the Secretary of Commerce. An appendix has been included describing the EFH protected within each conservation area.



Alaska EEZ has management areas in two oceans: the Pacific and the Arctic



Area-based management in the North Pacific



Areas by Implementation Date

	Area Name	Page
1967	IPHC Closed Area	53
1987 March	Area 512 Closure	36
NP28	Tanner Crab PSC Bycatch Limitation Zones	49
April NP11	Kodiak Island, Trawls Other Than Pelagic Trawls-Type I Closures	17
NP32	Kodiak Island, Trawls Other Than Pelagic Trawls-Type II Closures	40
	Kodiak Island, Trawls Other Than Pelagic Trawls-Type III Closures	52
1989 September	Area 516 Closure	37
NP29		
1990 February	Walrus Protection Areas-Cape Peirce, Round, and the Twins	32
NP24		
December NP30	Salmon Management Area West	38
1991 July	Herring Savings Areas	51
1992 June	Catcher Vessel Operations Area (CVOA)	50
1995 January	Pribilof Islands Habitat Conservation Zone	19
NP13		
August	Chum Salmon Savings Area	47
September NP14	Red King Crab Savings Area	20

	Area Name	Page
1996 January	Chinook Salmon Savings Area	46
August NP34	Scallop Closed Areas-Aleutian Islands	42
NP35	Scallop Closed Areas-Gulf of Alaska	43
1997 January	Nearshore Bristol Bay Trawl Closure	18
NP12		
June NP37	Black Rockfish Closure Areas	45
1998 January	<i>C. opilio</i> Bycatch Limitation Zone (COBLZ)	48
March NP10	Southeast Alaska Trawl Closure	16
May NP36	Bering/Kotzebue Herring Closed Area	44
2000 December	Sitka Pinnacles Marine Reserve	23
NP17		
2002 December	Cook Inlet Non-Pelagic Trawl Closure	33
NP25		
2003 January	Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Aleutian Islands Subarea	24-25
NP18		
NP19	Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Seguam Foraging Area	26
NP20	Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Bogoslof Area	27
NP21	Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Bering Sea Subarea	28
NP22	Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Bering Sea Pollock Restriction Area	29
NP23	Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Gulf of Alaska	30-31
NP33	Sea Lion Conservation Area	41

	Area Name	Page
2006 July NP1	Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation Area	7
NP3	Bowers Ridge Habitat Conservation Zone	9
NP4	Gulf of Alaska Coral Habitat Protection Areas	10
NP5	Gulf of Alaska Slope Habitat Conservation Areas	11
NP15	Alaska Seamount Habitat Protection Areas	21
NP16	Aleutian Islands Coral Habitat Protection Areas	22
2008 April NP2	Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area	8
August NP6	Northern Bering Sea Research Area	12
NP7	Nunivak Island, Etolin Strait, and Kuskokwim Bay Habitat Conservation Area	13
NP8	St. Lawrence Island Habitat Conservation Area	14
NP9	St. Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area	15
2009 August NP27	Arctic Closure	35
2011 January NP31	Modified Gear Trawl Zone	39
2014 February NP26	Marmot Bay Tanner Crab Protection Area	34
2015 January	Skate Nursery HAPC Areas	54



Areas by Type

Area Name	Page	Area Name	Page
Ecosystem Conservation Areas		Fishery Management Conservation Areas	
NP1 Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation Area	7	NP29 Area 516 Closure	37
NP2 Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area	8	NP30 Salmon Management Area West	38
NP3 Bowers Ridge Habitat Conservation Zones	9	NP31 Modified Gear Trawl Zone	39
NP4 Gulf of Alaska Coral Habitat Protection Areas	10	NP32 Kodiak Island, Trawls Other Than Pelagic Trawls- Type II Closures	40
NP5 Gulf of Alaska Slope Habitat Conservation Areas	11	NP33 Steller Sea Lion Conservation Area	41
NP6 Northern Bering Sea Research Area	12	NP34 Scallop Closed Areas-Aleutian Islands	42
NP7 Nunivak Island, Etolin Strait, and Kuskokwim Bay Habitat Conservation Area	13	NP35 Scallop Closed Areas-Gulf of Alaska	43
NP8 St. Lawrence Island Habitat Conservation Area	14	NP36 Bering/Kotzebue Herring Closed Area	44
NP9 St. Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area	15	NP37 Black Rockfish Closure Areas	45
1NP0 Southeast Alaska Trawl Closure	16	Other Management Areas	
NP11 Kodiak Island, Trawls Other Than Pelagic Trawls- Type I Closures	17	Chinook Salmon Savings Area	46
NP12 Nearshore Bristol Bay Trawl Closure	18	Chum Salmon Savings Area	47
NP13 Pribilof Islands Habitat Conservation Zone	19	<i>C. opilio</i> Bycatch Limitation Zone (COBLZ)	48
NP14 Red King Crab Savings Area	20	Tanner Crab PSC Bycatch Limitation Zone	49
NP15 Alaska Seamount Habitat Protection Area	21	Catcher Vessel Operations Area (CVOA)	50
NP16 Aleutian Islands Coral Habitat Protection Areas	22	Herring Savings Areas	51
NP17 Sitka Pinnacles Marine Reserve	23	Kodiak Island, Trawls Other Than Pelagic Trawls- Type III Areas	52
NP18 Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Aleutian Islands Subarea	24- 25	IPHC Closed Area	53
NP19 Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Seguam Foraging Area	26	Skate Nursery HAPC Areas	54
NP20 Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Bogoslof Area	27		
NP21 Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Bering Sea Subarea	28		
NP22 Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Pollock Restriction Area	29		
NP23 Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Gulf of Alaska	30- 31		
NP24 Walrus Protection Areas-Cape Peirce, Round, and the Twins	32		
NP25 Cook Inlet Non-Pelagic Trawl Closure	33		
NP26 Marmot Bay Tanner Crab Protection Area	34		
NP27 Arctic Closure	35		
NP28 Area 512 Closure	36		



Areas by Focus

Area Name	Page	Area Name	Page	Area Name	Page
Biodiversity		Habitat		Bycatch Control	
NP15 Alaska Seamount Habitat Protection Areas	21	NP1 Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation Area	7	Chinook Salmon Savings Area	46
NP16 Aleutian Islands Coral Habitat Protection Areas	22	NP2 Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area	8	Chum Salmon Savings Area	47
NP17 Sitka Pinnacles Marine Reserve	23	NP3 Bowers Ridge Habitat Conservation Zones	9	<i>C. opilio</i> Bycatch Limitation Zone	48
NP27 Arctic Closure	35	NP4 Gulf of Alaska Coral Habitat Protection Areas	10	Tanner Crab PSC Bycatch Limitation Zone	49
Vulnerable Species		NP5 Gulf of Alaska Slope Habitat Conservation Areas	11	IPHC Closed Area	53
NP11 Kodiak Island, Trawls Other Than Pelagic Trawls- Type I Closures	17	NP6 Northern Bering Sea Research Area	12	Herring Savings Areas	51
NP12 Nearshore Bristol Bay Trawl Closure	18	NP7 Nunivak Island, Etolin Strait, and Kuskokwim Bay Habitat Conservation Area	13	Allocation	
NP13 Pribilof Islands Habitat Conservation Zone	19	NP8 St. Lawrence Island Habitat Conservation Area	14	Catcher Vessel Operations Area (CVOA)	50
NP14 Red King Crab Savings Area	20	NP9 St. Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area	15		
NP18 Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Aleutian Islands Subarea	24- 25	NP10 Southeast Alaska Trawl Closure	16		
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NP30 Salmon Management Area West	38	Kodiak Island, Trawls Other Than Pelagic Trawls- Type III Areas	52		
NP32 Kodiak Island, Trawls Other Than Pelagic Trawls- Type II Closures	40	Skate Nursery HAPC Areas	54		
NP33 Steller Sea Lion Conservation Area	41	Rebuilding			
		NP36 Bering/Kotzebue Herring Closed Area	44		
		NP37 Black Rockfish Closure Areas	45		



Acronyms

AAC	Alaska Administrative Code	EIS	Environmental Impact Statement	N	North
ABC	Acceptable Biological Catch	EM	Electronic Monitoring	NBSRA	Northern Bering Sea Research Area
ACL	Annual Catch Limit	ESA	Endangered Species Act	NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
ADF&G	Alaska Department of Fish and Game	FFP	Federal Fisheries Permit	Nm	Nautical Miles
AFA	American Fisheries Act	FMP	fishery Management Plan	NMFS	National Marine Fishery Service
AFSC	Alaska Fisheries Science Center	FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact	NOAA	National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration
AI	Aleutian Islands	FR	Federal Register	NPFMC	North Pacific Fishery Management Council
AIHCA	Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation Area	FRFA	Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis	OECM	Other Effective Conservation Measure
AKFIN	Alaska Fisheries Information Network	ft	Foot or Feet	OY	Optimum Yield
Am	Amendment	GF	Groundfish	PSC	Prohibited Species Catch
ATB	America the Beautiful	GHL	Guideline Harvest Level	PPA	Preliminary Preferred Alternative
BSAI	Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands	GHR	Guideline Harvest Range	PRA	Paperwork Reduction Act
CAS	Catch Accounting System	GOA	Gulf of Alaska	PSEIS	Programmatic Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement
CBD	Center for Biological Diversity	HAPC	Habitat Area of Particular Concern	RFA	Regulatory Flexibility Act
CBL	Crab Bycatch Limit	HCA	Habitat Conservation Area	RIR	Regulatory Impact Review
CDQ	Community Development Quota	HPA	Habitat Protection Area	RKCSA	Red King Crab Savings Area
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality	IFQ	Individual Fishing Quota	RKCSS	Red King Crab Savings Subarea
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations	ICA	Intercooperative Agreement	RPA	Reasonable and Prudent Alternative
CHSSA	Chinook Salmon Savings Area	IPA	Incentive Plan Agreement	S	South
COBLZ	<i>C. opilio</i> Bycatch Limitation Zone	IPHC	International Pacific Halibut Commission	SAFE	Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation
CP	Catcher/Processor	IRFA	Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis	SCA	Sea Lion Conservation Area
CPUE	Catch Per Unit Effort	LLP	License Limitation Program	SFA	Sustainable Fisheries Act
CQE	Community Quota Entity	LOA	Length Overall	SSL	Steller Sea Lion
CSSA	Chum Salmon Savings Area	m	Meter or Meters	TAC	Total Allowable Catch
CV	Catcher Vessel	MFMT	Maximum Fishing Mortality Threshold	UN	United Nations
CVOA	Catcher Vessel Operations Area	MGTZ	Modified Gear Trawl Zone	U.S.	United States
DPS	Distinct Population Segment	MMPA	Marine Mammal Protection Act	USCG	United States Coast Guard
E	East	MPA	Marine Protected Area	USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
E.O.	Executive Order	MRA	Maximum Retainable Amount	VMS	Vessel Monitoring System
EA	Environmental Assessment	MSA	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act	VRHS	Voluntary Rolling Hotspot System
EC	Ecosystem Component	MSST	Minimum Stock Size Threshold	W	West
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone	MSY	Maximum Sustainable Yield		
EFH	Essential Fish Habitat				



Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation Area

275,909 nm²

CCC ABM Report #

NP1

Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Habitat	BSAI GF FMP Am 78	February 2005	March 22, 2006 71 FR 14470	June 28, 2006 71 FR 36694	July 28, 2006
		BSAI GF FMP 88	March 2007	Nov. 21, 2007 72 FR 655539	Feb. 19, 2008 73 FR 9035	March 20, 2008

Purpose and Need

The 1996 amendments to the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) require NMFS and regional Fishery Management Councils to describe and implement essential fish habitat (EFH) within FMPs and minimize, to the extent practicable adverse effects on EFH caused by fishing and identify other actions to encourage the conservation and enhancement of EFH. EFH is defined in the MSA as “those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity.”

The Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation Area (AIHCA) was adopted as part of a suite of conservation measures to minimize the adverse effects of bottom contact fishing in the Aleutian Islands subarea. After the AIHCA was established, fishery participants identified two changes necessary to fulfill the intent of the AIHCA while allowing fishing in areas that had historically been fished. The Council responded by closing additional waters near Buldir Island and opening waters near Agattu island to nonpelagic trawl gear under BSAI GF FMP Amendment 88.

Analysis

NMFS and the Council published a draft EIS for Amendment 78 in January 2004 evaluating 3 actions: Describing and identifying EFH, adopting an approach to identify HAPCs, and Minimizing to the extent practicable the adverse effects of fishing on EFH. The preferred alternative for HAPCs was to adopt a site-based approach for HAPC designations.

A 74 page EA/RIR/FRFA was prepared for Amendment 88. The two alternatives evaluated were no action and modifying the latitude and longitude definitions for open areas in the AIHCA, changing the boundaries in areas north of Agattu Island

and north of Buldir Island. Alternative 2 was determined to have no significant environmental impacts and would provide socioeconomic benefits through opening a portion of the AIHCA to fishing.

Regulation Summary

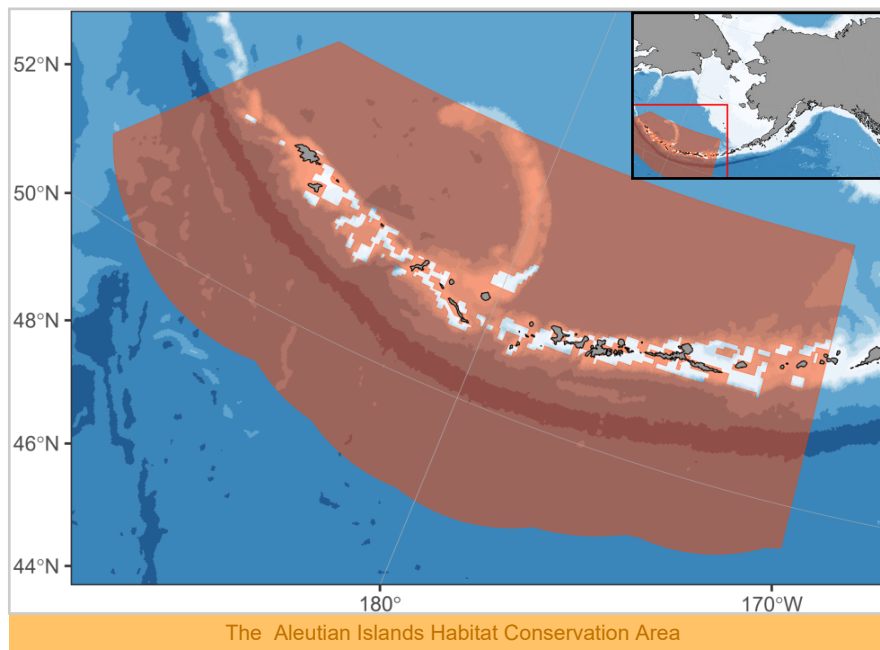
No federally permitted vessel may fish with nonpelagic trawl gear in the Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation Area. Vessel monitoring system is required for all fishing vessels.

Conservation Value

Beginning in 2006, over 95% of the Aleutian Islands management area was closed to bottom trawling (950,463 km² or 277,100 nm²), and about 4% (42,611 km² or 12,423 nm²) remain open.

This area establishes comprehensive protection for coral and sponge ecosystems, which occur at high densities along the Aleutian Islands and deep water basin/trench areas. Deep sea corals grow very slowly and damage to these corals can take hundreds of years to recover. The habitat created by deep sea coral and sponges provides spawning grounds for species such as rockfish and crabs.

In addition to protecting vulnerable deep-sea corals, sponges and other epifauna from potential impacts of fishing, the prohibition on nonpelagic trawl gear also prevents impacts to the undisturbed sediments and ecosystems of the deeper basin and trench areas.



Prohibitions

- Non-pelagic trawl gear



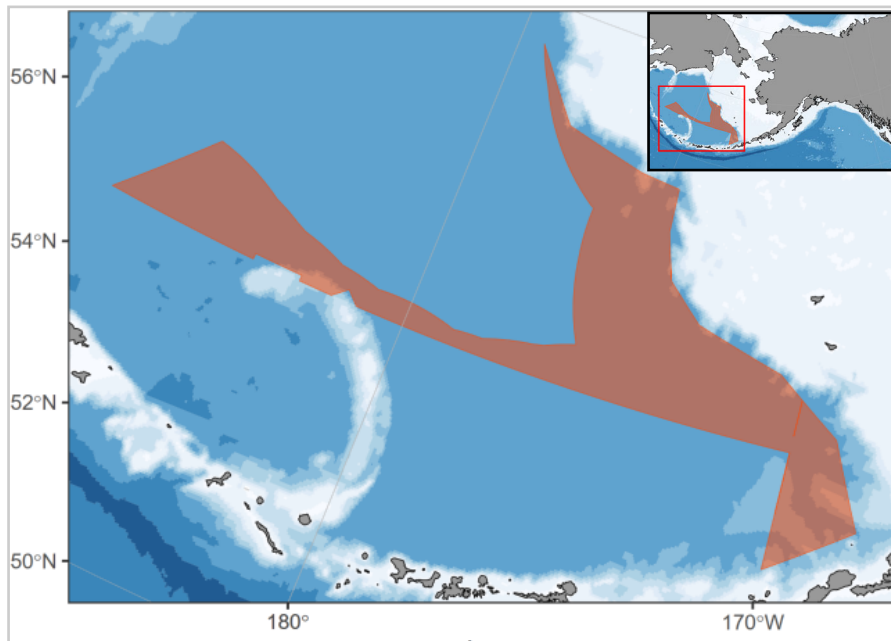
Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
<i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	<i>Habitat</i>	<i>BSAI GF FMP Am 89</i>	<i>March 2007</i>	<i>March 7, 2008 73 FR 12357</i>	<i>July 25, 2008 73 FR 43362</i>	<i>August 25, 2008</i>

Purpose and Need

In February 2005, the Council took final action on the EFH EIS (NMFS 2005) to adopt a suite of measures to conserve EFH in the Bering Sea from potential impacts due to fishing (BSAI Am. 78). At the time of final action, the Council took no action to implement additional conservation measures in the Eastern Bering Sea, as the analysis found such additional measures were neither required by law, nor necessary at that time. To address issues of Bering Sea habitat conservation, understanding costs and benefits of gear modifications, and conservation of historically important and lucrative fishing grounds, the Council notified the public that it planned to undertake a more focused examination of potential measures to further conserve fish habitat, including EFH, in the Eastern Bering Sea by initiating a separate analysis that would tier off of the EFH EIS. The Council indicated that only nonpelagic gear would be addressed due to its high long term effect indices on habitat based on the EIS evaluation. In evaluating EFH, the Council recommended limiting nonpelagic trawling in the Bering Sea subarea to areas that have historically been or are presently being fished with nonpelagic trawl gear. This action is intended to prevent expansion of the nonpelagic trawl fisheries into areas not previously fished with nonpelagic trawl gear and to provide for the developing arrowtooth flounder fishery. The

remainder of the Bering Sea subarea would be closed to nonpelagic trawling. This action would provide protection from the potential effects of nonpelagic trawling for areas where substantial amounts of nonpelagic trawling has not occurred.

In June 2007, the Council adopted precautionary measures to conserve benthic fish habitat in the Bering Sea by “freezing the footprint” of bottom trawling by limiting trawl effort only to those areas more recently trawled. Implemented in 2008, the new measures prohibit bottom trawling in a deep slope and basin area (47,000 nm²) in the Bering Sea.



The Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area

Analysis

A 230-page EA/RIR/FRFA (final draft dated May 2008) was prepared for Amendment 89 to the BSAI Groundfish FMP establishing the Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area, Northern Bering Sea Research Area, Nuvinak Island, Etoin Straight, and Kuskokwim Bay Habitat Conservation Area, St. Lawrence Island Habitat Conservation Area, and St. Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area. Three alternatives were considered, including: 1) the status quo alternative; 2) an open area approach (preferred alternative), prohibiting nonpelagic gear outside of a designated “open area”; and 3) gear modifications

required for all nonpelagic trawl gear used in flatfish target fisheries.

Regulation Summary

No federally permitted vessel may fish with nonpelagic trawl gear in the Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area.

Conservation Value

The Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area establishes nearly full protection for basin ecosystems off the Bering Sea slope. These prohibitions were determined to have the greatest positive effects on biodiversity in the Bering Sea basin, as they prevent impacts to the undisturbed sediments and deep sea ecosystems.

This area was adopted as a precautionary measure to “freeze the footprint” of bottom trawling on benthic fish habitat in the Bering Sea by limiting trawl effort to only areas that had been more recently trawled.

Prohibitions

- Non-pelagic trawl gear



Bowers Ridge Habitat Conservation Zone

5,284 nm²

CCC ABM Report #
NP3

Type: <i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	Focus: <i>Habitat</i>	Related FMP Amendment <i>BSAI GF FMP Am 78</i>	Council Action <i>February 2005</i>	Proposed Rule <i>March 22, 2006 71 FR 14470</i>	Final Regulations <i>June 28, 2006 71 FR 36694</i>	Effective <i>July 28, 2006</i>
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Purpose and Need

The 1996 amendments to the Magnuson-Stevens Act require NMFS and regional Fishery Management Councils to describe and implement essential fish habitat (EFH) within FMPs and minimize, to the extent practicable adverse effects on EFH caused by fishing and identify other actions to encourage the conservation and enhancement of EFH. EFH is defined in the Magnuson-Stevens Act as “those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity. The Bowers Ridge Habitat Conservation Zone was recognized as likely to contain high densities of coral and sponge habitat, prompting the Council to close the area to all bottom contact fishing gears.

contact gear to minimize adverse effects of fishing on EFH.

Regulation Summary

No federally permitted vessel may fish with mobile bottom contact gear, including dredges, non-pelagic trawl, and dinglebar gear, in the Bowers Ridge Habitat Conservation Zone.

Prohibitions

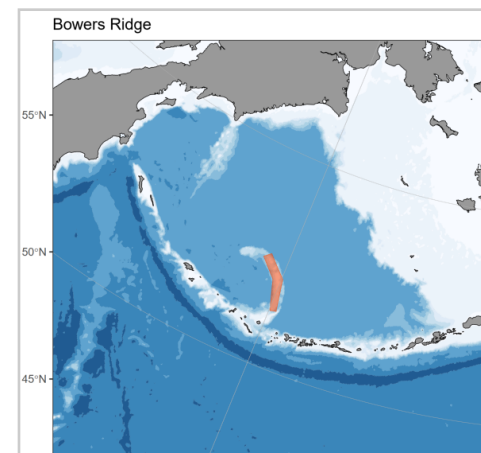
- Mobile bottom contact gear, including:
 - Dredge
 - Nonpelagic trawl
 - Dinglebar

Conservation Value

As a precautionary measure, the Council voted to prohibit mobile fishing gear that contacts the bottom (i.e. dredges, nonpelagic trawls, and dinglebar gear) within this 18,131 km² (5,286 nm²) area.

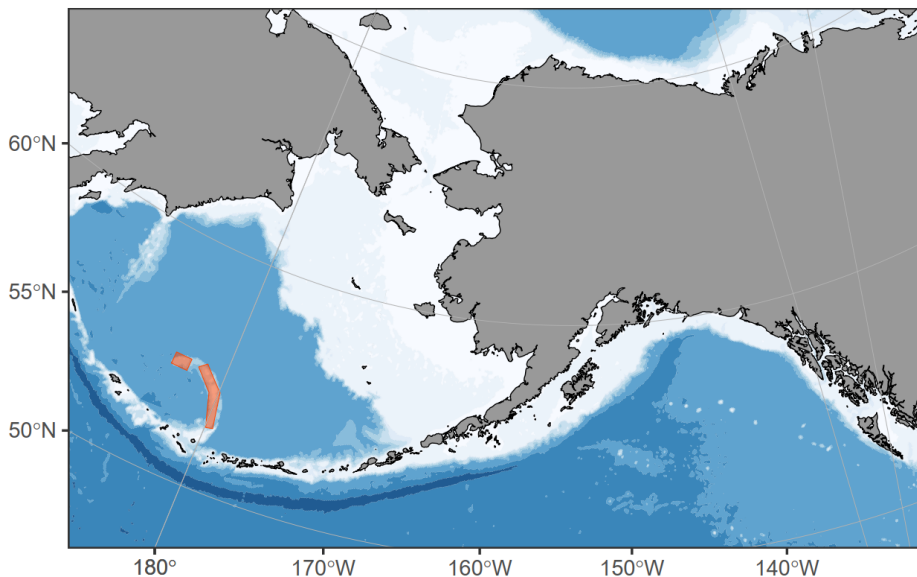
While Bower's ridge is relatively unexplored, it is likely to provide habitat for cold-water corals and sponges, as well as fish and crab species.

These area establish nearly full protection for the underwater ridge ecosystems north of the Aleutian Islands. Gear prohibitions in these areas was determined to have the greatest positive effects on biodiversity in the area, as they prevent impacts to the undisturbed sediments and ecosystems in these relatively intact and undisturbed ecosystems.



Analysis

NMFS and the Council published a draft EIS in January 2004 evaluating 3 actions: Describing and identifying EFH, adopting an approach to identify HAPCs, and Minimizing to the extent practicable the adverse effects of fishing on EFH. The preferred alternative was to establish numerous closures to trawl and bottom

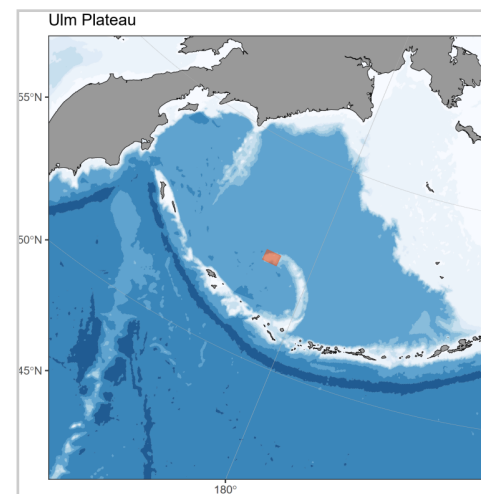


The Bowers Ridge Habitat Conservation Zone

Sub Areas

The Bowers Ridge Habitat Conservation Zone is comprised of two separate areas:

- Bowers Ridge (3,937 nm²)
- Ulm Plateau (1,347 nm²)



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Habitat	GOA GF FMP Am 65/73	February 2005	March 22, 2006 71 FR 14470	June 28, 2006 71 FR 36694	July 28, 2006

Purpose and Need

Dense aggregations of Primnoa coral were discovered in southeast Alaska by multibeam surveys and submersible observations. The Council evaluated GOA FMP Amendment 65, designating areas as Habitats of Particular Concern (HAPC) to highlight research areas and protect fragile coral habitats.

The 1996 amendments to the Magnuson-Stevens Act require NMFS and regional Fishery Management Councils to describe and implement essential fish habitat (EFH) within FMPs and minimize, to the extent practicable adverse effects on EFH caused by fishing and identify other actions to encourage the conservation and enhancement of EFH. EFH is defined in the Magnuson-Stevens Act as “those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity.”

Vertical structure provided by invertebrates such as corals, sponges, mussels, rockweed and kelp may be important habitat for fish. The purpose of Amendment 65 was to provide for improved long-term productivity of Alaska’s fisheries by controlling bycatch of these important invertebrate species, which provide essential ecosystem functions for marine habitat.

Analysis

NMFS and the Council published a draft EIS in January 2004 for GOA FMP Amendments 65/73 and BSAI FMP Amendments 65/78 evaluating three actions: Describing and identifying EFH, adopting an approach to identify HAPCs, and minimizing to the extent practicable the adverse effects of fishing on EFH. The preferred alternative was to adopt a site-based approach for HAPC designations.

In addition to the GOA Coral Habitat Protection Areas, other HAPC sites in Amendments 65 and 73 included HAPCs for seamounts in the EEZ and corals in the Aleutian Islands.

Regulation Summary

All Federally managed fisheries using bottom-contact gear (longlines, trawls, pots, and dinglebar gear) is prohibited within five zones of the HAPC area.

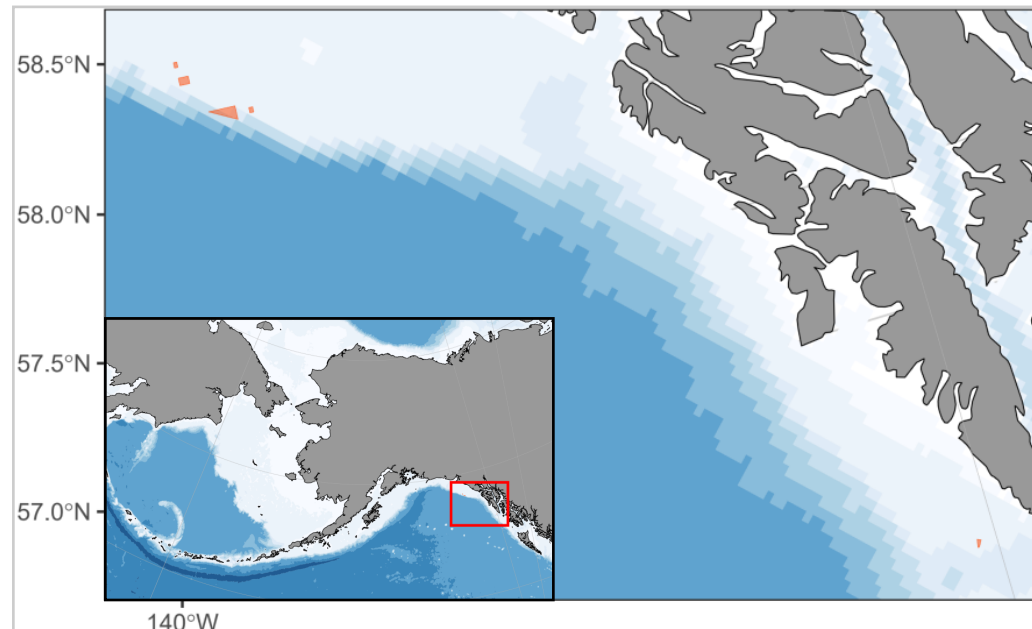
Prohibitions

- All bottom contact gear:
 - Nonpelagic trawl
 - Dredge
 - Dinglebar
 - Pot
 - Hook and line

Conservation Value

These zones, which total 46 km² (13.5 nm²), include the areas where there have been direct submersible observations documenting the presence of Primnoa. These red tree corals are keystone species and occur in the Gulf of Alaska in the densest and largest thickets documented anywhere. These cold-water coral habitats provide breeding areas, refuge, and rich feeding grounds for a wide variety of species including rockfish and crabs.

This area establishes full protection for deep sea Primnoa coral aggregations ('thickets') in the area off Cape Ommaney and on the Fairweather grounds off Yakutat. Gear prohibitions in this area were determined to have the greatest positive effects for the protection and maintenance of deep sea coral ecosystems, which in these 5 areas, consists of dense Primnoa thickets in the vicinity of the Fairweather grounds in the Eastern GOA.



The Gulf of Alaska Coral Habitat Protection Areas (Shown in orange)



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Habitat	GOA GF FMP 73	February 2005	March 22, 2006 71 FR 14470	June 28, 2006 71 FR 36694	July 28, 2006

Purpose and Need

The Council deemed that seamounts and undisturbed coral beds outside of core fishing areas were important as rockfish or other species habitat. These sites were evaluated for identification as Habitats of Particular Concern (HAPC) and for additional conservation measures.

HAPC are those areas of special importance that may require additional protection from adverse effects. HAPC is defined on the basis of its ecological importance, sensitivity, exposure, and rarity of the habitat. Vertical structure provided by invertebrates (e.g. corals, sponges, mussels, rockweed and kelp) may be important habitat for fish. The purpose of Amendment 65 is to provide for improved long-term productivity of Alaska's fisheries by controlling harvest of invertebrates, which have the potential to be developed into large-scale commercial fisheries and provide essential ecosystem services.

The purpose of GOA Groundfish FMP Amendment 73 is to determine whether and how to amend the Council's FMPs to identify and manage site-specific HAPCs. The HAPCs are subsets of EFH that are particularly important to the long-term productivity of one or more managed species, or that are particularly vulnerable to degradation and are site-specific areas of EFH of managed species.

Analysis

A 281-page EA/RIR/IRFA (Secretarial review draft dated October 2005) was prepared for GOA Groundfish FMP Amendment 73.

The three actions analyzed were as follows:

- 1) HAPCs for Seamounts in the EEZ
- 2) HAPCs for GOA (GOA) corals
- 3) HAPCs for AI corals (BSAI FMP)

Regulation Summary

No federally permitted vessel may fish with nonpelagic trawl gear in the Gulf of Alaska Slope Habitat Conservation Areas.

Prohibitions

- Nonpelagic trawl gear

Conservation Value

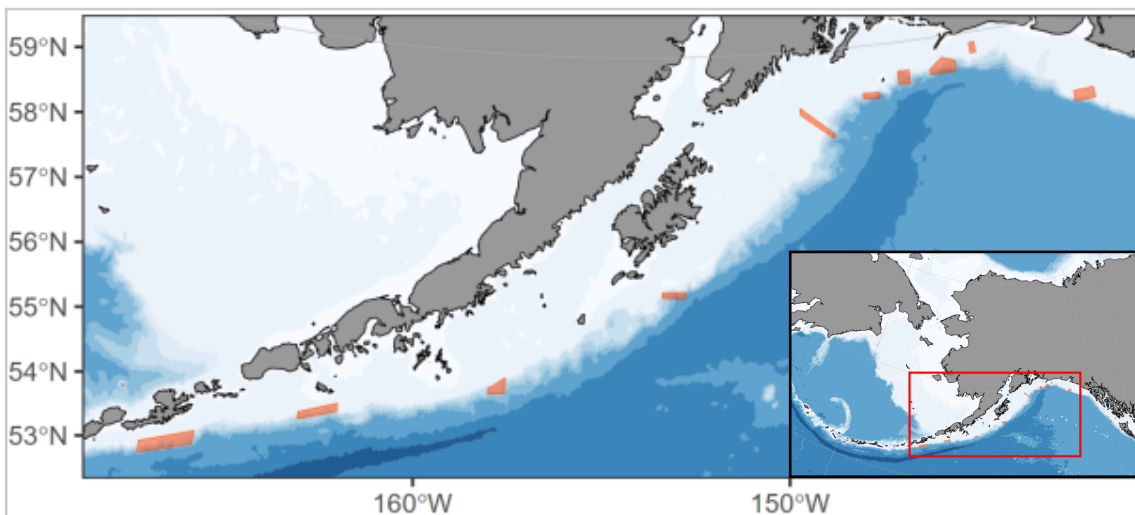
The GOA has approximately 160,000 sq. km of continental shelf with a relatively open marine system including landmasses to the east and the north. Commercial species are more diverse in the GOA than in the Eastern Bering Sea, but less diverse than in the Washington-California region. The most diverse set of species in the GOA is the rockfish group of which 30 species have been identified in this area. Protected sites in these areas contain contour and relief features such as vertical rock walls, gullies, and gravel areas of high importance to rockfish. Trawl fishermen have identified rocky areas in this area believed to provide epifaunal habitat for important fishery species.

These area establishes bottom trawl closure areas along the GOA slope to provide protection for vulnerable deep sea coral and sponge ecosystems that are likely to occur in these 9 areas distributed across the continental slope. A prohibition on bottom trawling in these areas was

determined to have the greatest positive effects for the protection and maintenance of the rugged coral and sponge habitats on the GOA slope. These areas range from 200m to 1,000 m depth.

Sub Areas

- Yakutat (194 nm²)
- Cape Suckling (51 nm²)
- Kayak Island (282 nm²)
- Middleton (E) (143 nm²)
- Middleton (W) (85 nm²)
- Cable (175 nm²)
- Albatross Bank (123 nm²)
- Shumagin Island (279 nm²)
- Unalaska Island (614 nm²)



The Gulf of Alaska Slope Habitat Conservation Areas



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
<i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	<i>Habitat</i>	<i>BSAI GF FMP Am 89</i>	<i>March 2007</i>	<i>March 7, 2008 73 FR 12357</i>	<i>July 25, 2008 73 FR 43362</i>	<i>August 25, 2008</i>

Purpose and Need

In June 2007, the Council adopted precautionary measures to conserve benthic fish habitat in the Bering Sea by “freezing the footprint” of bottom trawling by limiting trawl effort only to those areas more recently trawled. The Council also established the Northern Bering Sea Research Area that includes the shelf waters to the north of St. Matthew Island (85,000 nm²). The entire Northern Bering Sea Research Area will be closed to bottom trawling while a research plan is developed.

The Northern Bering Sea Research Area was implemented in 2008, prohibiting bottom trawling in this part of the Bering Sea. The Council’s objective was to develop a research plan to provide data allowing for a better understanding of the potential impacts of trawling on benthic and epibenthic fauna of the northern Bering Sea before authorizing any commercial trawling in the area.

Analysis

A 230-page EA/RIR/FRFA (final draft dated May 2008) was prepared for Amendment 89 to the BSAI and GOA Groundfish FMP establishing the Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area, Northern Bering Sea Research Area, Nunivak Island, Etolin Strait, and Kuskokwim Bay Habitat Conservation Area, St. Lawrence Island Habitat Conservation Area, and St. Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area. Three Alternatives were considered, including: the status quo alternative; an open area approach (preferred alternative), prohibiting nonpelagic gear outside of a designated “open area”; and gear modifications required for all nonpelagic trawl gear used in flatfish target fisheries. In addition, the EA/RIR/FRFA considered 5 options, each of which could be selected with any alternative and multiple options could be chosen, including:

closing the area around St. Matthew Island to nonpelagic trawl gear (preferred option), closing an area around Nunivak Island along the Etolin Strait to nonpelagic trawl gear, closing an area around Nunivak Island along the Etolin Strait and Kuskokwim bay to nonpelagic trawl gear (preferred option), closing an area from the Russian border around the Southern end of St. Matthew Island to nonpelagic trawl gear designated as the Northern Bering Sea Research Area (preferred option), and closing the area around St. Lawrence Sound to nonpelagic trawl gear (preferred option).

Regulation Summary

This area is closed to commercial bottom trawling pending understanding of its impacts on the ecosystem

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) passed Amendment 89 to the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Groundfish Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) in 2008. The Amendment established the Northern Bering Sea Research Area (NBSRA) and closed the area to nonpelagic trawling pending the results of research designed to investigate the potential impacts of nonpelagic trawling on the habitats and communities of the Northern Bering Sea.

Closed areas that extend into State of Alaska waters apply to federally permitted vessels operating in State of Alaska waters.

No federally permitted vessel may fish with nonpelagic trawl gear in the Northern Bering Sea Research Area.

Prohibitions

- Nonpelagic trawl gear

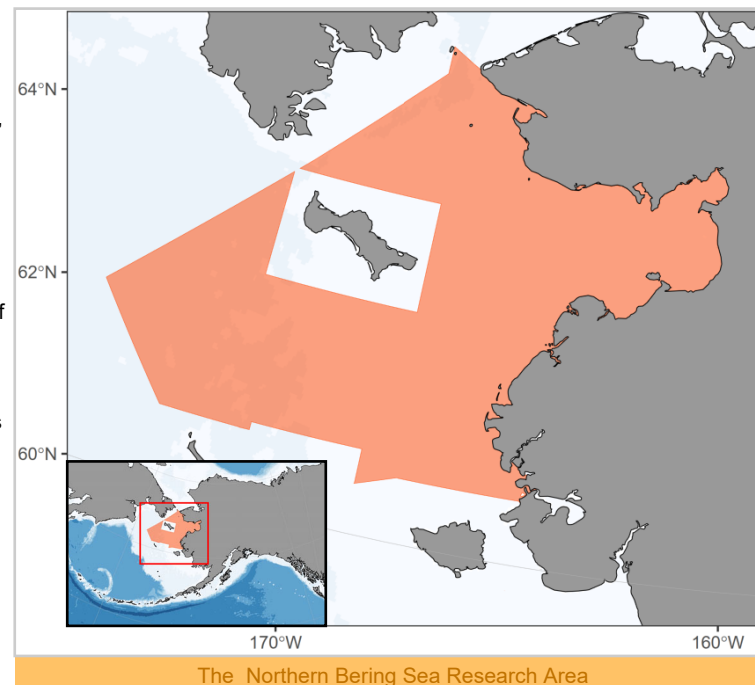
Conservation Value

While species diversity is thought to be low, the Northern Bering Sea has among the highest benthic biomass in the world’s oceans, dominated by bivalves, amphipods, and polychaetes. This area includes locations that have not previously been fished with nonpelagic trawl gear, nearshore bottom habitat areas that support subsistence marine resources, blue king crab habitat, and a research area for further study of the potential impacts of nonpelagic trawling on bottom habitat. Due to the pristine and largely unimpacted by commercial bottom trawl habitat, the research area is ideal for Before-After-Control-Impact (BACI) experiments examining changes in benthic habitat and fauna before and after trawling.

A total of 22 communities border the NBSRA, from Newtok in the south to Wales in the north, and the communities of Gambell and Savoonga on St. Lawrence Island and Diomed on Little Diomed Island. The economies of most of the communities that border the NBSRA are dominated by subsistence activities and seasonal employment opportunities. Commercial fishing and seasonal construction and firefighting jobs provide cash income

to many of the residents of these communities

The Northern Bering Sea Research Area establishes extensive protection for relatively undisturbed benthic habitats of the northern Bering Sea continental shelf. A prohibition on bottom trawling in this area was determined to have the greatest positive effects on relatively undisturbed habitats of the northern Bering Sea, at least until further research is conducted to better understand the impacts of this gear on these relatively undisturbed habitats.



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Habitat	BSAI GF FMP Am 89	March 2007	March 7, 2008 73 FR 12357	July 25, 2008 73 FR 43362	August 25, 2008

Purpose and Need

The Council consulted with a group of industry and subsistence resource users to identify bottom habitat supporting subsistence marine resources for protection in the Bering Sea. These resources include marine mammals, fish, and seabirds harvested by subsistence users from coastal and interior Alaska. Based on the results of the workgroup, the Council recommended prohibiting nonpelagic trawling in waters surrounding Nunivak Island and within Etolin Strait and Kuskokwim Bay. The northern and western edges of the area include waters with bottom habitat supporting subsistence resources and follow latitude and longitude lines to facilitate enforcement of the nonpelagic trawl closure. The southern boundary of the area is based on negotiations between the fishing industry and subsistence marine resource users. The boundaries of the closure area ensure access to important fishing locations for yellowfin sole and other flatfish while providing protection of important bottom habitat.

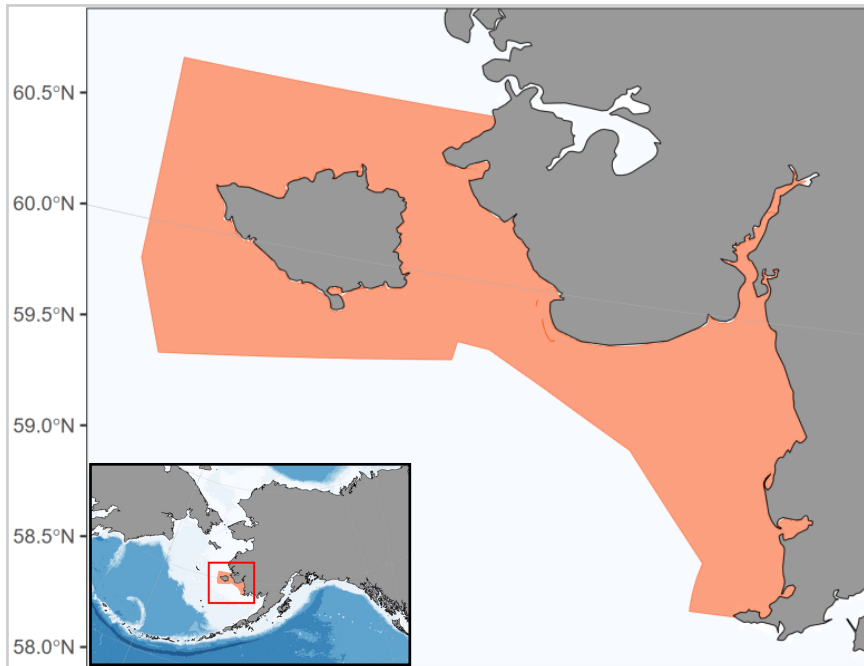
In June 2007, the Council adopted precautionary measures to conserve benthic fish habitat in the Bering Sea by “freezing the footprint” of bottom trawling by limiting trawl effort only to those areas more recently trawled. Implemented in 2008, the new measures prohibit bottom trawling in an area encompassing Nunivak Island-Etolin Strait-Kuskokwim Bay.

Analysis

A 230-page EA/RIR/FRFA (final draft dated May 2008) was prepared for Amendment 89 to the BSAI and GOA Groundfish FMP establishing the Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area, Northern Bering Sea Research Area, Nunivak Island, Etolin Strait, and Kuskokwim Bay Habitat Conservation Area, St. Lawrence Island Habitat Conservation Area, and St. Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area. Three Alternatives were considered, including: the status quo alternative; an open area approach (preferred alternative), prohibiting nonpelagic gear outside of a designated “open area”; and gear modifications required for all nonpelagic trawl

gear used in flatfish target fisheries. In addition, the EA/RIR/FRFA considered 5 options, each of which could be selected with any alternative and multiple options could be chosen, including: closing the area around St. Matthew Island to nonpelagic trawl gear (preferred option), closing an area around Nunivak Island along the Etolin Strait to nonpelagic trawl gear, closing an area around Nunivak Island along the Etolin Strait and Kuskokwim bay to nonpelagic trawl gear (preferred option), closing an area from the Russian border around the Southern end of St. Matthew Island to nonpelagic trawl gear designated as the Northern Bering Sea Research Area (preferred option), and closing the area

around St. Lawrence Sound to nonpelagic trawl gear (preferred option).



The Nunivak Island, Etolin Strait, and Kuskokwim Bay

Regulation Summary

No federally permitted vessel may fish with nonpelagic trawl gear in the Nunivak Island, Etolin Strait, and Kuskokwim Bay Habitat Conservation Area.

Prohibitions

- Nonpelagic trawl gear

Conservation Value

This area establishes extensive protection for relatively undisturbed benthic habitats of the nearshore areas of the Bering Sea. A non-pelagic trawl gear prohibition in this area was determined to have the greatest positive effects on benthic habitats relatively undisturbed by fishing.

Additionally, the closure around Etolin Strait provides protection from disturbance of bottom trawl gear to Walrus populations. This area is also particularly important area for walrus movement into the northern waters from the Bristol Bay Area, and vessel traffic can disturb walrus at haulouts and while feeding at sea.



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
<i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	<i>Habitat</i>	<i>BSAI GF FMP Am 89</i>	<i>March 2007</i>	<i>March 7, 2008 73 FR 12357</i>	<i>July 25, 2008 73 FR 43362</i>	<i>August 25, 2008</i>

Purpose and Need

In February 2005, the Council took final action on the EFH EIS (NMFS 2005) to adopt a suite of measures to conserve EFH in the Bering Sea from potential impacts due to fishing. At the time of final action, the Council took no action to implement additional conservation measures in the Eastern Bering Sea, as the analysis found such additional measures were neither required by law, nor necessary at that time. To address issues of Bering Sea habitat conservation, understanding costs and benefits of gear modifications, and conservation of historically important and lucrative fishing grounds, the Council notified the public that it planned to undertake a more focused examination of potential measures to further conserve fish habitat in the Eastern Bering Sea by initiating a separate analysis that would tier off of the EFH EIS. The Council indicated that only nonpelagic gear would be addressed due to its high long term effect indices on habitat based on the EIS evaluation.

In June 2007, the Council adopted precautionary measures to conserve benthic fish habitat in the Bering Sea by “freezing the footprint” of bottom trawling by limiting trawl effort only to those areas more recently trawled. Implemented in 2008, the new measures prohibit bottom trawling a habitat conservation area St Lawrence Island.

Analysis

A 230-page EA/RIR/FRFA (final draft dated May 2008) was prepared for Amendment 89 to the BSAI and GOA Groundfish FMP establishing the Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area, Northern Bering Sea Research Area, Nuvinak Island, Etolin Strait, and Kuskokwim Bay Habitat Conservation Area, St. Lawrence Island Habitat Conservation Area, and St. Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area. Three alternatives were considered: the status quo alternative, an open area approach (preferred alternative), prohibiting nonpelagic gear outside of a designated “open area”, and gear modifications required for all nonpelagic trawl gear in flatfish target fisheries. The analysis considered 5 options, each of which could be selected with any alternative and multiple options could be chosen, including: closing the area around St. Matthew Island to nonpelagic trawl gear (preferred option), closing an area around Nunivak Island along the Etolin Strait to nonpelagic trawl gear, closing an area around Nunivak Island along the Etolin Strait and Kuskokwim bay to nonpelagic trawl gear (preferred option), closing an area around the Southern end of St. Matthew Island to nonpelagic trawl gear designated as the Northern Bering Sea Research Area (preferred option), and closing the area around St. Lawrence Sound to nonpelagic trawl gear (preferred option).

The Council recommended closing waters surrounding St. Lawrence Island to nonpelagic trawl gear to conserve blue king crab habitat and minimize potential interactions with community use and subsistence fisheries taking place in nearshore areas. The boundaries of this area are based on the areas likely to support subsistence resources and along latitude and longitude lines to facilitate enforcement of the closure.

Regulation Summary

No federally permitted vessel may fish with nonpelagic trawl gear in the St. Lawrence Island Habitat Conservation Area.

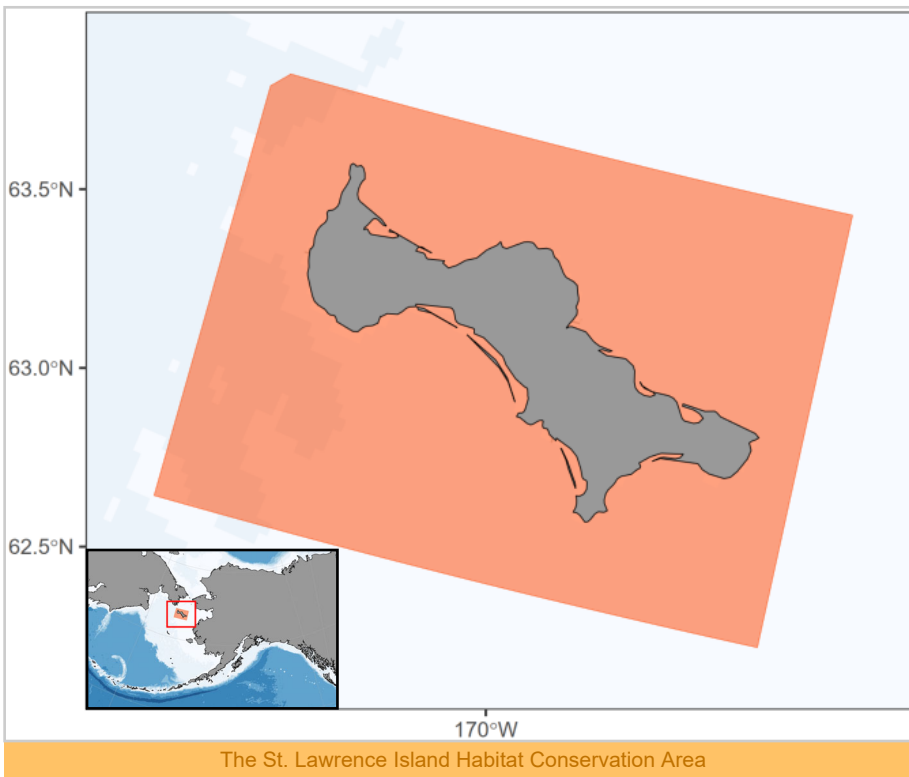
Prohibitions

- Nonpelagic trawl gear

Conservation Value

This area establishes extensive protection for the relatively undisturbed benthic habitats and marine ecosystems around the remote Island of St. Lawrence in the northern Bering Sea.

This area also protects blue king crab habitat, a stock that has been designated as “overfished”. Additionally, bycatch of this species can impact the crabs during particularly vulnerable life stages such as molting and mating which are known to occur in this area. This area assists blue king crab stock recovery by protecting undisturbed habitats and minimizing bycatch.



St. Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area

4,037 nm²

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Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Habitat	BSAI GF FMP Am 89	March 2007	March 7, 2008 73 FR 12357	July 25, 2008 73 FR 43362	August 25, 2008

Purpose and Need

In February 2005, the Council took final action on the EFH EIS (NMFS 2005) to adopt a suite of measures to conserve EFH in the Bering Sea from potential impacts due to fishing.

The goal of the Council in their decision to proceed with an analysis of trawl restrictions in the Bering Sea was largely to isolate the footprint of the fleet. The Council decided to focus on reducing the effects of nonpelagic trawling in the EBS largely because trawling employs gear that fishes hard on the bottom, has high long-term effect indices (LEI) on habitat, and was widely distributed, which could have potentially increased dramatically with increases in total

allowable catch (TAC) limits for flatfish

In June 2007, the Council adopted precautionary measures to conserve benthic fish habitat in the Bering Sea by “freezing the footprint” of bottom trawling by limiting trawl effort only to those areas more recently trawled. Implemented in 2008, the new measures prohibit bottom trawling in a deep slope and basin area (47,000 nm²), and three habitat conservation areas around St Matthew Island, St Lawrence Island, and an area encompassing Nunivak Island-Etolin Strait-Kuskokwim Bay.

Analysis

A 230-page EA/RIR/FRFA (final draft dated May 2008) was prepared for Amendment 89 to the BSAI and GOA Groundfish FMP establishing the Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area, Northern Bering Sea Research Area, Nuvinak Island, Etolin Strait, and Kuskokwim Bay Habitat Conservation Area, St. Lawrence Island Habitat Conservation Area, and St. Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area. Three alternatives were considered: the status quo alternative, an open area approach (preferred alternative), prohibiting nonpelagic gear outside of a designated “open area”, and gear modifications required for all nonpelagic trawl gear in flatfish target fisheries. The analysis considered 5 options, each of which could be selected with any alternative and multiple options could be chosen, including: closing the area around St. Matthew Island to nonpelagic trawl gear (preferred option),

The proposed rule would close waters near St. Matthew Island to nonpelagic trawling to protect bottom habitat for blue king crab. Various life stages of blue king crab occur in waters surrounding St. Matthew Island. Waters southwest of the island contain juvenile, non-ovigerous female and male blue king crab habitat, and waters to the northeast contain ovigerous females. The Council recommended that the area near St. Matthew Island be closed to nonpelagic trawling given the depleted blue king crab stock and the potential effects of nonpelagic trawling on blue king crab habitat. The recommended closed area includes the waters where blue king crab have been found and is shaped using straight lines to facilitate enforcement of the closure.

Regulation Summary

No federally permitted vessel may fish with nonpelagic trawl gear in the St. Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area.

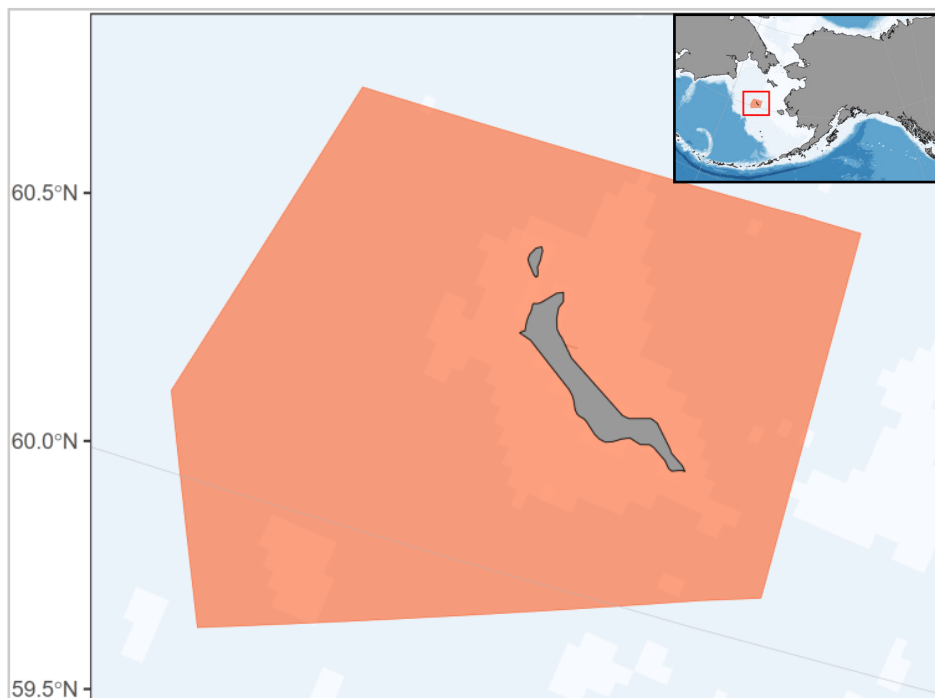
Prohibitions

- Nonpelagic trawl gear

Conservation Value

This area establishes extensive protection for the relatively undisturbed benthic habitats around the remote Island of St. Matthew in the Bering Sea.

The St Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area contains blue king crab habitat, protecting juveniles as well as egg-bearing female and male blue king crab habitat. High densities of ovigerous females have been noted in these waters. By preventing the use of bottom trawl gear, the St. Matthews Island Habitat Conservation Area assists blue king crab stock recovery though habitat conservation and reduced bycatch.



The St. Matthew Island Habitat Conservation Area



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
<i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	<i>Habitat</i>	GOA GF FMP Am 41	June 1995	Aug. 15, 1997. 62 FR 43866	Oct. 1, 1998. 63 FR 52642	January 1, 2000

Purpose and Need

In 1991, a ban on trawling in this area was proposed by longline fishermen from Sitka to prevent long-term damage to deep sea corals, as well as protect rockfish and prevent disruption with the local fishing industry. Initially, this proposal was not adopted by the Council, but it was later implemented under GOA FMP Amendment 41.

This management measure is intended to eliminate preemption conflicts between gear types, to prevent fixed gear loss, and to assist fishing communities dependent on the local fisheries in the Southeast Outside District by providing for their sustained participation and by minimizing the adverse impacts on them.

Small vessel fishermen from communities in Southeast Alaska depend on rockfish species, such as roughey, other slope rockfish, and thornyhead rockfish, to supplement their incomes, derived mainly from the salmon, sablefish, and halibut fisheries. These small vessel fishermen use primarily fixed gear to catch rockfish species and experience economic hardship when they are deprived of these supplemental fisheries through preemption by trawl gear. The Magnuson-Stevens Act's national standard 8 requires that management measures take into account the importance of fishery resources to fishing communities by providing for the sustained participation of fishing communities and, to the extent practicable, by minimizing adverse economic impacts on fishing communities. Authorizing only non-trawl gear in the Southeast Outside District is intended to meet these requirements.

Analysis

The Southeast Alaska Trawl Closure, also called the Southeast Outside District, was adopted as part of the license limitation program that was implemented under GOA Groundfish FMP Amendment 41.

A 98-page EA/RIR (final draft dated September 1997) with seven lengthy appendices and several supplemental analyses considered the status quo and a general license limitation alternative was prepared for the GOA Groundfish FMP Amendment 41. The EA/RIR did not directly discuss the Southeast Alaska Trawl Closure as it was implemented through no trawl licenses being issued in the Southeast Outside District.

Regulation Summary

Amendment 41 restricts the type of gear that may be used in Federal waters of the GOA east of 140° W. long. (Southeast Outside District) to non-trawl gear. Nontrawl gear is defined as hook and line gear, jig gear, and pot gear.

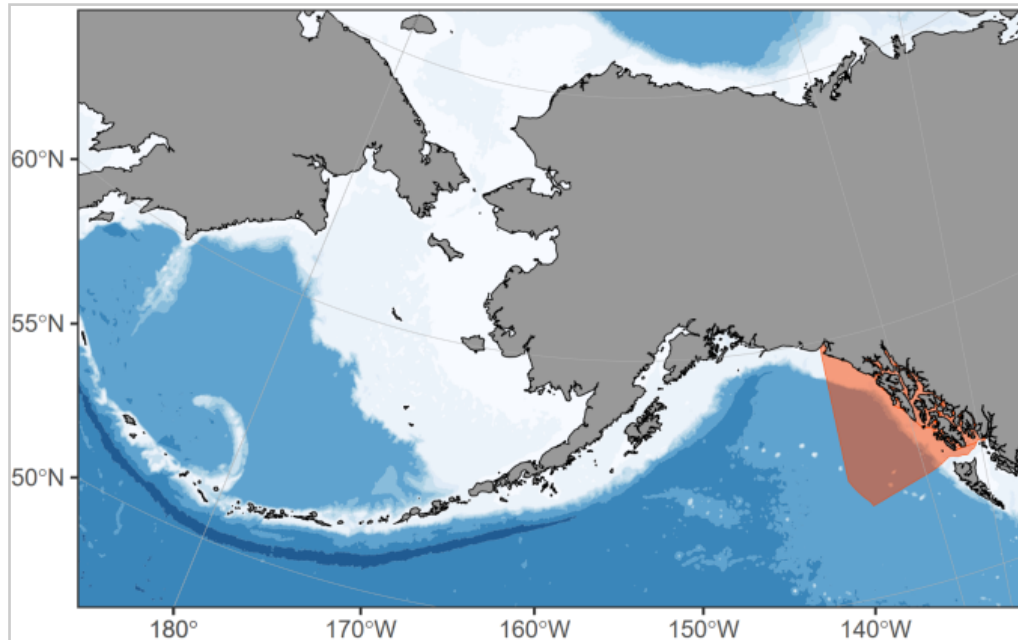
Prohibitions

- All trawl gear

Conservation Value

This area includes a wide variety of habitat, including continental shelf, slope, and basin areas. The trawl closure appears to have met the objective of conserving rockfish habitat, with Pacific ocean perch biomass dramatically increasing in the Gulf of Alaska since its implementation. This increase in biomass may be due in part to large year classes of Pacific ocean perch observed before the trawl closure, as well as a reduced harvest rate on larger fish. Fishermen in Southeast Alaska have described the area as successful from a social perspective as interactions between fixed gear and trawl gear have been eliminated and habitat degradation concerns have been addressed.

The Southeast Alaska Trawl Closure establishes extensive protection for deep-sea coral and sponge ecosystems, and provides added conservation of Pacific ocean perch and other rockfish species that are not harvested with gear other than trawl gear.



The Southeast Alaska Trawl Closure



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Emergency Rule	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations
Ecosystem Conservation	Habitat & Vulnerable Species	GOA GF FMP Am 15	September 1986	March 12, 1986 50 FR 8502	Dec. 12, 1986 51 FR 44812	April 15 1987 52 FR 12183
		GOA GF FMP Am 18	June 1989	Sept. 22, 1989 54 FR 39022	Dec. 6 1989 54 FR 50386	January 1, 1990
		GOA GF FMP Am 26	June 1992	Oct. 15, 1992 57 FR 47321	Jan. 6, 1993 58 FR 503	January 1, 1993

Purpose and Need

The red king crab stock around Kodiak Island peaked in 1965, with landings of 94 million pounds, and then declined and remained at moderately low levels through the 1970's. No fishery has been allowed since 1982 in an attempt to rebuild the stock. While the cause for the decline of red king crab is not known, most researchers believe the decline can be attributed to a variety of factors including overfishing, fish predation on king crab, and a warmer ocean environment. Fishery managers have enacted measures to provide an environment conducive to the recovery of the red king crab stock by minimizing impacts from other fisheries.

Trawl restrictions were adopted under GOA FMP Amendment 15 in 1987 to protect red king crabs near Kodiak Island. These areas were designated as Type I, Type II, and Type III areas based on crab concentration and use.

In 1989, the Kodiak crab trawl closure areas established in Amendment 15 were scheduled to sunset on December 31, 1989. The Kodiak Island Trawl closure areas were renewed for 3 more years under GOA FMP Amendment 18. These restrictions were considered necessary because of the poor condition of the king crab resource off Kodiak and because trawl bycatch and mortality rates are highest during the spring months when king crab migrate inshore for reproduction.

Analysis

A 44-page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated October 1986) was prepared for GOA Amendment 15. Two alternatives (in addition to the status quo) were examined for actions 1, 3 and 4. One alternative to the status quo was examined for action 2.

A 193-page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated July 21, 1989) was prepared for GOA Amendment 18, which included six actions that affected GOA groundfish management. In approving its action to delete fishing seasons from the FMPs, the Council also considered a framework procedure for annually setting fishing seasons.

An 18-page EA/RIR (final draft dated September 14, 1992) was prepared for GOA Amendment 26. Three alternatives including the status quo were considered. Under the status quo alternative, the time/area closures would have expired at the end of 1992. The other alternative not chosen would have extended the closures for another three years. The alternative adopted made these closures permanent.

Regulation Summary

Historically, Type I areas have had very high king crab concentrations and, to promote rebuilding of the crab stocks, are closed all year to all trawling except with pelagic gear. Type I areas have very high king crab concentrations and, to promote rebuilding of the crab stocks, are closed all year to all trawling except with pelagic gear. The Alitak Flats/Towers (879 nm²) and Marmot Flats (280 nm²) areas are Type I areas, closed to non-pelagic trawls all year.

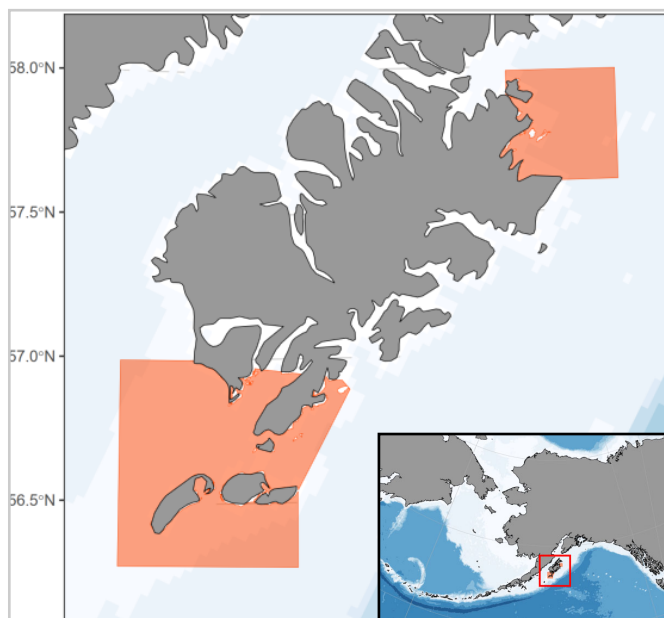
Conservation Value

Type I closures established extensive protection for vulnerable crab and their habitats. The closures provide for conservation of habitat biodiversity and ecosystems in the area, and minimize bycatch of red king crab.

This Type I and Type II areas encompass 80-90% of the known female red king crab stocks. This species is at historic low levels.

Since GOA Amendment 26 was approved, GOA king crab stocks in the vicinity of Kodiak Island remain depressed. The last strong year class produced was in 1973-74. Recent surveys have failed to detect signs of rebuilding.

These closures have been in place for over 30 years; however, it is difficult to assess their conservation benefits. Bycatch of red king crabs in groundfish fisheries have been reduced due to these closures as they help prevent trawlers from encountering crab aggregations and limit impacts of non-pelagic trawl gear on crab habitat. Despite being a tool created for the management of these areas, Type III closures have never been triggered from a lack of recruitment. Despite these long-term closures, adult and juvenile red king crab populations remain low as measured by trawl surveys in and around the Kodiak trawl closure areas.



The molting period off Kodiak begins around February 15 and ends by June 15. Because Amendment 18 also had a 3-year sunset, the management measure was scheduled to expire at the end of 1992. The purpose of this amendment was to renew these closure areas to protect red king crab.

Type I Closures around Kodiak

Prohibitions

- Nonpelagic trawl gear



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Habitat & Vulnerable Species	BSAI GF FMP Am 37	June 1996	Sept. 12, 1996 61 FR 48113	Dec. 16, 1996 61 FR 65985	January 1, 1997

Purpose and Need

The Bristol Bay red king crab population collapsed in 1981 following a huge buildup in biomass and historic high catches. The cause of the collapse remains unknown, but it has been hypothesized by different scientists to be due to several factors including overfishing, discard mortality, trawl interactions, disease or other source of natural mortality, or reduced recruitment due to climatic events. State fishery managers closed the fishery in 1982 and 1983.

The 1995 NMFS bottom trawl survey indicated that exploitable biomass of Bristol Bay red king crab is at about one-fifth record levels. The stock was at its lowest level since the fishery was closed after the first stock collapse in 1983. In addition, the annual trawl surveys indicated little prospect for increased recruitment of mature males or females, and low female spawning biomass. The purpose of Amendment 37 was to reduce the impacts of groundfish fisheries on the red king crab stock and their habitats, thus assisting recovery of this crab stock. The Nearshore Bristol Bay Trawl Closure was designed to provide additional protections for juvenile red king crabs by minimizing impacts on emergent epifauna, such as stalked ascidians, which provides suitable habitat thought to be critical to the survival of young crabs.

Analysis

A 268-page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated June 21, 1996) was prepared for BSAI Amendment 37. Three primary management measures were analyzed, each having at least three alternatives, including the status quo, as well as several options. The other alternatives and options not chosen would have defined slightly different time/area closures, and established PSC limits of 180,000 crabs or a PSC limit that fluctuated annually with crab abundance. The alternative chosen was more conservative because a larger area may offer more protection.

Regulation Summary

Directed fishing for groundfish by vessels using trawl gear in Bristol Bay, as described in the current edition of NOAA chart 16006, is closed at all times in the area east of 162° 00' W. long., except that the Nearshore Bristol Bay Trawl Area is open to trawling from 1200 hours A.I.t., April 1 to 1200 hours A.I.t., June 15 of each year. A total of 15,279 nm² is closed year-round and 946 nm² is closed most of the year

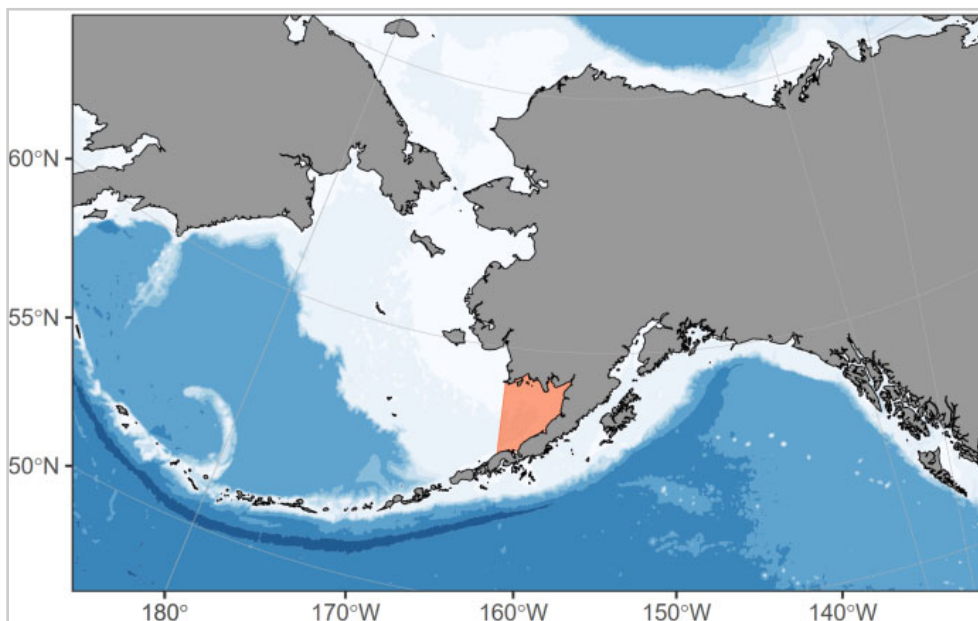
One small area within the Nearshore Bristol Bay MPA, bounded by long. 159° to 160°W and lat. 58° to 58°43'N, remains open to trawling during the period 1 April to 15 June each year. Analysis of observer data

indicated that fisheries for yellowfin sole could be prosecuted within this area and not impact crab habitat or increase crab and Pacific herring bycatch.

Conservation Value

This area establishes extensive protection for juvenile red king crab, emergent epifauna habitats, and associated biodiversity.

This conservation area, in combination with favorable environmental conditions, may have assisted in the recovery of the Bristol Bay red king crab stock. Survey information suggests that sessile benthic invertebrates used by juvenile king crab may be increasing in Bristol Bay. Further, the red king crab stock had increased following the establishment of the Nearshore Bristol Bay Trawl Closure to biomass levels associated with maximum sustainable yield, with many year classes present in the population. The red king crab fishery reopened in 1996, remaining open until it was again closed in 2021 due to low levels of abundance.



The Nearshore Bristol Bay Trawl Closure

Prohibitions

- All trawl gear
- A small area southwest of the Nushagak Peninsula is open to trawling April 1 to June 15



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
<i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	<i>Habitat & Vulnerable Species</i>	<i>BSAI GF FMP Am 21a</i>	<i>April 1994</i>	Oct. 17, 1994 59 FR 52277	Jan. 20, 1995 60 FR 4110	January 20, 1995

Purpose and Need

In 1991, the Council initiated an analysis of a proposal from the Central Bering Sea Fishermen's Association to prohibit trawling around the Pribilof Islands, and the analysis was revised several times to consider other boundary configurations. Through spatial display of NMFS survey data, groundfish observer data, and commercial crab fishery data, the analysis provided an understanding of blue king crab habitat and trawl fishing effort distribution. The area that was ultimately selected was designed to cover the majority of blue king crab distribution, while at the same time, allowing the trawl fishery access to the edge of the 100 m contour, which is economically important to trawl vessels targeting walleye pollock and Pacific cod. Pribilof Islands Habitat Conservation Area was implemented by BSAI Groundfish FMP Amendment 21a, and the area was permanently closed to all trawling and dredging year-round.

The purpose of the original amendment was to protect habitat by eliminating trawl activities in areas of importance to blue king crab and Korean hair crab stocks. In addition, the amendment would reduce bycatch of crab as well as mitigate any unobserved mortality or habitat modification that occurred due to trawling.

The prohibition was expanded in 2015 under Amendment 103 to prohibit groundfish pot gear in the area.

Analysis

A 106-page EA/RIR (final draft dated September 12, 1994) was prepared for the original amendment. Eleven alternatives were considered. The other alternatives that were not chosen would have established different area closure configurations or established a closure based on a trigger level of crab bycatch. Through spatial display of NMFS annual trawl surveys; foreign, JV, and domestic groundfish observer data; and the directed commercial crab catch, the analysis provided an understanding of blue king crab habitat, trawl fishing effort and the distribution or feeding areas of other marine species. Analysis of this information was used to delineate an area for closures that provides trawl access to the majority of groundfish resources in the Pribilof Islands area, yet affords habitat protection for blue king crab. The boundary selected does not encompass the entire range of blue king crab in the area, but does surround the habitat with highest blue king crab concentrations. Included in the boundary is habitat vital to juvenile blue king crab, populations of red king crab, Korean hair crab, and area important to foraging sea birds and marine mammals. The boundary in Alternative 8 was selected to allow trawl access to the edge of the 100 m contour and the groundfish resources to the northeast of the Pribilof Islands. The boundary was drawn with straight edges and as few corners as possible in order to facilitate ease of closure enforcement.

Regulation Summary

Directed fishing for groundfish using trawl gear or pot gear, or fishing for halibut using pot gear, is prohibited at all times in the Pribilof Islands Habitat Conservation Zone.

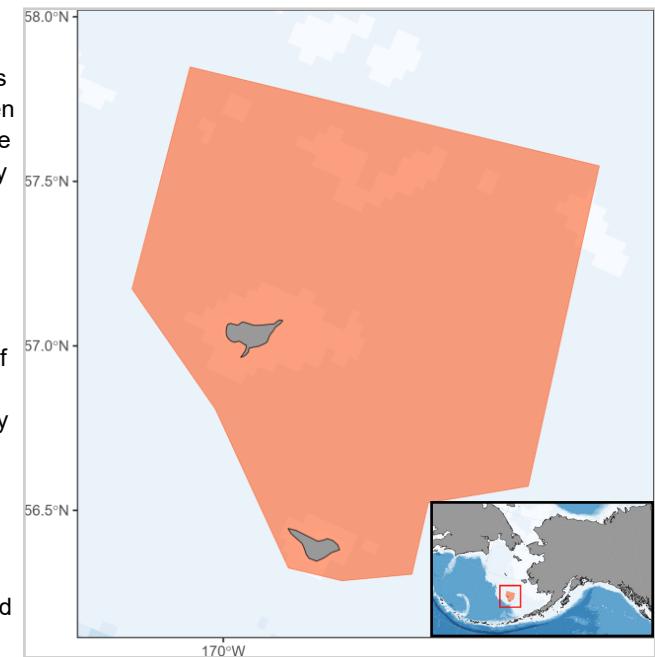
Conservation Value

This area establishes extensive protection for juvenile blue king crab and their shell hash habitats and protects important fish habitat for other species, including forage fish consumed by marine mammals and seabirds in the surrounding waters.

The blue king crab population had decreased over 90% from a peak in 1975, and the fishery was closed entirely in 1988 due to low abundance. The Pribilof Islands Conservation Area has not been successful in rebuilding the blue king crab stock, although it may have served to limit the effects of trawl fisheries on juvenile crabs and habitat. Despite the protection offered by the conservation area, and closure of the crab fisheries, the Pribilof Islands stock of blue king crab has continued to decline to very low levels and is considered to be in an "overfished" condition. On the other hand, the Pribilof Islands red king crab stock seems to have benefited from the trawl closure, with increased abundance since 1996.

Prohibitions

- Directed fishing for groundfish with trawl or pot gear
- Directed fishing for halibut using pot gear



The Pribilof Islands Habitat Conservation Zone



Red King Crab Savings Area

3,999 nm²

CCC ABM Report #

NP14

Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
<i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	<i>Habitat & Vulnerable Species</i>	<i>BSAI GF FMP Am 37</i>	<i>June 1996</i>	<i>Sept. 12, 1996 61 FR 48113</i>	<i>Dec. 16, 1996 61 FR 65985</i>	<i>January 1, 1997 Initial Implementation September 1995</i>

Purpose and Need

The Bristol Bay red king crab population collapsed in 1981 following a huge buildup in biomass and historic high catches. The cause of the collapse remains unknown, but it has been hypothesized by different scientists to be due to several factors including overfishing, discard mortality, trawl interactions, disease or other source of natural mortality, or reduced recruitment due to climatic events. State fishery managers closed the fishery in 1982 and 1983.

The 1995 NMFS bottom trawl survey indicated that exploitable biomass of Bristol Bay red king crab was at about one-fifth record levels, the lowest level since the fishery was closed after the first stock collapse in 1983. In 1994 and 1995, the Bristol Bay Red King Crab Savings Area was closed to red king crab fishing because the number of female red king crab had declined below the threshold of 8.4 million crab. The Red King Crab Savings Area was established by emergency rule in 1995 as a year-round bottom trawl and dredge closure area. This closure did not encompass the entire molting and mating period of red king crabs. The annual trawl surveys indicated little prospect for increased recruitment of mature males or females, and low female spawning biomass. The purpose of Amendment 37 was to reduce the impacts of groundfish fisheries on the red king crab stock, thus assisting recovery of this crab stock.

Analysis

A 268-page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated June 21, 1996) was prepared for BSAI Amendment 37. Three primary management measures were analyzed, each having at least three alternatives, including the status quo, as well as several options. The other alternatives and options not chosen would have defined slightly different time/area closures, and established PSC limits of 180,000 crabs or a PSC limit that fluctuated annually with crab abundance. The alternative chosen was more conservative because a larger area may offer more protection.

Regulation Summary

Directed fishing for groundfish by vessels using trawl gear other than pelagic trawl gear is prohibited at all times, except as provided at RKCSS section 2, in that part of the Bering Sea subarea defined as RKCSA.

In adopting this MPA as a permanent measure, the Council provided for a limited bottom trawl fishery to occur in the Red King Crab Savings Area south of lat. 56°10'N, an area with historically high catch rates of rock sole. To ensure that this provision would not create allocation or conservation problems, the allowance for bottom trawling would only be made in years when there is a directed fishery for Bristol Bay red king crab using pot gear. If the fishery is to be open, a red king crab bycatch limit is established for this subarea, and vessels

trawling for groundfish (mainly rock sole) can fish in the specified subarea until the bycatch limit is reached.

Red King Crab Savings Subarea (RKCSS).

(1) The RKCSS is the portion of the RKCSA between 56°00' and 56°10' N. lat. Notwithstanding other provisions of this part, vessels using non-pelagic trawl gear in the RKCSS may engage in directed fishing for groundfish in a given year, if the ADF&G had established a guideline harvest level the previous year for the red king crab fishery in the Bristol Bay area.

(2) When the RKCSS is open to vessels fishing for groundfish with nonpelagic trawl gear, NMFS, after consultation with the Council, will specify an amount of the red king crab bycatch limit annually established for the RKCSS. The amount of the red king crab bycatch limit specified for the RKCSS will not exceed an amount equivalent to 25 percent of the red king crab PSC allowance and will be based on the need to optimize the groundfish harvest relative to red king crab bycatch.

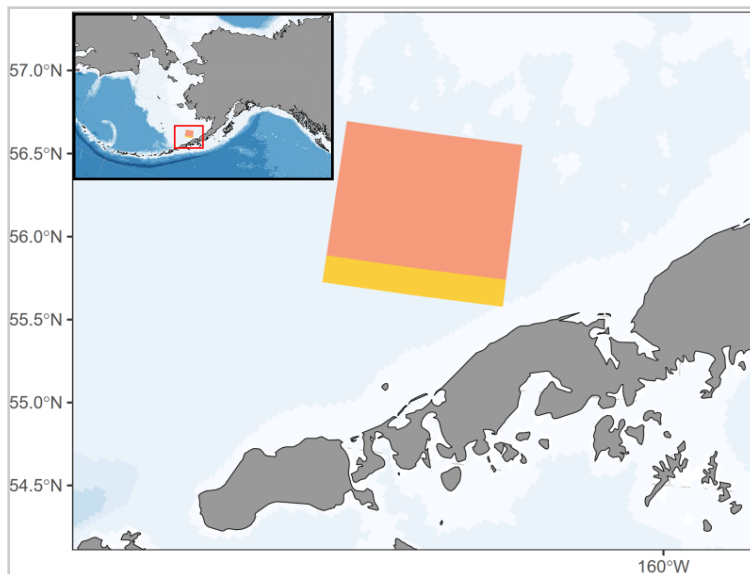
Conservation Value

This area establishes protection for adult red king crab and their habitats.

This conservation area, in combination with favorable environmental conditions, may have assisted in the recovery of the Bristol Bay red king crab stock. Survey information suggests that sessile benthic invertebrates used by juvenile king crab may be increasing in Bristol Bay. Further, the red king crab stock had increased following the establishment of the Nearshore Bristol Bay Trawl Closure to biomass levels associated with maximum sustainable yield, with many year classes present in the population. The red king crab fishery reopened in 1996, remaining open until it was again closed in 2021 due to low levels of abundance.

Prohibitions

- Nonpelagic trawl gear except in the Saving Subarea



The Red King Crab Savings Area (3,322nm²) in orange with the Savings Subarea (677 nm²) in yellow



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Biodiversity	GOA GF FMP Am 65/73	February 2005	March 22, 2006 71 FR 14470	June 28, 2006 71 FR 36694	July 28, 2006

Purpose and Need

The Magnuson-Stevens Act was amended in 1996 by the Sustainable Fisheries Act. The new Act mandates that any FMP must include a provision to describe and identify essential fish habitat (EFH) for the fishery, minimize to the extent practicable adverse effects on such habitat caused by fishing, and identify other actions to encourage the conservation and enhancement of such habitat. Essential fish habitat has been broadly defined by the Act to include “those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity”.

The Council has set the priorities of seamounts and undisturbed coral beds outside of core fishing areas important as rockfish or other species habitat as priority sites for identification as Habitats of Particular Concern (HAPC) and for additional conservation measures.

HAPC are those areas of special importance that may require additional protection from adverse effects. HAPC is defined on the basis of its ecological importance, sensitivity, exposure, and rarity of the habitat. Vertical structure provided by invertebrates (e.g. corals, sponges, mussels, rockweed and kelp) may be important habitat for fish. The purpose of Amendment 65 is to provide for improved long-term productivity of Alaska’s fisheries by controlling harvest of invertebrates, which have the potential to be developed into large-scale commercial fisheries.

Analysis

A 281 page EA/RIR/IRFA (dated with errata on April 2006) was prepared for GOA Groundfish FMP Amendments 65 and 73. This analysis looked at alternatives for 3 different actions, with the Alaska Seamount Habitat Protection Areas area initially evaluated under Action 1: Seamounts. This action had 3 alternatives: no action, Designating five seamounts as HAPC and prohibiting all bottom contact fishing by Council-managed fisheries on these seamounts, and designating 16 seamounts as HAPC and prohibiting all bottom contact fishing on these seamounts (preferred alternative).

The Council voted to prohibit all bottom contact fishing by Federally managed fisheries on the 16 seamounts in the EEZ off Alaska named on NOAA Charts: Bowers, Brown, Chirikikof, Marchand, Dall, Denson, Derickson, Dickins, Giacomini, Kodiak, Odessey, Patton, Quinn, Sirius, Unimak, and Welker seamounts. These areas make up the Alaska Seamount Habitat Protection Areas

Prohibitions

- All bottom contact gear
 - Nonpelagic trawl
 - Dredge
 - Dinglebar
 - Pot
 - Hook and line
- Anchoring

Regulation Summary

The Alaska Seamount Habitat Protection Area restricts fishing with bottom contact gear in 16 distinct seamount areas within the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Management Areas. Additionally, no federally permitted vessel may anchor in any habitat protected area.

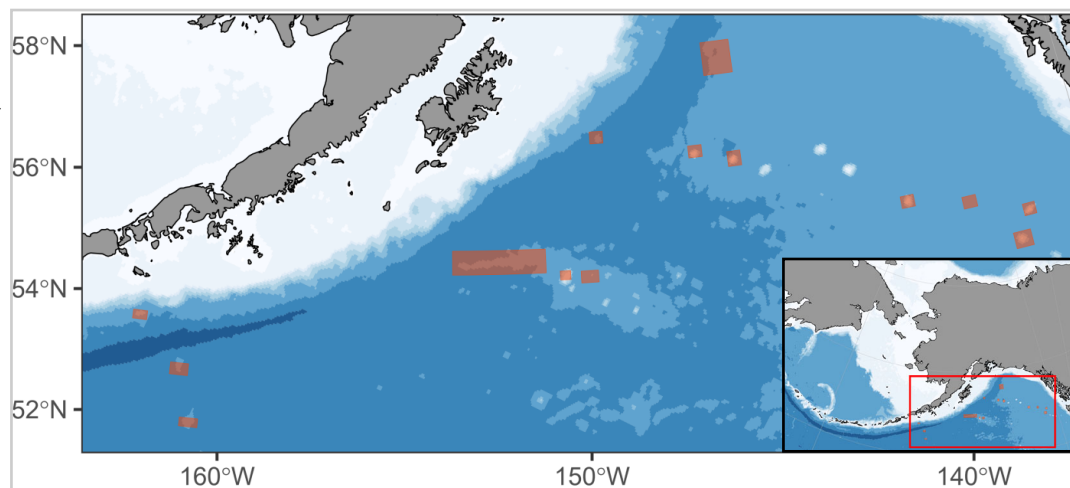
To protect these unique habitats and ecosystems, the Council voted to prohibit all bottom contact fishing by Federally managed fisheries on the 16 seamounts in the EEZ off Alaska named on NOAA charts: Bowers, Brown, Chirikikof, Marchand, Dall, Denson, Derickson, Dickins, Giacomini, Kodiak, Odessey, Patton, Quinn, Sirius, Unimak, and Welker seamounts. These MPA’s comprise the Alaska Seamount Habitat Conservation Zone with a total combined area of 5,312 nm².

Conservation Value

This area establishes full protection of unique ecosystems on all seamounts in the EEZ off Alaska.

Seamounts are considered to be HAPC areas because they may be unique ecosystems with endemic stocks or species, including corals, and thus particularly vulnerable to human activities such as fishing. Relatively diverse fish and invertebrate communities have been found on the top and flanks of several seamounts off Alaska.

The Alaska Seamount Habitat Protection Areas encompass all 16 named seamounts in Alaska’s federal waters. Seamounts provide habitat for cold-water corals and sponges, which in turn provide essential habitat for other deep sea species. These areas are used as protective nurseries by larval rockfish. The ecosystems created by seamounts are unique in the deep sea, providing the necessary habitat for many species to spread. Deep-sea seamount habitats are largely unexplored, supporting an unknown amount of biodiversity.



The Alaska Seamount Habitat Protection Areas



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Biodiversity & Vulnerable Ecosystems	BSAI GF FMP Am 65/78	February 2005	March 22, 2006 71 FR 14470	June 28, 2006 71 FR 36694	July 28, 2006

Purpose and Need

Council evaluated BSAI FMP Amendments 65 and 78, designating areas as Habitats of Particular Concern (HAPC) to highlight research areas and protect fragile coral habitats.

The 1996 amendments to the Magnuson-Stevens Act require NMFS and regional Fishery Management Councils to describe and implement essential fish habitat (EFH) within FMPs and minimize, to the extent practicable adverse effects on EFH caused by fishing and identify other actions to encourage the conservation and enhancement of EFH. EFH is defined in the Magnuson-Stevens Act as “those waters and substrate necessary to fish for spawning, breeding, feeding, or growth to maturity.” Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC) are those areas of EFH that are particularly important as fish habitat, or are particularly vulnerable to depredation.

Submersible observations identified high densities of corals and sponges in the Aleutian Islands area. The Council voted to protect these “coral garden” areas and develop a comprehensive plan for research and monitoring to improve scientific information about this area and evaluate the effectiveness of fishery management measures to protect this habitat.

Analysis

NMFS and the Council published a draft EIS in January 2004 for GOA FMP Amendments 65/73 and BSAI FMP Amendments 65/78 evaluating 3 actions: Describing and identifying EFH, adopting an approach to identify HAPCs, and Minimizing to the extent practicable the adverse effects of fishing on EFH. The preferred alternative for HAPCs was to adopt a site-based approach for HAPC designations.

In addition to the Aleutian Islands Coral Habitat Protection Areas, other HAPC sites in Amendments 65 and 73 included HAPCs for Seamounts in the EEZ and corals in the Gulf of Alaska.

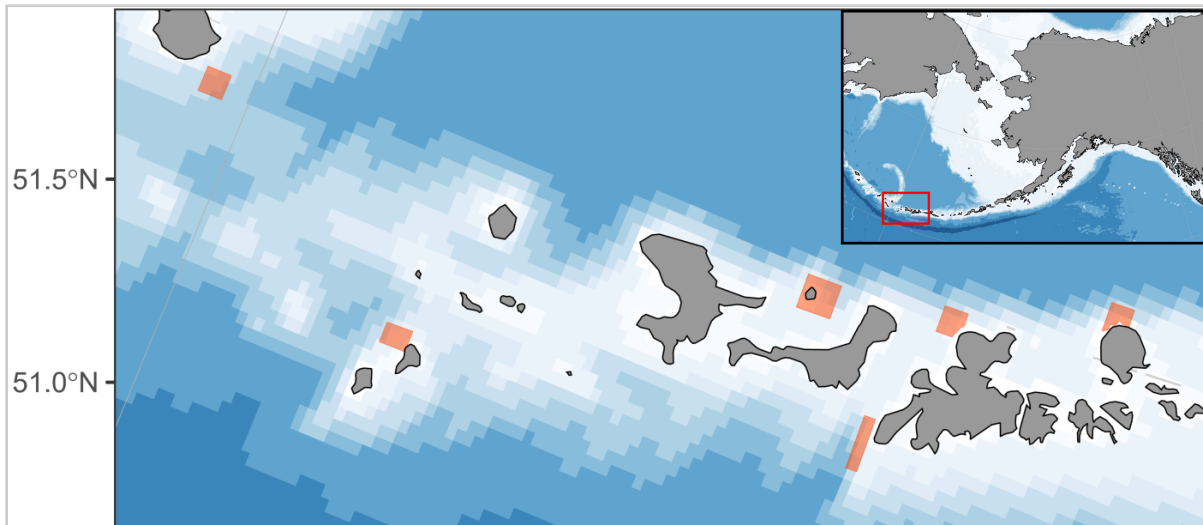
Regulation Summary

No federally permitted vessel may fish with mobile bottom contact gear in the Aleutian Islands Coral Habitat Protected Areas.

Beginning in 2006, these areas were closed to all bottom contact fishing gear (longlines, pots, trawls, etc.) and cover a total area of 377.3 km² (110 nm²). To improve monitoring and enforcement of the Aleutian Island closures, a vessel monitoring system (VMS) was required for all fishing vessels. Additionally, a comprehensive plan for research and monitoring will be developed to improve scientific information about this area, and improve and evaluate effectiveness of these fishery management measures.

Conservation Value

These areas provide protection of these undisturbed coral and sponge areas in the Aleutian Islands from potential impacts of fishing gear. Deepsea coral habitats provide breeding areas, refuge and rich feeding grounds for a wide variety of species. These six sites with especially high densities of corals and sponges (the so-called “coral garden” areas) were delineated based on submersible observations. Deep sea corals grow very slowly and can be thousands of years old. Damage to these corals can take hundreds of years to recover. The habitat created by deep sea coral and sponges provides spawning grounds for species such as rockfish and crabs.



The Aleutian Islands Coral Habitat Protection Areas

Prohibitions

- All bottom contact gear:
 - Nonpelagic trawl
 - Dredge
 - Dinglebar
 - Pot
 - Hook and line



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Biodiversity	GOA GF FMP Am 59	June 1998	June 26, 2000 65 FR 39342	Nov. 9, 2000 65 FR 67305 Corrected: Sept. 8, 2005 70 FR 53318	December 27, 2000

Purpose and Need

In 1991, a few commercial fishermen had discovered the concentrations of lingcod and rockfish on these pinnacles and experienced unusually high catch rates. Underwater investigations of the area by state fisheries biologists confirmed the large aggregations of lingcod and revealed the unique nature of the pinnacle area. State fishery biologists and managers were concerned about the risk of overfishing the concentrations of lingcod on these pinnacles and, beginning in 1997, implemented an emergency order to prohibit retention of all groundfish by commercial vessels in the vicinity of the pinnacles.

The Sitka Pinnacles area provides habitat for a variety of species and is extremely productive, in part due to its physical oceanography. Closure of this area allows a vital ecosystem to be maintained in an area surrounded by heavy

fishing pressure. The closure would also recognize the fragile nature of this rare habitat and would prevent the harvest or bycatch of species that reside there during critical portions or their life history.

Public support for establishing a reserve was widespread as a result of a public outreach initiative (that included showing underwater footage from submersible dives on the pinnacles) by the local biologists and managers. The state biologists also petitioned the Council to prohibit fishing for Federally managed species (including Pacific halibut) in the pinnacle area, thereby creating a comprehensive marine reserve.

The State of Alaska had already implemented a prohibition on fishing for lingcod and rockfish within the prescribed area for the Sitka Pinnacles Marine Reserve. The purpose of the proposed amendment 59 was to mirror this regulation for federally managed fisheries, and make the closure more comprehensive.

Analysis

A 20-page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated November 1999) was prepared for GOA amendment 59. Two alternatives including the status quo were considered. The action alternative considered two options: Option 1 - close the pinnacles area to fishing for all federally managed species and anchoring by all fishing vessels subject to federal fisheries jurisdiction; and Option 2 (preferred)- close the pinnacles area to fishing and anchoring by commercial groundfish fishing vessels and commercial and sport halibut fishing vessels.

Regulation Summary

GOA Amendment 59 prohibits fishing in an area containing important fish habitat, totaling 2.5 square nautical miles, off Cape Edgecumbe near Sitka, Alaska. This amendment closes this area to groundfish fishing and anchoring by commercial groundfish vessels, to halibut fishing and anchoring by IFQ halibut fishing vessels, to sport fishing for halibut, and to anchoring by any vessel if halibut is on board.

Regulations prohibit the use of all recreational and commercial fishing gear (except pelagic troll gear used for salmon), and anchoring by fishing vessels within a 10.3 km² (3 nm²) rectangular area encompassing the pinnacles.

Prohibitions

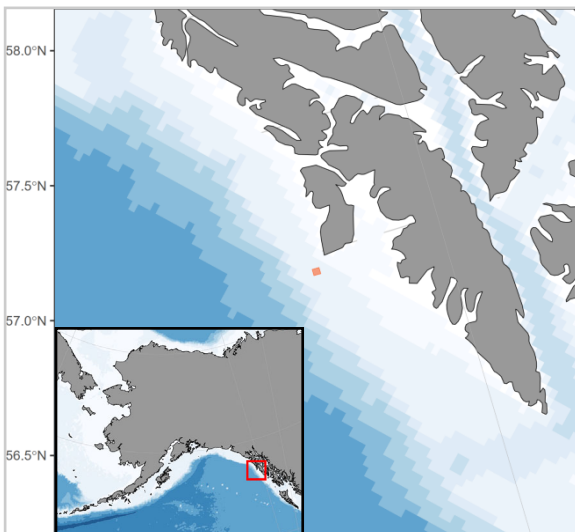
- Groundfish fishing
- Halibut fishing
- Sport fishing for halibut
- Anchoring for commercial groundfish vessels, IFQ halibut vessels, and any vessel with halibut onboard

Conservation Value

This area establishes complete protection of a nearshore pinnacle that is particularly high in biodiversity of fish, sponges and corals.

The boulder field at the base of the pinnacles provides important refuge for adult fishes including large numbers of yelloweye rockfish (*Sebastes ruberrimus*), tiger rockfish (*S. nigrocinctus*), prowlfish (*Zaprora silenus*) and lingcod (*Ophiodon elongatus*) as well as octopus.

Aggregations of small deep-water rockfishes occur here as well, including sharpchin (*S. zacentrus*), pygmy rockfish (*S. wilsoni*), and redstripe rockfish (*S. proriger*). Besides harboring adult fishes, the boulder field is also used as spawning habitat by lingcod. The sides and tops of the pinnacles are comprised of columnar basalt and Primnoa gorgonians provide ecologically important biogenic habitat for fishes on the steep walls of the pinnacles. Juvenile rockfishes occur in great abundance at the tops of the pinnacles, as do Puget Sound rockfish (*S. emphaeus*), a small rockfish that is important prey for other rockfish and lingcod. Dense assemblages of sessile invertebrates, including Metridium and other anemones, tunicates and hydrocorals provide cover for these small fishes. Adult lingcod utilize the tops of the pinnacles as seasonal feeding platforms after spawning, occurring in extremely dense aggregations during the late spring and early summer. The small size of the area and high density and feeding behavior of the lingcod make them extremely susceptible to fishing pressure. In addition to fish living directly on the habitat or using the pinnacles and associated fauna for cover, there are large schools of pelagic fishes that congregate in the water column above the pinnacles. These include black (*S. melanops*), yellowtail (*S. flavidus*), dusky (*S. ciliatus*) and widow (*S. entomelas*) rockfishes that feed on the plankton in the water column.



The Sitka Pinnacles Marine Reserve



Type: <i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	Focus: <i>Vulnerable Species</i>	Related FMP Amendment <i>BSAI GF FMP Am 70</i>	Council Action <i>October 2001</i>	Proposed Rule <i>Jan. 8, 2002 67 FR 956</i>	Final Regulations <i>May 16, 2002 67 FR 34860</i>	Effective <i>Implemented Through Regulations</i>
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Purpose and Need

In 1990, NMFS designated Steller sea lions as a threatened species under the ESA. The designation followed severe declines throughout much of the GOA and Aleutian Islands region. In 1993, NMFS designated critical habitat for the species, including the marine areas within 20 nautical miles (nm) of major rookeries and haulouts west of 144° W longitude (long.) and three large aquatic foraging areas.

In the 2001, NMFS recognized that the decline of the species was likely due to multiple factors including environmental changes such as El Nino and the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, predation, subsistence harvests, incidental take in fisheries, and competition for prey resources with pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries. This last issue, competition

with fisheries, is addressed by this action.

On November 30, 2000, NMFS issued a biological opinion on the Groundfish FMPs, which determined that the pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries were likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the western DPS of Steller sea lions and to adversely modify its critical habitat. This opinion contained a reasonable and prudent alternative (RPA) including large fishery closure areas, harvest limits, and seasonal harvest distribution for pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries. Before the RPA could be implemented, President Clinton signed Public Law 106-554 on December 21, 2000, which contained a 1-year timetable to phase in the RPA. This year provided the Council with time to develop alternative protection measures that would avoid jeopardy and adverse modification of critical habitat for



Steller Sea Lions at Cape Izigan, Unalaska Island

Steller sea lions
NMFS issued a final rule to implement Steller sea lion protection measures to avoid the likelihood that the groundfish fisheries off Alaska would jeopardize the

continued existence of the western DPS of Steller sea lions or adversely modify its critical habitat. These management measures disperse fishing effort over time and area to provide protection from potential competition for important Steller sea lion prey species in waters adjacent to rookeries and important haulouts. The intended effect of this final rule was to protect the endangered western DPS of Steller sea lions, as required under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and to conserve and manage the groundfish resources in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands management area (BSAI) and the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

Analysis

A 2,227 page SEIS (dated November 2001) was prepared for Steller Sea Lion Protection Measures in the Federal Groundfish Fisheries Off Alaska. Five alternatives were evaluated: no action allowing regulatory measures designed to protect Steller sea lions to expire, a low and slow approach establishing lower TACs and implementing measures to spread catches throughout the year, a restricted and closed area approach establishing large areas of critical habitat where fishing is prohibited and restricting catch in remaining critical habitat, an area and fishery specific approach allowing different management measures in three areas (AI, BS, and GOA) including fishery specific closed areas around rookeries and haulouts with seasons and catch apportionments (preferred alternative), and a critical habitat and catch limit approach with seasonal apportionments and harvest limits within critical habitat in proportion with

estimated fish biomass. Alternative four had 3 options: a small boat exemption in Chignik, a small boat exemption in Unalaska, and gear specific zones for GOA Pacific cod fisheries.

Regulation Summary

There are site-specific regulations that prohibit fishing for pollock, Pacific cod, or Atka mackerel by different gear types from 3 nm, 10, nm, and 20 nm around the Steller sea lion rookery or haulout area. The harvest of these prey species for Steller sea lions in these areas was evaluated, and specific fisheries were prohibited to reduce the potential of competition for prey. At some sites, there may be minor fishing effort rockfish, sablefish, and halibut. While not prohibited outside of 3 nm, there are no recreational fisheries in these areas.

Conservation Value

The rookery and haulout areas in the Aleutian Islands Subarea are designated as critical habitat for Steller sea lions and the regulations protect sea lions from any potential competition with fisheries for prey.

In addition to mitigating potential effects of fishing on Steller sea lions, the MPA's also offer localized protection to deep-sea coral and sponge communities along the Aleutian Islands. Submersible observations have found areas with complex coral and sponge communities within the areas encompassed by the MPA's, although the absolute amount of protection to this habitat has not been quantified.



Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Aleutian Islands Subarea (continued)

CCC ABM Report #

NP18

Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Vulnerable Species	BSAI GF FMP Am 70	October 2001	Jan. 8, 2002 67 FR 956	May 16, 2002 67 FR 34860	Implemented Through Regulations

Sub Areas

Yunaska Island

Directed fishing for pollock and trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 10 nm of rookery/haulout area; use of hook and line and pots for Pacific cod within 20 nm; within 20 nm for Atka mackerel.

Bumpy Point

Directed fishing for pollock and trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 3 nm of rookery/haulout area; and for Atka mackerel 3/20 nm depending on area.

Seguam Island South Side

Directed fishing for pollock and trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 3 nm of rookery/haulout area; use of hook and line and pots for Pacific cod within 20 nm; within 12 nm for Atka mackerel.

Amlia Island East, Tanadak Island (Amlia), Finch Point, Amuka Island & Rocks, and Chugulak Island

Directed fishing for pollock and trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 3 nm of rookery/haulout area; use of hook and line and pots for Pacific cod within 20 nm; within 20 nm for Atka mackerel.

Bobrof Island, Kanaga Island North Cape, Little Kanaga Strait, Great Sitkin Island, Anagaksik Island, North Cape, Amilia Island Sviech Harbor, and Sagigik Island

Directed fishing for pollock and trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 3 nm of rookery/haulout area; within 20 nm for Atka mackerel

Agligadak Island and Saddleridge Point

Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within 10 nm of rookery/haulout area; all fishing for Pacific cod within 20 nm; within 20 nm for Atka mackerel.

Ship Rock, Adak Island, and Kasatochi Island

Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within 10 nm of rookery/haulout area; within 10 nm for Pacific cod trawls and within 3 nm for hook and line and pots; within 20 nm for Atka mackerel

Alaid Island, Shemya Island, Sobaka & Vega, and Chirikof Point

Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area, trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 3nm of area, and 3 nm for Atka mackerel.

Krysi Point, Cape St. Stephan, and Cape Ivan

Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area, trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 3nm of area; and 20 nm for Atka mackerel

Sirius Point, Tanadak Island (Kiska), Nitrof Point, Unalga & Dinkum Rocks, and Kavalga Island

Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area, trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 3nm of area; and 3 nm for Atka mackerel.

Ugidak Island and Segula Island

Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area, trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 3nm of area; and for Atka mackerel 3/20 m depending on area.

Buldir Island

Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area; Pacific cod fishing is prohibited within 10 nm for all gears, and 10 nm for Atka mackerel.

Cape St. Stephan, Cape Wrangell, Gillon Point, Cape Sabak, Leif Cove, and Hasgox Point

Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area; within 10 nm for Pacific cod trawls and within 3 nm for hook and line and pots, and 10 nm for Atka mackerel.

Tag Island and Gramp Rock

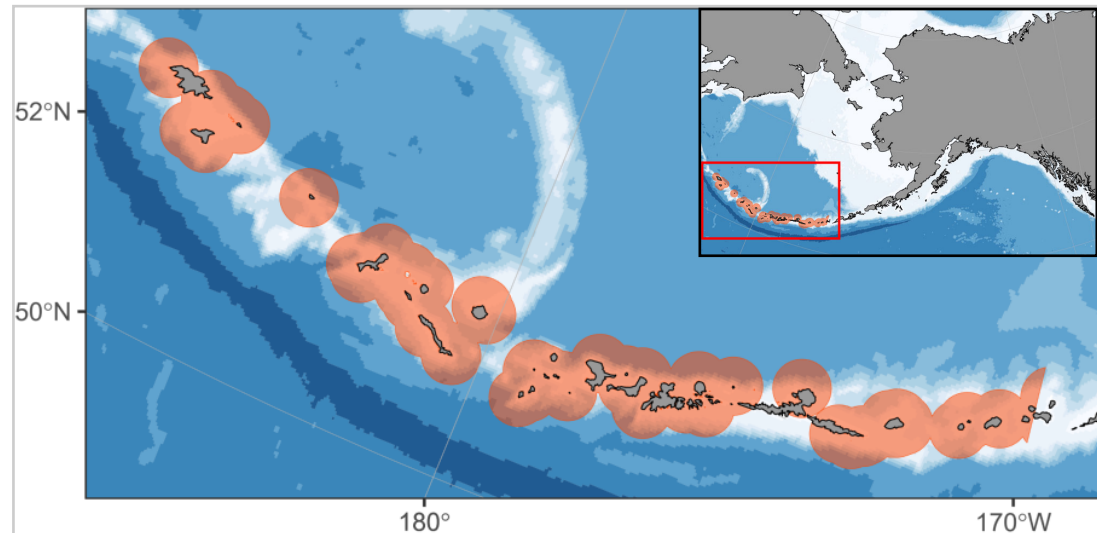
Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area; within 10 nm for Pacific cod trawls and within 3 nm for hook and line and pots; and 10/20 nm for Atka mackerel depending on area.

Ayugadak Point, Column Rocks, East Cape, Petrel Point and Pochnoi Point

Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area; within 10 nm for Pacific cod trawls and within 3 nm for hook and line and pots; and 20 nm for Atka mackerel.

Prohibitions

- * Prohibitions vary by site, but may include prohibitions on directed fishing for pollock, Pacific cod, or Atka mackerel, out to specified distances from the haulout or rookery.



Sea Lion Protection Areas in the Aleutian Islands Subarea



Type: <i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	Focus: <i>Vulnerable Species</i>	Related FMP Amendment <i>BSAI GF FMP Am 70</i>	Council Action <i>October 2001</i>	Proposed Rule <i>Jan. 8, 2002 67 FR 956</i>	Final Regulations <i>May 16, 2002 67 FR 34860</i>	Effective <i>Implemented Through Regulations</i>
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Purpose and Need

In 1990, NMFS designated Steller sea lions as a threatened species under the ESA. The designation followed severe declines throughout much of the GOA and Aleutian Islands region. In 1993, NMFS designated critical habitat for the species, including the marine areas within 20 nautical miles (nm) of major rookeries and haulouts west of 144° W longitude (long.) and three large aquatic foraging areas.

In the 2001, NMFS recognized that the current decline of the species is likely due to multiple factors including environmental changes such as El Nino and the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, predation, subsistence harvests, incidental take in fisheries, and competition for prey resources with pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries. This last issue, competition with fisheries, is addressed by this action.

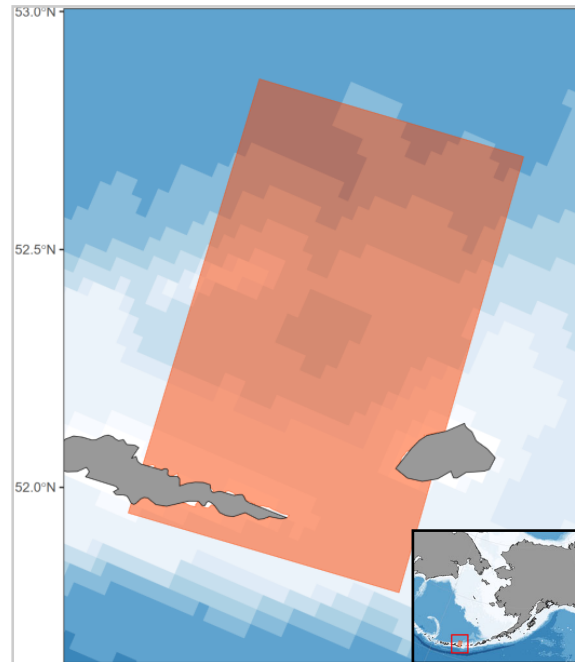
On November 30, 2000, NMFS issued a biological opinion on the Groundfish FMPs, which determined that the pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries were likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the western DPS of Steller sea lions and to adversely modify its critical habitat. This opinion contained a reasonable and prudent alternative (RPA) including large fishery closure areas, harvest limits, and seasonal harvest distribution for pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries. Before the RPA could be implemented, President Clinton signed Public Law 106-554 on December 21, 2000, which contained a 1-

year timetable to phase in the RPA. This year provided the Council with time to develop alternative protection measures that would avoid jeopardy and adverse modification of critical habitat.

Analysis

A 2227 page SEIS (dated November 2001) was prepared for Steller Sea Lion Protection Measures in the Federal Groundfish Fisheries Off Alaska. Five alternatives were evaluated: no action allowing regulatory measures designed to protect Steller sea lions to expire, a low and slow approach establishing lower TACs

and implementing measures to spread catches throughout the year, a restricted and closed area approach establishing large areas of critical habitat where fishing is prohibited and restricting catch in remaining critical habitat, an area and fishery specific approach allowing different management measures in three areas (AI, BS, and GOA) including fishery specific closed areas around rookeries and haulouts with seasons and catch apportionments (preferred alternative), and a critical habitat and catch limit approach with seasonal apportionments and harvest limits within critical habitat in proportion with estimated fish biomass. Alternative four had 3 options: a small boat exemption in Chignik, a small boat exemption in Unalaska, and gear specific zones for GOA Pacific cod fisheries



Segum Foraging Area Sea Lion Protection Area

Regulation Summary

All fishing for pollock, Pacific cod, or Atka mackerel is prohibited in the area. The harvest of these prey species for Steller sea lions in these areas was evaluated, and fisheries were prohibited to eliminate the potential of competition for prey. There are no other major commercial fisheries in the area, although rockfish, sablefish, and halibut can be targeted. While not prohibited, no recreational fishermen is likely to venture out to the Aleutian Islands.

Conservation Value

This area is critical habitat for Steller sea lions and the regulations protect sea lions from any potential competition with fisheries for prey.

In addition to mitigating potential effects of fishing on Steller sea lions, the area also offers localized protection to deep-sea coral and sponge communities along the Aleutian Islands. Submersible observations have found areas with complex coral and sponge communities within the areas encompassed by the area, although the absolute amount of protection to this habitat has not been quantified.

Prohibitions

- All directed fishing for pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel



Type: <i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	Focus: <i>Vulnerable Species</i>	Related FMP Amendment <i>BSAI GF FMP Am 70</i>	Council Action <i>October 2001</i>	Proposed Rule <i>Jan. 8, 2002 67 FR 956</i>	Final Regulations <i>May 16, 2002 67 FR 34860</i>	Effective <i>Implemented Through Regulations</i>
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Purpose and Need

In 1990, NMFS designated Steller sea lions as a threatened species under the ESA. The designation followed severe declines throughout much of the GOA and Aleutian Islands region. In 1993, NMFS designated critical habitat for the species, including the marine areas within 20 nautical miles (nm) of major rookeries and haulouts west of 144° W longitude (long.) and three large aquatic foraging areas.

In the 2001, NMFS recognized that the current decline of the species is likely due to multiple factors including environmental changes such as El Nino and the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, predation, subsistence harvests, incidental take in fisheries, and competition for prey resources with pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries. This last issue, competition with fisheries, is addressed by this action.

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Analysis

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Regulation Summary

All waters within the Bogoslof area are closed to directed fishing for pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel by vessels named on a Federal Fisheries Permit.

Bogoslof Pacific Cod Exemption Area

Catcher vessels less than 60 ft. LOA using jig of hook-and-line gear for directed fishing for Pacific cod are exempt from the Pacific cod fishing prohibition. If the Regional Administrator determines that 113 mt of Pacific cod have been caught by these vessels, the Regional Administrator will prohibit further directed fishing for Pacific cod in this area

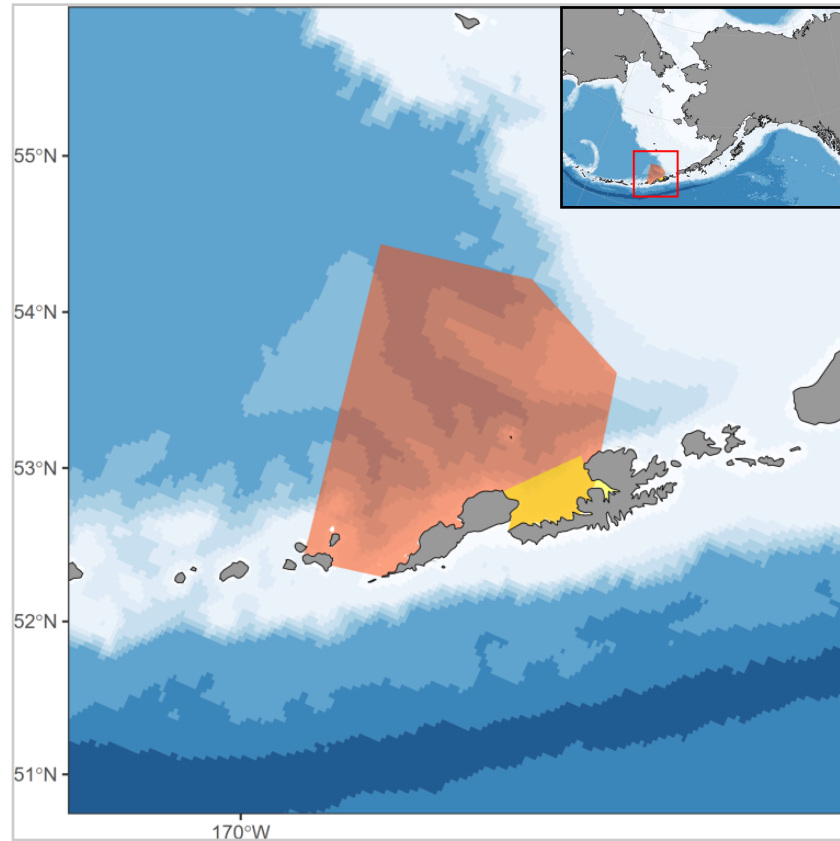
Prohibitions

- Directed fishing for pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel

Conservation Value

This area is critical habitat for Steller sea lions and the regulations protect sea lions from any potential competition with fisheries for prey.

In addition to mitigating potential effects of fishing on Steller sea lions, the area also provides localized protection to deep-sea coral and sponge communities along the Aleutian Islands. Submersible observations have found areas with complex coral and sponge communities within the areas encompassed, although the absolute amount of protection to this habitat has not been quantified.



Bogoslof Area Sea Lion Protection Area in orange with the Pacific Cod Exemption area in yellow



Type: <i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	Focus: <i>Vulnerable Species</i>	Related FMP Amendment <i>BSAI GF FMP Am 70</i>	Council Action <i>October 2001</i>	Proposed Rule <i>Jan. 8, 2002 67 FR 956</i>	Final Regulations <i>May 16, 2002 67 FR 34860</i>	Effective <i>Implemented Through Regulations</i>
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Purpose and Need

In 1990, NMFS designated Steller sea lions as a threatened species under the ESA. The designation followed severe declines throughout much of the GOA and Aleutian Islands region. In 1993, NMFS designated critical habitat for the species, including the marine areas within 20 nautical miles (nm) of major rookeries and haulouts west of 144° W longitude (long.) and three large aquatic foraging areas.

In the 2001, NMFS recognized that the current decline of the species is likely due to multiple factors including environmental changes such as El Nino and the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, predation, subsistence harvests, incidental take in fisheries, and competition for prey resources with pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries. This last issue, competition with fisheries, is addressed by this action.

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Analysis

A 2227 page SEIS (dated November 2001) was prepared for Steller Sea Lion Protection Measures in the Federal Groundfish Fisheries Off Alaska. Five alternatives were evaluated: no action allowing regulatory measures designed to protect Steller sea lions to expire, a low and slow approach establishing lower TACs and implementing measures to spread catches throughout the year, a restricted and closed area approach establishing large areas of critical habitat where fishing is prohibited and restricting catch in remaining critical habitat, an area and fishery specific approach allowing different management measures in three areas (AI, BS, and GOA) including fishery specific closed areas around rookeries and haulouts with seasons and catch apportionments (preferred alternative), and a critical habitat and catch limit approach with seasonal apportionments and harvest limits within critical habitat in proportion with estimated fish biomass. Alternative four had 3 options: a small boat exemption in Chignik, a small boat exemption in Unalaska, and gear specific zones for GOA Pacific cod fisheries

Regulation Summary

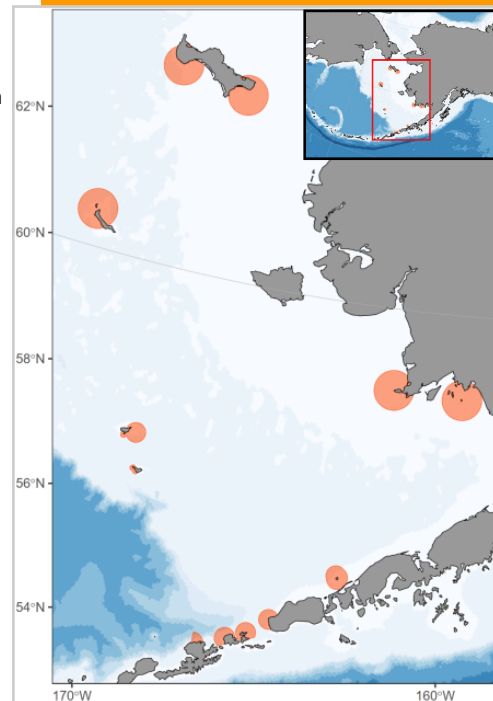
There are site-specific regulations that prohibit fishing for pollock and Pacific cod, or all groundfish, by different gear types from 7 nm, 10, nm, and 20 nm around the Steller sea lion rookery or haulout area. The harvest of these prey species for Steller sea lions in these areas was evaluated, and specific fisheries were prohibited to reduce the potential of competition for prey. At some sites, there may be minor fishing effort for halibut using hook and line gear. While not prohibited, there are no recreational fisheries in these areas.

Conservation Value

The rookery and haulout areas are designated as critical habitat for Steller sea lions and the regulations protect sea lions from any potential competition with fisheries for prey.

Prohibitions

- Prohibition varies by area but may include:
 - Directed fishing for pollock
 - Directed fishing for Pacific cod
 - Fishing for all groundfish



Bering Sea Subarea Sea Lion Protection Areas

Sub Areas

South Punuk Island, St. Lawrence Island Southwest Cape, Hall Island, Cape Newenham, and Round Island

Directed fishing for pollock and Pacific cod prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area

Sea Lion Rock, St. Paul Island Northeast Point, Dalnoi Point, St. and George Island South Rookery

Directed fishing for pollock and Pacific cod prohibited within 3 nm of rookery/haulout area

Bishop Point, and Reef-lava

Directed fishing for pollock and Pacific cod using trawls and hook and line gear is prohibited within 10 nm of rookery/haulout area; Pacific cod fishing with pots prohibited within 3 nm.

Walrus Island (Pribilofs), Billings Head, Cape Serichef, and Amak Island and rocks

Directed fishing for pollock and Pacific cod using trawls is prohibited within 10 nm of rookery/haulout area; Pacific cod fishing with hook and line and pots prohibited within 3 nm.

Sea Lion Rock (Amak)

Directed fishing for pollock and Pacific cod using trawls is prohibited within 10 nm of rookery/haulout area; Pacific cod fishing with hook and line and pots prohibited within 7 nm.

Uliaga, Kagamil, Agudak Island, Cape Aslik, and Fire Island

Fishing for all groundfish species is prohibited within the Bogoslof Area where this rookery/haulout area is.



Type: <i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	Focus: <i>Vulnerable Species</i>	Related FMP Amendment <i>BSAI GF FMP Am 70</i>	Council Action <i>October 2001</i>	Proposed Rule <i>Jan. 8, 2002 67 FR 956</i>	Final Regulations <i>May 16, 2002 67 FR 34860</i>	Effective <i>Implemented Through Regulations</i>
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Purpose and Need

In 1990, NMFS designated Steller sea lions as a threatened species under the ESA. The designation followed severe declines throughout much of the GOA and Aleutian Islands region. In 1993, NMFS designated critical habitat for the species, including the marine areas within 20 nautical miles (nm) of major rookeries and haulouts west of 144° W longitude (long.) and three large aquatic foraging areas.

In the 2001, NMFS recognized that the current decline of the species is likely due to multiple factors including environmental changes such as El Nino and the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, predation, subsistence harvests, incidental take in fisheries, and competition for prey resources with pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries. This last issue, competition with fisheries, is addressed by this action.

On November 30, 2000, NMFS issued a biological opinion on the Groundfish FMPs, which determined that the pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries were likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the western DPS of Steller sea lions and to adversely modify its critical habitat. This opinion contained a reasonable and prudent alternative (RPA) including large fishery closure areas, harvest limits, and seasonal harvest distribution for pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries. Before the RPA could be implemented, President Clinton signed Public Law 106-554 on December 21, 2000, which contained a 1-year timetable to phase in the RPA. This year provided the Council with time to develop alternative protection measures that would avoid jeopardy and adverse modification of critical habitat for Steller sea lions

Analysis

A 2227 page SEIS (dated November 2001) was prepared for Steller Sea Lion Protection Measures in the Federal Groundfish Fisheries Off Alaska. Five alternatives were evaluated: no action allowing regulatory measures designed to protect Steller sea lions to expire, a low and slow approach establishing lower TACs and implementing measures to spread catches throughout the year, a restricted and closed area approach establishing large areas of critical habitat where fishing is prohibited and restricting catch in remaining critical habitat, an area and fishery specific approach allowing different management measures in three areas (AI, BS, and GOA) including fishery specific closed areas around rookeries and haulouts with seasons and catch apportionments (preferred alternative), and a critical habitat and catch limit approach with seasonal apportionments and harvest limits within critical habitat in proportion with estimated fish biomass. Alternative four had 3 options: a small boat exemption in Chignik, a small boat exemption in Unalaska, and gear specific zones for GOA Pacific cod fisheries

Regulation Summary

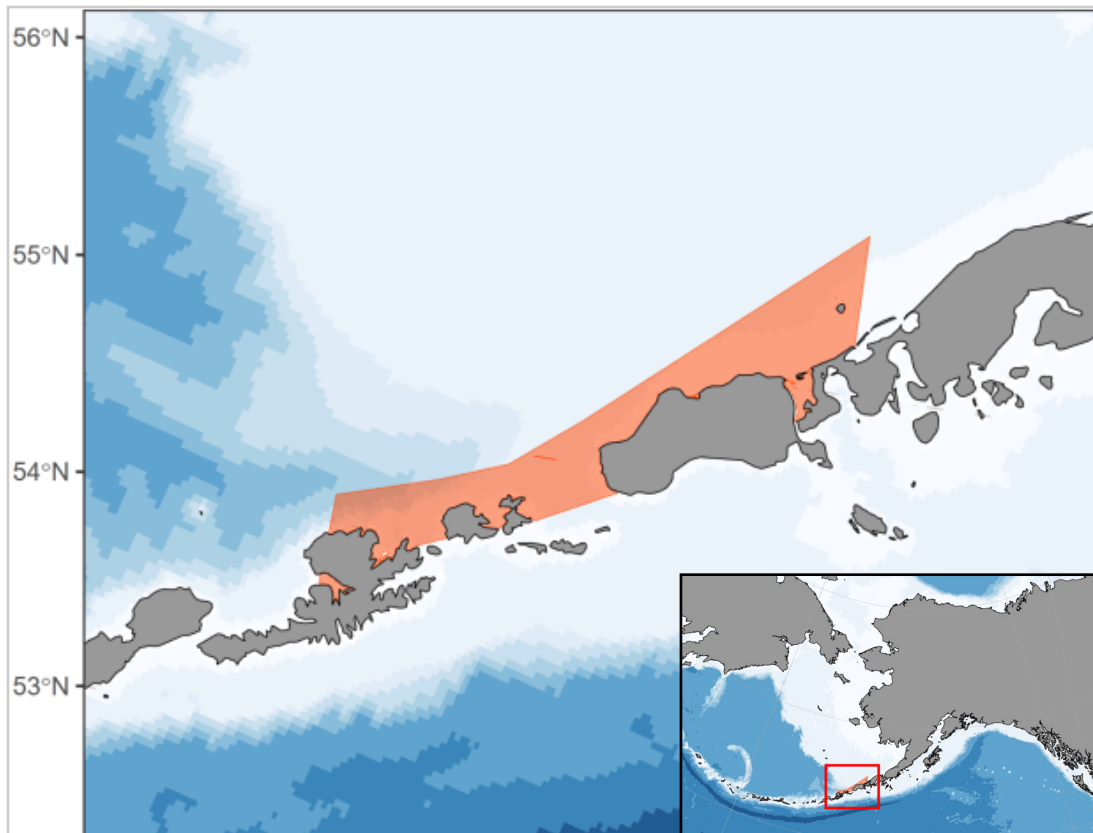
Fishing for pollock is prohibited in the area during the pollock A-season (January 20-June 10) for vessels named on a Federal Fisheries Permit.

Prohibitions

- Directed fishing for pollock in the A season

Conservation Value

The regulations in this area protect Steller sea lions from any potential competition with fisheries for pollock during the winter months.



Bering Sea Pollock Restriction Area



Type: <i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	Focus: <i>Vulnerable Species</i>	Related FMP Amendment <i>BSAI GF FMP Am 70</i>	Council Action <i>October 2001</i>	Proposed Rule <i>Jan. 8, 2002 67 FR 956</i>	Final Regulations <i>May 16, 2002 67 FR 34860</i>	Effective <i>Implemented Through Regulations</i>
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Purpose and Need

In 1990, NMFS designated Steller sea lions as a threatened species under the ESA. The designation followed severe declines throughout much of the GOA and Aleutian Islands region. In 1993, NMFS designated critical habitat for the species, including the marine areas within 20 nautical miles (nm) of major rookeries and haulouts west of 144° W longitude (long.) and three large aquatic foraging areas.

In the 2001, NMFS recognized that the current decline of the species is likely due to multiple factors including environmental changes such as El Nino and the Pacific Decadal Oscillation, predation, subsistence harvests, incidental take in fisheries, and competition for prey resources with pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel fisheries. This last issue, competition with fisheries, is addressed by this action.

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Analysis

A 2227 page SEIS (dated November 2001) was prepared for Steller Sea Lion Protection Measures in the Federal Groundfish Fisheries Off Alaska. Five alternatives were evaluated: no action allowing regulatory measures designed to protect Steller sea lions to expire, a low and slow approach establishing lower TACs and implementing measures to spread catches throughout the year, a restricted and closed area approach establishing large areas of critical habitat where fishing is prohibited and restricting catch in remaining critical habitat, an area and fishery specific approach allowing different management measures in three areas (AI, BS, and GOA) including fishery specific closed areas around rookeries and haulouts with seasons and catch apportionments (preferred alternative), and a critical habitat and catch limit approach with seasonal apportionments and harvest limits within critical habitat in proportion with estimated fish biomass. Alternative four had 3 options: a small boat exemption in Chignik, a small boat exemption in Unalaska, and gear specific zones for GOA Pacific cod fisheries

Regulation Summary

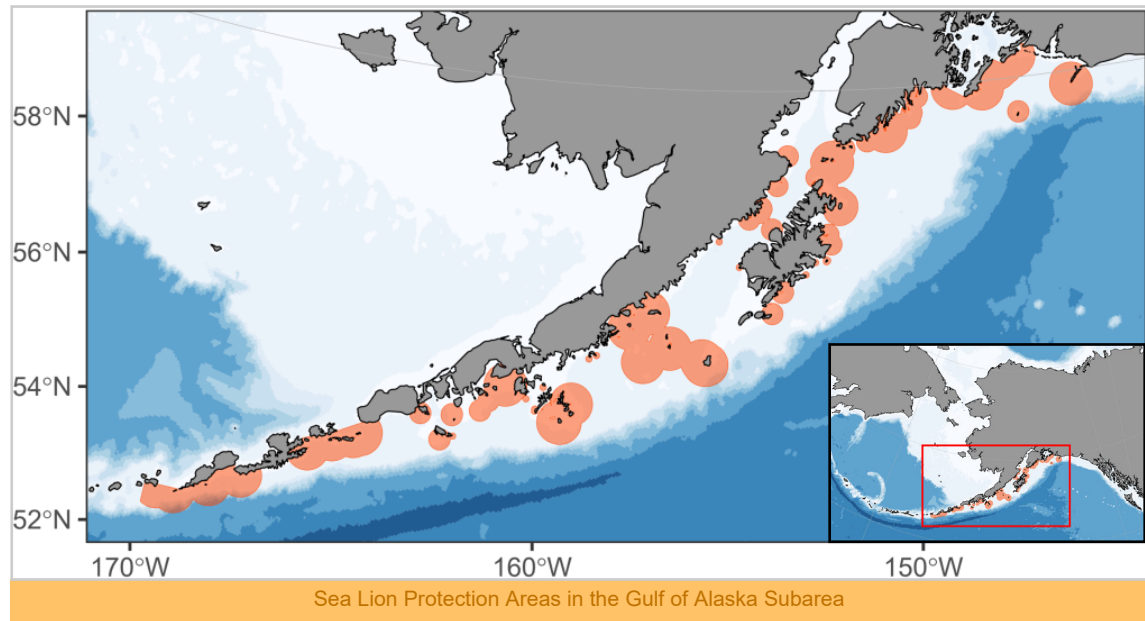
There are site-specific regulations that prohibit fishing for pollock and Pacific cod by different gear types from 10, nm and 20 nm around the Steller sea lion rookery or haulout areas. In some areas, all trawling is prohibited for any species. The harvest of these prey species for Steller sea lions in these areas was evaluated, and specific fisheries were prohibited to reduce the potential of competition for prey. At some sites, there may also be fishing effort for halibut using hook and line gear. Recreational fisheries are very limited in these areas.

Conservation Value

The rookery and haulout areas are designated as critical habitat for Steller sea lions and the regulations protect sea lions from any potential competition with fisheries for prey.

Prohibitions

- Prohibitions vary by site, and may include directed fishing for pollock and Pacific cod by certain gears out to various distances from the rookery or haulout.



Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas-Gulf of Alaska Subarea (continued)

CCC ABM Report #

NP23

Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Vulnerable Species	BSAI GF FMP Am 70	October 2001	Jan. 8, 2002 67 FR 956	May 16, 2002 67 FR 34860	Implemented Through Regulations

Sub Areas

Cape Barnabas and Castle Rock

Directed fishing for pollock and fishing for Pacific cod with trawl and hook and line is prohibited within 3 nm of rookery/haulout area

Lighthouse Rocks, Sutwik Island, Chowit Island, Nagai Rocks and Chirikof Island

Directed fishing for pollock and Pacific cod is prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area

Cape Ikolik, Pinnacle Rock, Sea Lion Rocks, Mountain Point, The Whaleback, Spitz Island, and Mitrofanina

Directed fishing for pollock and Pacific cod is prohibited within 3 nm of rookery/haulout area

Bird Island, South Rocks, Suchilnoi Rocks, Olga Rocks, Takli Island, Cape Kuliak, Cape Gull, Cape Sitkinak, Shakun Rocks, Twoheaded Island, Cape Douglas, Latax Rocks, Ushagat Island Southwest, Sea Otter Island, Long Island, Sud Island, Cape Chiniak, Sea Lion Rocks (Marmot), Nagahut Rocks, Perl, Gore Point, Steep Point, Seal Rocks (Kenai), Chiswell Islands, Rugged Island, and Middleton Island

Directed fishing for pollock and trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 10 nm of rookery/haulout area

Marmot Island

Directed fishing for pollock and trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 15/20 nm of rookery/haulout area, depending on season; Pacific cod fishing with hook and line and pots within 10 nm.

Jude Island, Point Erlington, Cape Hinchinbrook, Hook Point, and Cape St. Elias

Directed fishing for pollock and trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area

Sugerloaf Island, and Outer (Pye) Island

Directed fishing for pollock and trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area; Pacific cod fishing with hook and line and pots within 10 nm.

Cheernabura Island, Atkins Island, Wooded Island (Fish Island), and Seal Rocks (Cordova)

Directed fishing for pollock and trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area; Pacific cod fishing with hook and line and pots within 3 nm

Gull Point and Ugak Island

Directed fishing for pollock and trawling for Pacific cod prohibited within 10/3 nm of rookery/haulout area, depending on season

Clubbing Rocks (South) and Clubbing Rocks (North)

Directed fishing for pollock prohibited within 10 nm of rookery/haulout area; within 10 nm for Pacific cod trawls and within 3 nm for hook and line and pots.

Caton Island

Directed fishing for pollock, and fishing for Pacific cod with trawls or hook and line is prohibited within 3 nm of rookery/haulout area

Kak Island

Directed fishing for pollock, and trawling and hook and line fishing for Pacific cod prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area; fishing for Pacific cod with pot gear within 3 nm.

Chuginadak Island

Directed fishing for pollock, and trawling and pot fishing for Pacific cod prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area; Fishing for Pacific cod with hook and line gear is seasonally prohibited within 20/10 nm.

Samalga, Ogchul Island, Polivnoi Point, Emerald Island, Cape Izigan, Cape Sedanka, Old Man Rocks, Cape Morgan, Rootok, Tanginak Island, Tigalda Rocks Northeast, Aitak, and Ugamak Island, Round (GOA)

Directed fishing for pollock, and trawling and pot fishing for Pacific cod prohibited within 20 nm of rookery/haulout area; fishing for Pacific cod with hook and line gear within 10 nm.

Perry Island, The Needle, Point Eleanor, and Glacier Island

Fishery restricted by Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game

Paule Bay and Cape Ugat

Trawling for Pacific cod is prohibited within 10 nm of rookery/haulout area



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Ecosystem Conservation	Vulnerable Species	BSAI GF FMP Am 13	June 1989	Dec. 12, 1989 54 FR 51042	Feb 12, 1990 55 FR 4839	February 7, 1990
		BSAI GF FMP Am 17	August 1991	Dec. 4, 1991 56 FR 63487	March 26, 1992 57 FR 10430	April 24, 1992

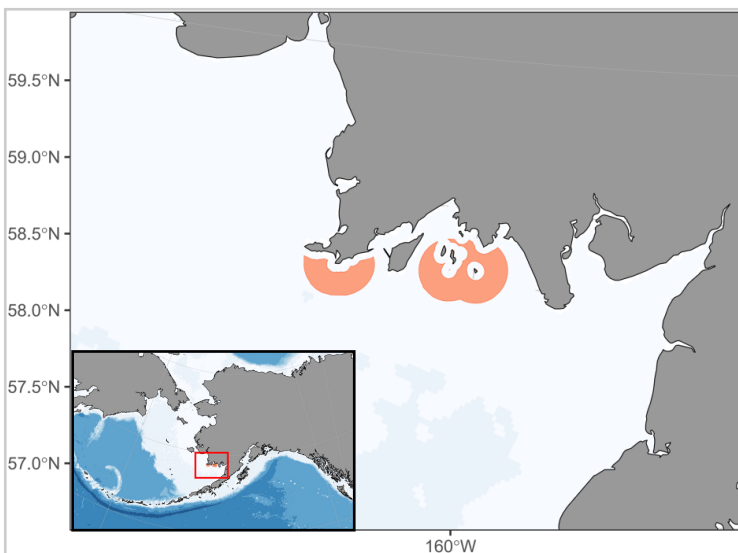
Purpose and Need

The Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary was established to protect one of the largest terrestrial haulout sites for Pacific walrus in North America. Round Island, Cape Peirce, and the Twins (Newenham and Seniavin) are the four major terrestrial haulouts for walrus in Alaska. Walrus can be disturbed by the sight, sound, or smell of vessels or aircraft, or other human activity and it is clear that vessel traffic in Bristol Bay has the potential to disturb walrus and other marine mammals in the area. Some recent incidents of walrus stampeding off of terrestrial haulouts in northern Alaska and Russia have been reported related to human disturbance. In the late 1980s, the Council responded to requests from Bristol Bay residents to limit fishing activities near some walrus haulouts. After considering the possible impacts on walrus related to noise generated by fishing activities, the Council adopted 12 nm

closures around the Walrus Islands and Cape Peirce from April 1 through September 30, when walrus are likely to be present. The State of Alaska established a 3 nm year-round closure around Round Island, within the Walrus Islands State Game Sanctuary in part to protect this haulout from human disturbance.

This MPA, which totals 3,087 km² (900 nm²), was first established as a temporary measure in 1989 under Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Groundfish FMP Amendment 13, in response to a 50% decline in then number of walrus hauled out on Round Island and was implemented as a permanent measure under Amendment 17 in 1992. In conjunction with the Federal action, a no-transit zone, except by permit, was established by the Alaska Board of Game for vessels within 5.6 km (3 nm) of Round Island in the Walrus Island State Game Sanctuary.

An allowance for fishing vessels to transit the protection areas was added under Amendment 107 to the BSAI FMP to allow vessels with a FFP to transit the walrus protection area closures at Round Island and Cape Peirce without surrendering their FFP.



The Walrus Protection Areas

Analysis

A 193 page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated July 21, 1989) was prepared for BSAI FMP Amendment 13. Alternatives evaluated included the status quo and closing groundfish fishing waters from 3-12 nm around the Walrus Islands and Cape Peirce from April 1– September 30.

A 71 page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated May 14, 1991) was prepared for BSAI FMP Amendment 17. Alternatives evaluated included the status quo, walrus haulout buffer zones within 3-12 nm with seasonal fishery closures around three haulout sites, and a seasonal fishing closure north of a line from Cape Constantine to Cape Peirce.

Regulation Summary

From April 1 through September 30 of each calendar year, vessels designated on a Federal fisheries permit issued are prohibited from deploying fishing gear in the Bering Sea subarea between 3 and 12 nm seaward off Round Island and The Twins, and around Cape Peirce. Federal fish vessels may not enter this area during this period except for designated areas off of Round Island and Cape Pierce from April 1 through August 15.

Prohibitions

- Deploying fishing gear from April 1 to September 30.

Walrus Island State Game Sanctuary
Established 1960

Conservation Value

The Walrus Protection Areas are important haulout and feeding areas for Pacific walrus. The closures protect walrus and their prey (surf clams) from disturbance.

These protected islands provide haulouts to male walrus as the ice pack recedes northward in the spring. They allow walrus in Bristol Bay to rest for several days between feeding forays. Counts of walrus resting on Round island have been as high as 14,000 in a single day. Harbor seals also use these haulouts year-round and Steller's sea lions can be found on the haulouts between May and November.

The Walrus Islands closures may have substantially reduced effects of acoustic disturbance based on observations that more Pacific walrus occupy the haulouts throughout the summer now than before the closures. Nevertheless, it may be impossible to ascertain the impact of the MPA on the Pacific walrus population as a whole. The population had been reduced by commercial exploitation to a low in the mid 1950's, and by the late 1970's it had apparently recovered to pre-exploitation levels of 200,000 to 250,000 animals.

Gray whales feed offshore in these protected waters during their northward spring migration. Humpback and minke whales are also sighted in these waters along with orca, often using the area to hunt walrus.



Type: <i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	Focus: <i>Habitat & Vulnerable Species</i>	Related FMP Amendment GOA GF FMP Am 60	Council Action September 2000	Proposed Rule June 13, 2002 67 FR 40680	Final Regulations Nov. 27, 2002 67 FR 70859	Effective December 27, 2002
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Purpose and Need

The Cook Inlet Non-Pelagic Trawl Closure established under Amendment 60 to the GOA FMP was created to protect king and Tanner crab stocks which had not recovered from the dramatic declines. The king crab population in the area declined in the 1980s, with the commercial fishery closing in 1984. Tanner crab populations declined in the late 1980s as well with the commercial fishery closing in 1991 in the western portion and 1994 in the eastern portion of the closed area. While non-pelagic trawl vessels had not regularly targeted the area since the 1980s, the area was closed in anticipation of non-pelagic trawl effort in the area as a precautionary measure.

Analysis

An 80-page EA/RIR/FRFA (dated February 14, 2002) was prepared for Amendment 60 to the GOA FMP to prohibit non-pelagic trawl gear in Cook Inlet. Seven alternatives were considered: No action, Prohibiting the use of non-pelagic trawl gear in Federal waters of Cook Inlet (preferred alternative), Deferring management of groundfish in Federal waters of Cook Inlet to the State of Alaska, removing waters of Cook Inlet from the GOA FMP, requiring observer coverage for vessels fishing for groundfish in Federal waters of Cook Inlet, implementing time and area closures, and requiring an ADF&G Commissioner's Permit.

Regulation Summary

No person may use a non-pelagic trawl in waters of the EEZ of Cook Inlet north of a line from Cape Douglas (58°51.10' N. lat.) to Point Adam (59°15.27' N. lat.).

Conservation Value

This area establishes extensive protection for vulnerable crab and their habitats.

Prohibitions

- Nonpelagic trawl gear



Red king crab. Image courtesy of NOAA



The Cook Inlet Non-Pelagic Trawl Closure



Marmot Bay Tanner Crab Protection Area

112 nm²

CCC ABM Report #
NP26

Type: <i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	Focus: <i>Habitat & Vulnerable Species</i>	Related FMP Amendment <i>GOA GF FMP Am 89</i>	Council Action <i>October 2009</i>	Proposed Rule <i>June 17, 2013 78 FR 36150</i>	Final Regulations <i>Jan. 16, 2014 79 FR 2794</i>	Effective <i>February 18, 2014</i>
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Purpose and Need

Tanner crab is a prohibited species in the Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries. Directed fisheries for Tanner crab in the Gulf of Alaska were fully allocated under the limited entry system. At the time, no specific conservation measures existed in the GOA to address adverse interactions between both the trawl and fixed gear sectors targeting groundfish and Tanner crab. In the Bering Sea, however, trawl sweep modifications had been effective at reducing unobserved prohibited species catch (PSC) mortality of Tanner crab while maintaining flatfish catch. Additionally, low observer coverage in GOA groundfish fisheries limited confidence in the assessment of Tanner crab PSC in those fisheries, and the Council recommended that PSC catch estimation be improved either by this action or by the restructured observer program.

Analysis

An 161-page EA/RIR/IRFA (Secretarial review draft dated May 2013) was prepared for the portion of Amendment 89 regarding area closures for tanner crab protection in the GOA groundfish fisheries. The analysis included the potential impacts of four alternatives to close specific areas of the Central GOA to the use of trawl gear and pot gear or, either in addition to or in lieu of a closure, to require additional observer coverage in these areas. Included in the alternatives were options to apply the

closures year-round or seasonally, to pot and/or trawl gear types. Additionally, the analysis also examined exempting some vessels from the area closures if they met specific conditions such as using approved gear modifications. Lastly, the analysis examined several alternatives for increased observer coverage requirements to improve estimates of PSC in the closed area, as a basis for future management action as necessary. Part of the Council's preferred alternative was to develop a trailing amendment to require trawl vessels to use approved modified gear, such as trawl sweep modifications, in the Central GOA nonpelagic trawl fishery. Council staff prepared a 95-page EA/RIR/IRFA to examine the efficacy of requiring the use of modified nonpelagic trawl gear. During rulemaking, the 2 actions were recombined into a single amendment.

Regulation Summary

No federally permitted vessel may fish with trawl gear in the Marmot Bay Tanner Crab Protection Area, except federally permitted vessels directed fishing for pollock using pelagic trawl gear.

Amendment 89 closes year-round the Marmot Bay Tanner Crab Protection Area to vessels using trawl gear to target groundfish, with the exception of vessels using pelagic trawl gear to target pollock.

Conservation Value

This area establishes protection for vulnerable Tanner crab and their habitats. Also, this closure reduces the incidental catch of Tanner crab in the Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries. The negative impacts of the non-pelagic trawl gear on Tanner crab and Tanner crab habitat in the Central GOA are reduced due to the closure. Nevertheless, it is not well understood how important trawl interactions are relative to other factors in the environment that may be limiting recovery of the stock and resumption of a stable and profitable Tanner crab fishery.

Prohibitions

- All fishing with trawl gear, except for pollock fishing with pelagic trawl gear



The Marmot Bay Tanner Crab Protection Area



Type: <i>Ecosystem Conservation</i>	Focus: <i>Biodiversity</i>	Related FMP Amendments <i>Arctic FMP</i> <i>BSAI King/Tanner Crab FMP Am 29</i>	Council Action <i>February 2009</i>	Proposed Rule <i>June 10, 2009 74 FR 27498</i>	Final Regulations <i>Nov 3, 2009 74 FR 56734</i>	Effective <i>August 17, 2009</i>
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Purpose and Need

The Council established the Arctic Management Area in order to put in place federal fisheries management that complied with the Magnuson-Stevens Act before an unregulated commercial fishery could emerge and cause adverse impacts to the marine resources and ecosystems of Alaska's Arctic EEZ. This was necessary to protect an area stressed by climate change that could become further stressed from potentially unregulated, or inadequately regulated, commercial fishing in the Arctic. The action prevented commercial fisheries from developing in the Arctic without the required management framework and scientific information on the fish stocks, their characteristics, and the implications of fishing for the stocks and related components of the ecosystem.

Analysis

A 385-page EA/RIR/FRFA (dated August 2009) was prepared for the Arctic Fishery Management Plan and Amendment 29 to the Fishery Management Plan for Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands King and Tanner. Four alternatives were evaluated: No action, adopting an Arctic FMP initially closing the entire Arctic Management Area to commercial fishing and amending the crab FMP to terminate its geographic coverage at the Bering Strait (the preferred alternative), adopting an Arctic FMP initially closing the entire Arctic Management Area to nearly all commercial fishing and amending the crab FMP to terminate its

geographic coverage at the Bering Strait while exempting a red king crab fishery in the Chukchi Sea the size and scope of the historic, and initially closing the entire Arctic Management Area to commercial fishing all species except crab covering the area north of Point Hope for crab and north of the Bering Strait for all other species while exempting from the Arctic FMP a red king crab fishery in the Chukchi Sea the size and scope of the historic fishery under authority of the Crab FMP.

Regulation Summary

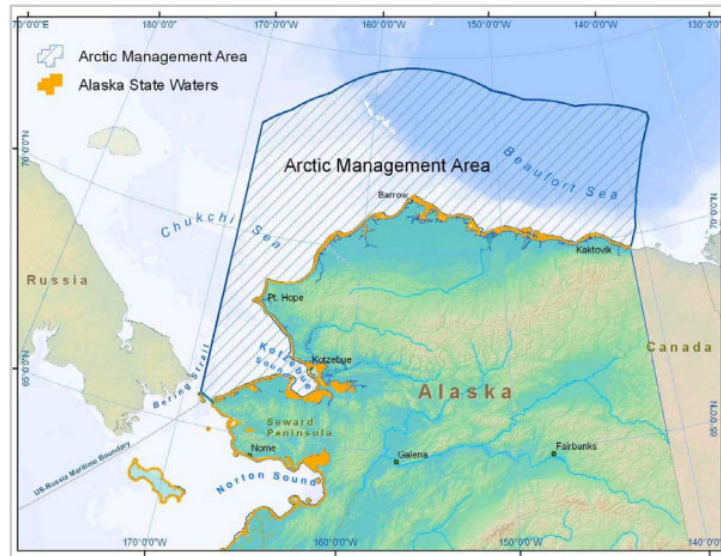
The Arctic Management Area is all marine waters in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Chukchi and Beaufort Seas from 3 nautical miles offshore the coast of Alaska or its baseline to 200 nautical miles offshore, north of Bering Strait (from Cape Prince of Wales to Cape Dezhneva) and westward to the 1990 United States/Russia maritime boundary line and eastward to the United States/Canada maritime boundary.

The Arctic Management Area is closed to commercial fishing inside the EEZ between 3 and 200 mi until such time in the future that sufficient information is available with which to initiate a planning process for commercial fishery development.

Conservation Value

This area establishes full protection for the Arctic ecosystem, biodiversity, and habitats.

The emergence of unregulated, or inadequately regulated, commercial fisheries in the Arctic EEZ off Alaska could have adverse effects on the sensitive ecosystem and marine resources of this area, including fish, fish habitat, and non-fish species that inhabit or depend on marine resources of the Arctic EEZ, and the subsistence way of life of residents of Arctic villages. The close coupling of high primary to high benthic productivity in the Chukchi Sea provides the rich northern foraging grounds for migrating gray whales and other benthic feeders during the open water season.



The Arctic Closure Area
Image from Arctic FMP

Prohibitions

- All fishing is prohibited



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Fishery Management	Habitat & Vulnerable Species	BSAI GF FMP Am 10	September 1986	Dec. 18, 1986 51 FR 45349	March 19, 1987 52 FR 8592	March 9, 1987

Purpose and Need

BSAI FMP Amendment 10 was proposed primarily in response to concerns that commercial trawl fishing was contributing to the mortality of crabs through incidental capture and mutilation by trawl gear. At its January 1986 meeting, the Council determined that stocks of Bering Sea Tanner and king crab were low in abundance, and that trawling for groundfish, especially yellowfin sole and other flounders, was threatening both the crab and halibut stocks. Although regulations governing foreign trawl fishing provided certain closed areas and prohibited species catch (PSC) limits for Pacific halibut, Tanner crab, and king crab, domestic trawl fishing vessels and joint ventures (domestic catchers delivering to foreign catcher/ processors) had not been similarly restricted.

In response, the Council approved an emergency rule to close an area north of the Alaska Peninsula to all trawling, with the exception of trawling for Pacific cod (with a PSC limit of 12,000 red king crab). The closed areas were expected to protect about 70% of the mature female red king crab spawning stock. The emergency rule also established PSC limits for *C. bairdi*, red and blue king crab, and halibut that, when

reached, would close a directed fishery. The rule also required that domestic vessels carry NMFS observers in certain areas and comply with a data gathering program. The Secretary implemented the emergency rule, with the deletion of blue king crab and halibut, on June 3, 1986, and it was extended until December 2, 1986.

Analysis

A 79-page RIR/ IRFA (final draft dated November 1986) was prepared for BSAI GF FMP Amendment 10. Six alternatives were considered for the proposed area closing, including no action. The alternatives included variations on the closed area, PSC limits, and bycatch limitation zones. The other actions were evaluated on the basis of the preferred alternative and the no action alternative.

Regulation Summary

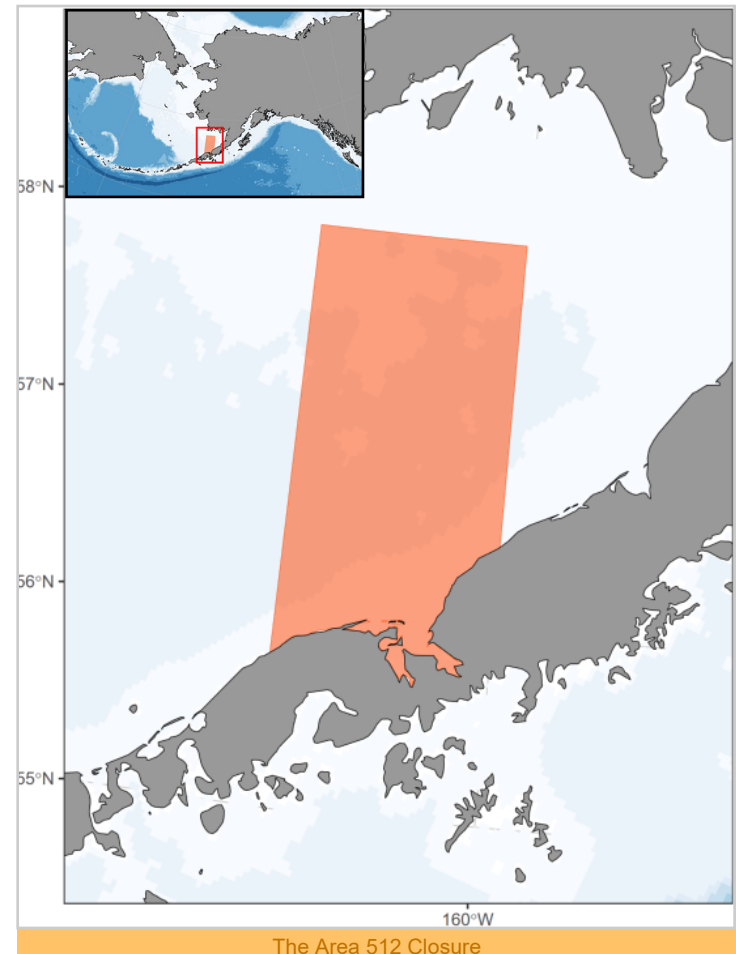
No fishing with trawl gear is allowed at any time in reporting Area 512 of Zone 1 in the Bering Sea subarea.

Conservation Value

This area establishes protection for red king crab and their habitats by prohibiting all trawling. The prohibition protects red king crab and their habitats from impacts of trawling.

Prohibitions

- All trawl gear



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Fishery Management	Vulnerable Species	BSAI GF FMP Am 12a	December 1998	May 4, 1989 54 FR 19199	Aug. 9, 1989 54 FR 32642 54 FR 37469	Sep. 3, 1989- Dec. 31 1990

Purpose and Need

Concern about crab and halibut bycatch in the groundfish fisheries prompted the Council to adopt BSAI Groundfish FMP Amendment 12a to replace Amendment 10, which was intended to expire at the end of 1988 due to uncertainty about population level fluctuations of prohibited species and development in the domestic groundfish fisheries. The purpose of BSAI Groundfish FMP Amendment 12a was to limit incidental catch of Tanner crab, red king crab, and Pacific halibut in groundfish fisheries. This amendment specified PSC limits on these species, apportioning these limits among four groundfish fisheries, which were in effect in 1989 and 1990. The Council aimed to balance the avoidance of bycatch with providing reasonable opportunities for trawl fisheries to harvest their target species. Its bycatch policy was developed because discarding crab and halibut is wasteful, may adversely affect their use as a target species in other commercial fisheries, and potentially could result in their being overfished.

Analysis

An 86-page EA/RIR/IRFA (dated March 29, 1989) was prepared for BSAI GF FMP Amendment 12a analyzed the following management alternatives to address crab and halibut PSC limits: 1) status quo; 2) extending specific bycatch provisions in Amendment 10; 3) establishing a framework for management procedure to control bycatch of Tanner crab, red king crab, and Pacific halibut; 4) establishing fixed, but increasingly restrictive, numerical limits for particular zones; and 5) establishing aggregate PSC limits, apportioned by “target fishery” and area (preferred).

Regulation Summary

No fishing with trawl gear is allowed at any time in reporting Area 516 of Zone 1 in the Bering Sea Subarea during the period March 15 through June 15.

Conservation Value

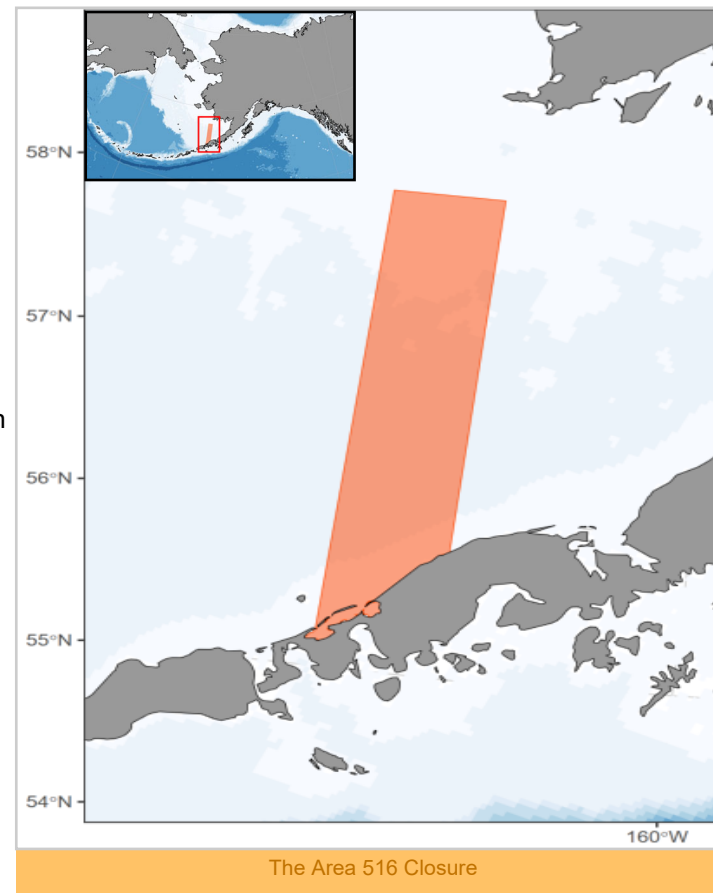
This area establishes protection for red king crab and their habitats by prohibiting all trawling from March 15 through June 15. The prohibition protects red king crab during the molting period and their habitats from impacts of trawling. Some pot or

longline fishing effort for Pacific cod or halibut may occur in the area in some years. Some gillnetting for salmon may occur in the nearshore waters. There are no other commercial or recreational fisheries in the area.

Crab stocks have continued to fluctuate since the implementation of the Area 516 closure, with rebuilding plans developed for both Tanner crab and opilio crab stocks. The red king crab fishery was closed in 1994 and 1995, and again in 2021 with historically low biomass.

Prohibitions

- All trawl gear from March 15 through June 15



Salmon Management Area West

984,294 nm²

CCC ABM Report #
NP30

Type: <i>Enforcement</i>	Focus: <i>Vulnerable Species</i>	Related FMP <i>Salmon FMP</i>	Council Action <i>May 1979</i>	Interim Emergency Reg. <i>May 18, 1979</i>	Final Regulations <i>June 8, 1979 44 FR 33250</i>	Effective <i>December 10, 1990</i>
North Pacific Fisheries Management Act						
1954						

Purpose and Need

The Alaska Salmon FMP was approved in 1979. The FMP conserves and manages the Pacific salmon commercial and sport fisheries that occur in the EEZ off Alaska. The FMP establishes two management areas, the East Area and the West Area, with a border at Cape Suckling and addresses commercial salmon fisheries differently in each area. The FMP prohibits commercial salmon fishing in the West Area, except in three defined traditional net areas – Cook Inlet, the Alaska Peninsula, and Prince William Sound. The FMP delegates management of the sport fishery to the State in both areas.

The FMP's unique functions – closing the vast majority of the EEZ to salmon fishing and facilitating State management of the few salmon fisheries in the EEZ – reflect the salmon life cycle. Salmon have a complex life cycle that involves a freshwater rearing period, followed by a period of ocean feeding prior to their spawning migration back to freshwater. Salmon from individual brood years can return as adults to spawn over a 2-to-6-year period. As a result, a single year class can be vulnerable to fisheries for several years. Salmon migrate and feed over great distances during their marine life stage. While there is great diversity in the range and migratory habits among different species of salmon, there also is a remarkable consistency in the migratory habit within stock groups, which greatly facilitates stock-specific fishery planning.

Regulation Summary

The West Area under the Salmon FMP comprises the area of the EEZ off Alaska, west of Cape Suckling. The FMP prohibits commercial salmon fishing in the West Area, except in three traditional net areas (Cook Inlet, Prince William Sound, and the South Alaska Peninsula). In contrast to the East Area, the FMP does not explicitly delegate management and regulation of these fisheries to the State.

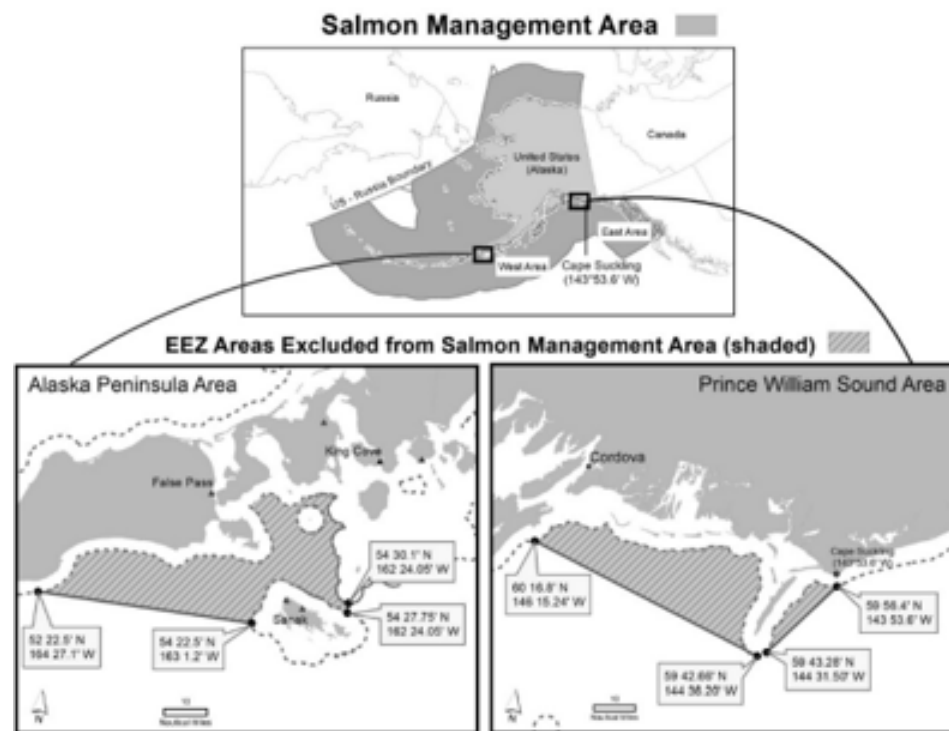
It is unlawful for any person to engage in commercial fishing for salmon in the West Area of the Salmon Management Area

Conservation Value

This area prevents harvest of salmon while stocks are mixed in the offshore areas of the Gulf of Alaska and Bering Sea. Salmon stocks from around the Pacific rim (including ESA listed stocks of the Pacific Northwest) use this area for feeding. The prohibition prevents mixed stock fisheries and conserves those stocks that have conservation concerns.

Prohibitions

- Commercial fishing for salmon



Salmon Management Areas. From Salmon FMP



Modified Gear Trawl Zone

3,194 nm²

CCC ABM Report #
NP31

Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Fishery Management	Habitat	BSAI GF FMP Am 94	October 2009	July 15, 2010 75 FR 41123	Oct. 6, 2010 75 FR 61642	January 20, 2011

Purpose and Need

BSAI FMP Amendment 94 followed from BSAI FMP Amendment 89 reopening a portion of the Northern Bering Sea Research Area to flatfish fishing with a trawl gear modification requirement, creating an area wherein anyone fishing with non-pelagic trawl gear must use modified trawl sweeps.

The purpose of the action is to provide additional protection to Bering Sea bottom habitat from the potential adverse effects of nonpelagic trawl gear used for flatfish fishing. This would be achieved by modifying nonpelagic trawl gear used for flatfish fishing by raising the majority of the gear off the bottom. Studies have shown that elevating the trawl sweep can reduce impacts on benthic organisms, such as basketstars and sea whips. The Council endorsed this action in their final recommendation on Bering Sea habitat conservation in June 2007, but was unable to approve specific details of the gear modification component. Further research was needed in order to identify the appropriate modification that would meet the Council's desired performance standard and implementation issues needed to be resolved. Field testing of the modification has now been completed and industry workshops were held, demonstrating that the modification is workable in the fishery. Because the bottom habitat is an important part of the entire Bering Sea marine ecosystem, this action is needed to ensure ecosystem-based management is incorporated into flatfish fisheries management in the Bering Sea.

As part of the June 2007 motion, the Council also stated that a portion of the now closed (under Amendment 89) Northern Bering Sea Research Area may be reopened to nonpelagic trawl fishing. The Council linked the reopening of this area, colloquially referred to as the "wedge", to the implementation of the proposed gear modification requirements for the flatfish fishery. The flatfish industry had identified the "wedge" as important to the fishery due to purported high concentrations of flatfish species and low concentrations of other bycatch species. The

purpose of reopening the "wedge" is to allow for efficient harvest of flatfish species while providing protection to this minimally fished area by requiring modified gear. Implementing the modified gear requirement would reduce potential impacts on bottom habitat that might result from opening this area. This action is needed to ensure fishers can efficiently harvest flatfish as flatfish stocks are likely to shift locations in the Bering Sea.

Analysis

A 203-page EA and RIR were prepared for BSAI FMP Amendment 94, with two alternatives to the status quo. Both implemented a requirement for use of the trawl sweep modification in Bering Sea flatfish target fisheries, however the Council preferred Alternative 3, which additionally reopened a small subarea of the NBSRA to non-pelagic trawl fishing for any target species, provided the vessels used the trawl sweep modification. An option in the analysis, also preferred by the Council, analyzed an adjustment to the eastern boundary of the St Matthew Island HCA to protect blue king crab habitat.

Regulation Summary

BSAI FMP Amendment 94 required vessels participating in a Sea flatfish nonpelagic trawl fishery to use modified trawl gear to protect benthic habitat. In addition, a section of the Northern Bering Sea Research Area, called the Modified Gear Trawl Zone (MGTZ), was re-opened to nonpelagic trawl fishing. Within the MGTZ, modified sweeps must be used on nonpelagic trawl gear regardless of the target fishery

No vessel required to be federally permitted may fish with nonpelagic trawl gear in the MGTZ except for federally permitted vessels that are directed fishing for groundfish using modified nonpelagic trawl gear that meets the standards set by Amendment 94.

Prohibitions

- Nonpelagic trawl gear without trawl sweep modification

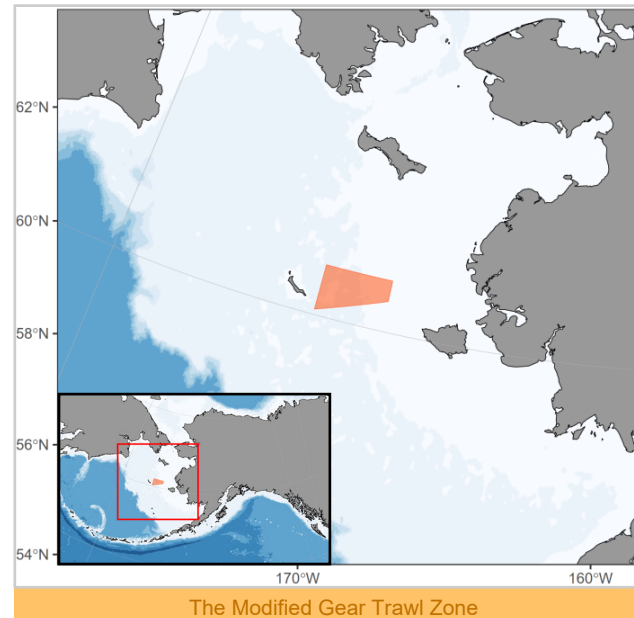
Conservation Value

This area establishes gear requirements to conserve the relatively undisturbed benthic habitats around the remote Island of St. Matthew in the Bering Sea.

The trawl sweep modifications may have beneficial effects on the amount of biological structure in the Bering Sea, due to the reduction in the amount of contact between the trawl sweeps and the sea bed. The trawl sweep modification has been tested to be effective in reducing trawl sweep impact effects to sea whips (a long-lived species of primary concern). The modification also reduced impacts on basket

stars, sponges, and polychaete siphons. Also, the demonstrated reductions in mortality to *C. bairdi* and *C. opilio* crabs likely indicate that any mortality of other, smaller epibenthos (such as other crab, sea stars, or shrimp) would also be reduced. The gear modification reduces potential destruction of benthic species and potentially preserve benthic biodiversity and likely provides some benefit to non-living substrates.

The extent of this protection is dependent on the sensitivity of the benthic fauna in the area and the intensity of fishing. While some contact with living habitat species would continue from the elevating devices contacting the bottom, the fishery-wide adoption of devices should reduce seafloor contact with trawl sweeps. The Bering Sea shelf consists primarily of sand and mud substrates, supporting low-profile living and non-living structures. These structures can be protected by relatively small increases in clearance between the gear and the seafloor, such as the proposed trawl sweep modification.



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Emergency Rule	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations
Fishery Management	Vulnerable Species	GOA GF FMP Am 15	September 1986	March 12, 1986 50 FR 8502	Dec. 12, 1986 51 FR 44812	April 15 1987 52 FR 12183
		GOA GF FMP Am 18	June 1989	Sept. 22, 1989 54 FR 39022	Dec. 6 1989 54 FR 50386	January 1, 1990
		GOA GF FMP Am 26	June 1992	Oct. 15, 1992 57 FR 47321	Jan. 6, 1993 58 FR 503	January 1, 1993

Purpose and Need

The red king crab stock around Kodiak Island peaked in 1965, with landings of 94 million pounds, and then declined and remained at moderately low levels through the 1970's. No fishery has been allowed since 1982 in an attempt to rebuild the stock. While the cause for the decline of red king crab is not known, most researchers believe the decline can be attributed to a variety of factors including overfishing, fish predation on king crab, and a warmer ocean environment. Fishery managers have enacted measures to provide an environment conducive to the recovery of the red king crab stock by minimizing impacts from other fisheries.

Trawl restrictions were adopted under GOA FMP Amendment 15 was adopted in 1987 to protect red king crabs near Kodiak Island. These areas were designated as Type I, Type II, and Type III areas based on crab concentration and use.

In 1989, the Kodiak crab trawl closure areas established in Amendment 15 were scheduled to sunset on December 31, 1989. The Kodiak Island Trawl closure areas were renewed for 3 more years under GOA FMP Amendment 18. Because Amendment 18 also had a 3-year sunset, the management measure was scheduled to expire at the end of 1992. These areas were made permanent by GOA FMP Amendment 26.

Analysis

A 44-page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated October 1986) was prepared for GOA Amendment 15. Two alternatives (in addition to the status quo) were examined for actions 1, 3 and 4. One alternative to the status quo was

examined for action 2.

A 193-page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated July 21, 1989) was prepared for GOA Amendment 18, which included six actions that affected GOA groundfish management. In approving its action to delete fishing seasons from the FMPs, the Council also considered a framework procedure for annually setting fishing seasons.

An 18-page EA/RIR (final draft dated September 14, 1992) was prepared for GOA Amendment 26. Three alternatives including the status quo were considered. Under the status quo alternative, the time/area closures would have expired at the end of 1992. The other alternative not chosen would have extended the closures for another three years. The alternative adopted made these closures permanent.

Regulation Summary

Historically, Type II areas have had lower crab concentrations than Type I and are only closed to non-pelagic gear from February 15 through June 15. Type III areas are adjacent to Type I and II areas and have been identified as important juvenile king crab rearing or migratory areas and become operational following a determination that a "recruitment event" has occurred. The Regional Administrator will classify the expanded Type III area as either Type I or II, depending on the information available. A "recruitment event" is defined as the appearance of female king crab in substantially increased numbers (when the total number of females estimated for a given district equals the number of females established as a threshold criterion for opening that district to commercial crab fishing). A recruitment event

closure will continue until a commercial crab fishery opens for that district or the number of crabs drops below the threshold level for that district. When necessary, Type III areas will be closed by regulatory amendment; the Regional Administrator will specify which of the Type III areas are closed and whether the closure is for an entire year or only a portion of a year.

Conservation Value

This areas established seasonal protection for adult female crab during the vulnerable molting period and their habitats. Type I and Type II areas encompass 80-90% of the known female red king crab stocks.

These closures have been in place for over 20 years; however, it is difficult to assess their conservation benefits. Bycatch of red king crabs in groundfish fisheries have been reduced due to these closures as they help prevent trawlers from encountering crab aggregations and limit impacts of non-pelagic trawl gear on crab habitat. Despite being a tool created for the management of these areas, Type III closures have never been triggered from a lack of recruitment. Despite these long-term closures, adult and

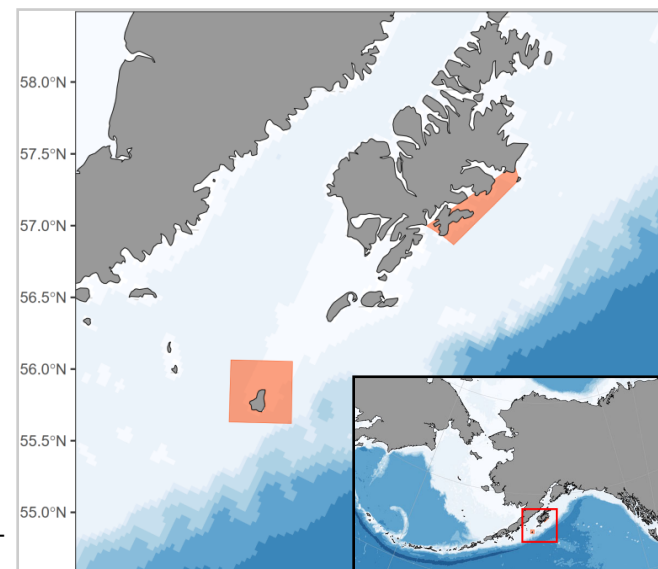
juvenile red king crab populations remain low as measured by trawl surveys in and around the Kodiak trawl closure areas.

Sub Areas

- Chirikof Island (528nm²)
- Barnabas (82 nm²)

Prohibitions

- Nonpelagic trawl gear from February 15 to June 15



Type II Closures around Kodiak



Type: <i>Fishery Management</i>	Focus: <i>Vulnerable Species</i>	Related FMP Amendment <i>BSAI GF FMP Am 70</i>	Council Action <i>October 2001</i>	Proposed Rule <i>Jan. 8, 2002 67 FR 956</i>	Final Regulations <i>May 16, 2002 67 FR 34860</i>	Effective <i>Implemented Through Regulations</i>
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Purpose and Need

The western population of Steller sea lions declined by over 70% since the 1960s, and was listed as endangered in 1997 (62 FR 24345). One hypothesis to explain the continued decline of the western stock of Steller sea lions was nutritional stress due to competition with fisheries for prey. The 11/30/00 Biological Opinion concluded that fisheries for walleye pollock, Pacific cod and Atka mackerel being managed under the fisheries regulations in effect in the year 2000, jeopardized the survival and recovery of Steller sea lions and adversely modified their critical habitat. The 2000 Biological Opinion included a reasonable and prudent

alternative (RPA) that included, among other things, areas closed to trawling, which if implemented in its entirety, would have had substantial adverse impacts to the fishing industry and fishing communities. Federal legislation (Public Law 106- 554) allowed for a phase-in of the RPA for the 2001 fisheries while the Council developed an alternative approach which would allow fisheries to operate in such a manner that would not jeopardize the continued existence of Steller sea lion and would prevent adverse modification of their critical habitat.

Analysis

A 2,206 page EIS/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated November 2001) was prepared for this amendment. Five alternatives were considered including no action, a low and slow approach (from draft programmatic SEIS), a restricted and closed area approach (from the 11/2000 RPA), an area and fishery specific approach (from RPA Committee) and a critical habitat catch limit approach (based on measures in place in 2000). A map packet, containing poster sized maps that show the closure areas proposed for each alternative, was also provided. The analysis the preferred alternative would avoid jeopardy and adverse modification while at the same time, have the least negative social and economic impacts to fishermen, processors, and communities.

Regulation Summary

Pollock fishing in the area is prohibited until April 1 for vessels >99'. When 28% of pollock harvest limit is taken by the smaller catcher vessels, the area closes for all pollock fishing until April 1, thus reducing intensive fishing activity in the area during the A-season. The harvest of this prey species for Steller sea lions in the area was evaluated, and fisheries were restricted to reduce the potential of competition for prey.

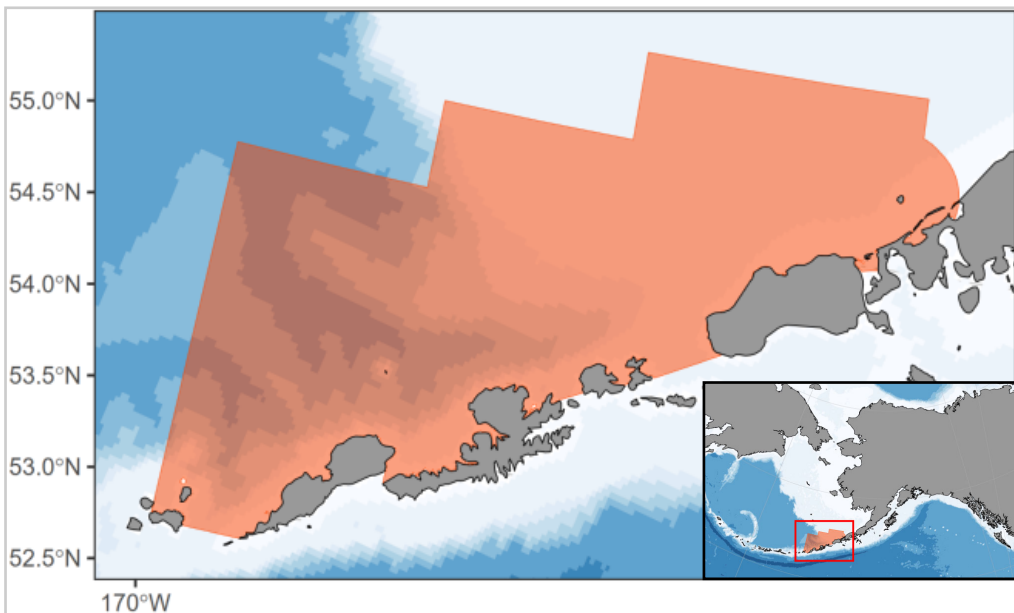
Conservation Value

This area had been designated as critical habitat for Steller sea lions and the regulations protect sea lions from potential competition with fisheries for prey in this area by distributing fisheries more broadly over time and space.

Diet studies indicate that Steller sea lions depend on pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel as major prey resources. The winter time is likely the most sensitive period for juveniles and lactating females during which they may be easily susceptible to local prey depletions. Juveniles and adult females with pups require access to prey close to shore, due to the need to return often to a rookery or haulout. These winter fisheries, in particular, could adversely affect Steller sea lions. The Steller Sea Lion Conservation Area closes these fisheries during this essential period for Steller sea lions, reducing the impact of groundfish fisheries on the reproductive season for this species.

Prohibitions

- Pollock fishing for Vessels >99 ft LOA before April 1



The Steller Sea Lion Conservation Area



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Fishery Management	Habitat	Scallop FMP Am 1	June 1995	May 10, 1996 61 FR 21413	July 23, 1996 61 FR 38099	August 1, 1996
						State of Alaska Law
						June 27, 1993 5 AAC 38.076 Register 126

Purpose and Need

Limited age data suggests that the scallop stock historically exploited off west Kodiak Island experienced a shift in age-structure in the late 1960's from predominantly scallops of age 7 and older to predominantly scallops of under 6 years by the 1970's, indicating harvests had exceeded sustainable levels. This shift was compounded by changes in fleet distribution from historical fishing grounds in primarily State waters to previously unfished grounds in the EEZ.

In response to these concerns, ADF&G implemented a FMP for the scallop fishery in 1993 which established eight fishery registration areas corresponding to the Southeastern, Yakutat, Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Alaska Peninsula, Dutch Harbor, and Bring Sea portions of the State. ADF&G established a guideline harvest range (GHR) for each of the traditional weathervane scallop fishing areas to prevent overfishing and maintain the reproductive potential of scallop stocks.

The State of Alaska has managed the fishery for weathervane scallops, *Patinopecten caurinus*, since the fishery's inception in the late 1960's. In 1995, the NPFMC developed the Alaska Scallop Fishery Management Plan, which delegated most of the authority over scallop resources in the EEZ to the State of Alaska. Extensive closures to fishing with dredge gear were established due to concerns over crab bycatch and habitat.

Analysis

Under the State-Federal FMP, closures areas for the scallop fishery are designated by ADF&G and the Alaska Board of Fisheries. The analysis to authorize this action occurred through Amendments 1 and 2 to the FMP for the Scallop Fishery off Alaska. Two alternatives were considered: Status quo continuing the closure of the EEZ for up to a 1-year period to all scallop fishing, and amending the FMP to allow for a federally controlled fisher to occur in the FMP (preferred alternative). Alternative 2 was comprised of Amendments 1 & 2. Amendment 1 would implement: (1) Gear and efficiency restrictions, (2) scallop registration areas and districts, (3) procedures for specifying TAC and CBLs, (4) time and area closures, (5) inseason management authority, (6) fishing seasons, and (7) observer coverage requirements.

Regulation Summary

Scallop dredging is prohibited in certain areas of the Aleutian Islands.

Scallop dredging is also prohibited in areas of important crab habitat (Pribilof Islands Habitat Conservation Zone, the Bristol Bay Red King Crab Savings Area, Nearshore Bristol Bay Trawl Closure)

Prohibitions

- Scallop dredging

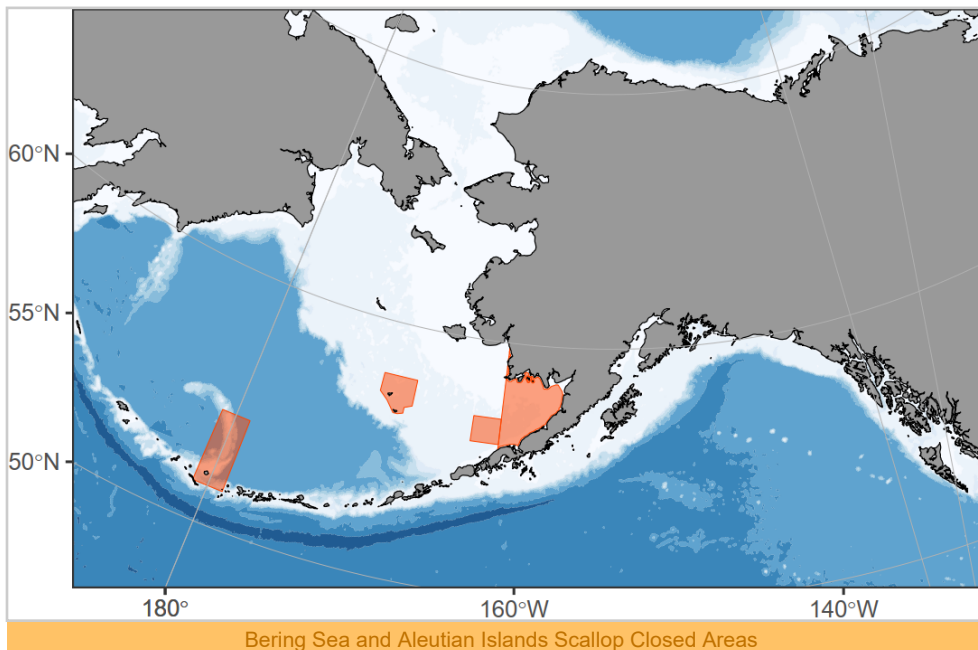
Conservation Value

Scallop dredges can impact benthic habitats, and closing areas of lower scallop abundance to scallop dredging keeps the fleet operating in areas that allow harvests with minimal habitat impacts and less crab bycatch.

The prohibition on dredging in these areas protects areas designated as crab habitat protection areas as well as Essential Fish Habitat for Late Juvenile and Adult Weathervane Scallops. Measures to reduce the harvest of immature scallops may increase the long term yield per recruit in the future as more young scallops survive, reproduce, and grow legal size. To the extent that a minimum size measures act to prevent recruitment overfishing

Sub Areas

- Akutan Bay (2 nm²)
- Unalaska (214 nm²)
- RKCSA (3,999 nm²)
- Pribilof Island (5,342 nm²)
- Petrel Bank (12,795 nm²)



Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Scallop Closed Areas



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Fishery Management	Habitat	Scallop FMP Am 1	June 1995	May 10, 1996 61 FR 21413	July 23, 1996 61 FR 38099	August 1, 1996
						State of Alaska Law
						June 27, 1993 5 AAC 38.076 Register 126

Purpose and Need

Limited age data suggests that the scallop stock historically exploited off west Kodiak Island experienced a shift in age-structure in the late 1960's from predominantly scallops of age 7 and older to predominantly scallops of under 6 years by the 1970's, indicating harvests had exceeded sustainable levels. This shift was compounded by changes in fleet distribution from historical fishing grounds in primarily State waters to previously unfished grounds in the EEZ.

In response to these concerns, ADF&G implemented a FMP for the scallop fishery in 1993 which established eight fishery registration areas corresponding to the Southeastern, Yakutat, Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Alaska Peninsula, Dutch Harbor, and Bring Sea portions of the State. ADF&G established a guideline harvest range (GHR) for each of the traditional weathervane scallop fishing areas to prevent overfishing and maintain the reproductive potential of scallop stocks.

The State of Alaska has managed the fishery for weathervane scallops, *Patinopecten caurinus*, since the fishery's inception in the late 1960's. In 1995, the NPFMC developed the Alaska Scallop Fishery Management Plan, which delegated most of the authority over scallop resources in the EEZ to the State of Alaska. The FMP was last updated in 2005. This FMP also established MPA's for the scallop fishery. Extensive closures to fishing with dredge gear were established due to concerns over crab bycatch and habitat.

Analysis

Under the State-Federal FMP, closures areas for the scallop fishery are designated by ADF&G and the Alaska Board of Fisheries. The analysis to authorize this action occurred through Amendments 1 and 2 to the FMP for the Scallop Fishery off Alaska. Two alternatives were considered: Status quo continuing the closure of the EEZ for up to a 1-year period to all scallop fishing, and amending the FMP to allow for a federally controlled fisher to occur in the FMP (preferred alternative). Alternative 2 was comprised of Amendments 1 & 2. Amendment 1 would implement: (1) Gear and efficiency restrictions, (2) scallop registration areas and districts, (3) procedures for specifying TAC and CBLs, (4) time and area closures, (5) inseason management authority, (6) fishing seasons, and (7) observer coverage requirements.

Regulation Summary

Scallop dredging is prohibited from several GOA areas in the EEZ (Unimak Island, Sanak Island, Trinity Islands, Marmot Bay, other Kodiak, Cook Inlet, PWS, Dangerous Cape).

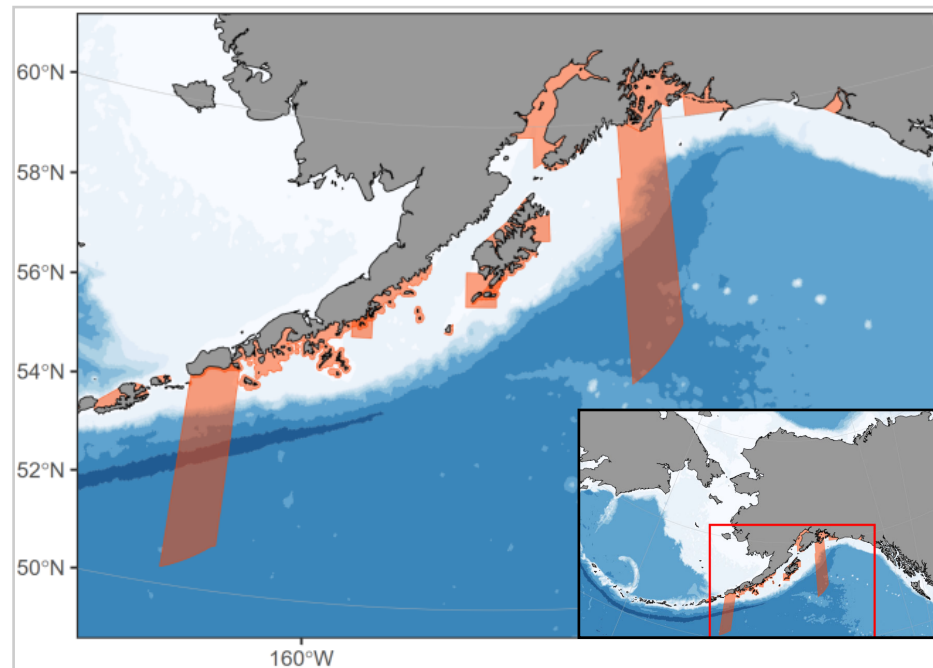
Prohibitions

- Scallop dredging

Conservation Value

Scallop dredges can impact benthic habitats, and closing areas of lower scallop abundance to scallop dredging keeps the fleet operating in areas that allow harvests with minimal habitat impacts and less crab bycatch.

The prohibition on dredging in these areas also protects areas designated as red king crab and Tanner crab habitat. The areas also provide protection for immature scallops. Measures to reduce the harvest of immature scallops may increase the long term yield per recruit in the future as more young scallops survive, reproduce, and grow legal size. To the extent that a minimum size measures act to prevent recruitment overfishing.



Gulf of Alaska Scallop Closed Areas



Type:
*Fishery
Management*

Focus:
Rebuilding

State of Alaska Law
[5 AAC 27.950 Register 146](#)

Effective
May 31, 1998

Purpose and Need

The Norton Sound, Port Clarence, and Kotzebue Sound management district contains essential northern Bering Sea spawning habitat for Pacific herring. The American commercial fishery for Bering Sea Herring started in the Early 1900's in Norton Sound. Commercial fishing for this "spring herring" was sporadic through the 1960's and 70's, until the fishery for herring sac roe picked up in 1979 with fishing effort and harvest increasing each season until the late 1980's. The Kotzebue Sound Herring District closed area was established in 1998 to protect spawning herring, under the statewide management strategy based on the Bering Sea Herring Fishery Management Plan.

Regulation Summary

The Kotzebue District consists of all waters between the latitude of Cape Prince of Wales and the latitude of Point Hope. Herring may not be taken in any waters of the Bering Sea-Kotzebue Area that are not listed below:

- (a) The Cape Romanzof District
- (b) The Norton Sound District. Subdistricts 1-7
- (c) The Port Clarence District.
- (d) The Kotzebue District.

The Bering Sea-Kotzebue Area has as its southern boundary a line extending west from Naskonat Peninsula at 60 ° 58.17' N. lat., 165 ° 11' W. long. and as its northern boundary a line extending west from Point Hope, and as its western boundary the International Date Line in the Bering Sea and Chukchi Sea.

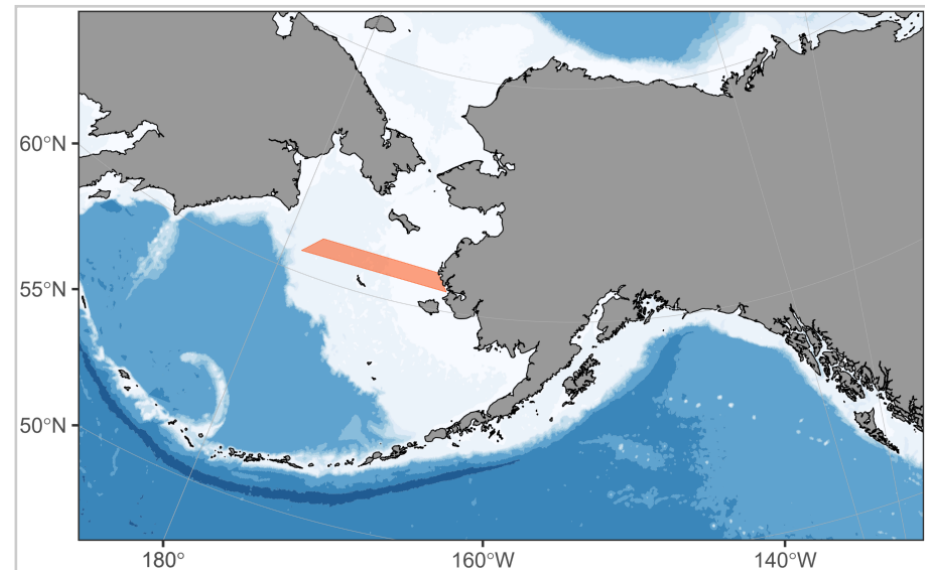
Prohibitions

- Fishing for Herring

Conservation Value

Fishing for herring is prohibited in these areas, which provides conservation by preventing harvests of herring in areas where stocks from different spawning groups mix, thus preventing unintended overharvesting of stocks.

Kotzebue Sound provides essential herring spawning habitat. Climate and ocean conditions, particularly the extent of Bering Sea pack ice, strongly influence the arrival of herring on the spawning grounds. Herring spawn in this area soon after the breakup of this pack ice in the spring, between May and June, continuing in a northern direction until July or August.



The Bering-Kotzebue Herring Closed Area



Black Rockfish Closure Areas

2,147 nm²

CCC ABM Report #

NP37

Type:
*Fishery
Management*

Focus:
Rebuilding

State of Alaska Law
[5 AAC 28.150](#) Register 146

Effective
June 14, 1997

Purpose and Need

In 2003, the Alaska Board of Fisheries closed Sitka Sound and a series of four latitudinal strips on the outer coast of the eastern Gulf of Alaska to commercial harvest of black rockfish as a proactive move to protect the species from potential overexploitation. This closure was intended to protect and maintain older year classes containing females, as older females have been shown to produce larvae with higher rates of survival.

Regulation Summary

The State of Alaska has management jurisdiction for Black Rockfish in the EEZ, these closures contain both state and Federal waters. Black rockfish may not be taken in a directed fishery Black Rockfish Closure Areas.

Conservation Value

Fishing for black rockfish is prohibited in these areas, which provides conservation by preventing harvests of older, more productive rockfish, thus protecting the spawning stock and genetic biodiversity of this species, and maintaining productivity.

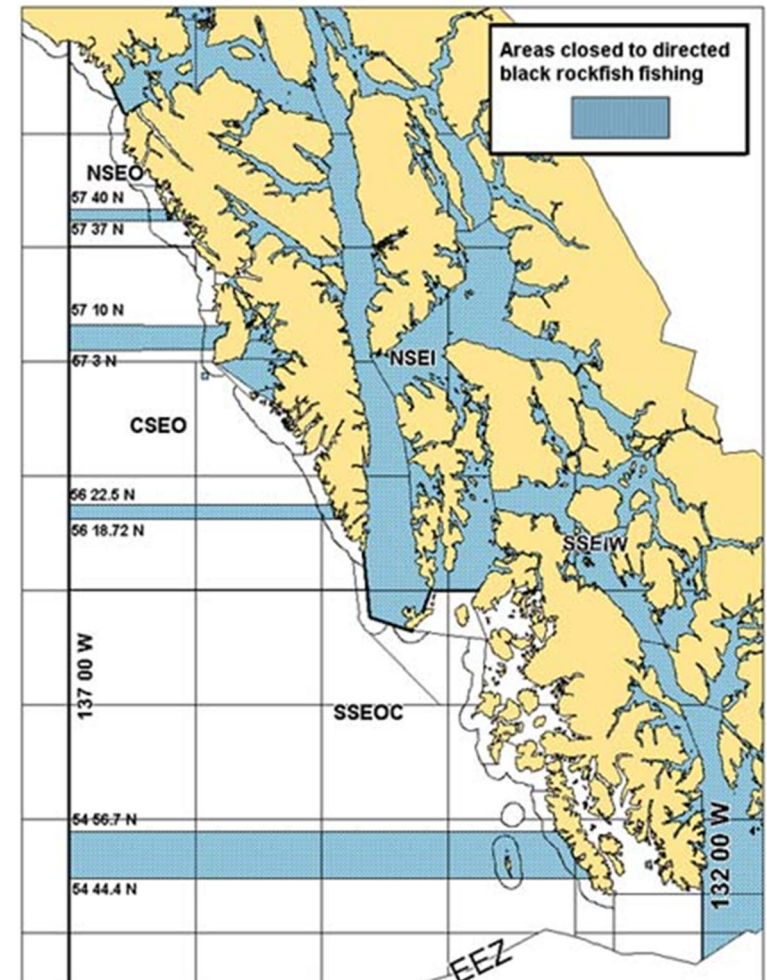
The conservation benefits of state groundfish closures are difficult to assess. Closure of areas known to contain older female spawning fish has likely had some conservation benefit however the effect of these areas has not been quantified. The protection of large, older female spawning fish has shown conservation success in Pacific coast rockfish fisheries, suggesting these areas may contribute a similar benefit to Black rockfish stocks in Alaska if properly placed to conserve female spawning populations.



Black Rockfish. Image courtesy of ADF&G

Prohibitions

- Fishing for Black Rockfish



Black Rockfish Closure Areas

Image courtesy of ADF&G



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Other Management	Bycatch Control	BSAI GF FMP Am 21b	November 1995	Sept. 8, 1995 60 FR 46811	Nov. 29, 1995 60 FR 61215	January 1, 1996
		BSAI GF FMP Am 58	February 1999	Dec. 21, 1999 64 FR 71390	Nov. 12, 2000 65 FR 60587	November 13, 2000

Purpose and Need

Chinook salmon are an important cultural and subsistence resource for Alaska Natives and those living in rural communities, as well as a target species in directed commercial and recreational salmon fisheries. Salmon are also taken as incidental bycatch in groundfish trawl fisheries, particularly in the pelagic trawl fisheries for pollock. The objective of BSAI GF FMP amendment 21b was to provide the Council with the means to control Chinook salmon bycatch in the BSAI groundfish trawl fisheries. Amendment 21b established measures to control the amount of Chinook salmon taken as bycatch in BSAI trawl fisheries by closing three areas in the BSAI to all trawling when 48,000 Chinook salmon were taken as bycatch. This closure would remain in effect from the time the trigger was reached until April 16, when the areas would reopen to trawling for the remainder of the year.

In 2000, Amendment 58 reduced the amount of Chinook salmon allowed to be taken as bycatch in BSAI trawl fisheries from 48,000 to 29,000 over a 4-year period, implemented year-round accounting of chinook salmon bycatch in the pollock fishery, revised the boundaries of the CHSSA to create 2 distinct closures areas (1 in the Aleutian Islands and 1 in the Bering Sea), and set new closure dates.

In October 2005, the Council adopted Amendment 84 to the BSAI FMP, establishing the salmon bycatch intercooperative agreement (ICA) which allows vessels in the pollock fishery to reduce salmon bycatch using the fishery's internal cooperative structure by implementing a voluntary rolling hotspot system (VRHS).

In 2010, the Council removed the Savings Area closure in the Bering Sea with Amendment 91. This amendment also set a Chinook Salmon PSC

limit of 60,000 salmon to sectors participating in an IPA that meets performance standards. If a sector fails this performance standard. NMFS issues an allocation of 47,591 chinook salmon PSC for vessels that do not participate in an IPA or meet performance standards.

Amendment 110 to the BSAI FMP created a comprehensive Chinook and chum salmon bycatch avoidance program, allowing an exemption from Chinook salmon closure area if participating in an IPA. This amendment removed Amendment 84.

Analysis

A 238-page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated September 29, 1999) was prepared BSAI GF FMP amendment 58. Five primary alternatives including the status quo were considered along with several options for seasonal allocation, area closures, and applicable fisheries. The alternatives not chosen would have established a time/area closure but without a PSC limit that triggered a closure, or established a closure based on an annual limit of 36,000 salmon. The preferred alternative was the most conservative in that it reduced the PSC limit to only 29,000 Chinook salmon taken in the pollock fisheries.

A 760-page EIS was prepared for BSAI GF FMP amendment 91. The EIS considered 5 alternatives for hard caps, triggered closures and IPAs for Chinook Salmon PSC in the pollock fishery. The preferred alternative set separate hard caps for those sectors participating in an IPA and met participation standards and those that did not.

An EA/RIR/IRFA was presented to the Council for BSAI GF FMP Amendment 110 at the December 2015 meeting that analyzed five action alternatives and a status quo alternative. The EA

concluded that ecosystem management, rationalization, and traditional management tools were likely to improve the protection and management of target and prohibited species, including pollock, Chinook, and chum salmon.

Regulation Summary

If, during the fishing year, the Regional Administrator determines that catch of Chinook salmon by vessels using trawl gear while directed fishing for pollock in the AI will reach the PSC limit, NMFS, by notification in the Federal Register, will close the AI Chinook Salmon Savings Area to directed fishing for pollock with trawl gear on the following dates: From the effective date of the closure until April 15, and from September 1 through December 31, if the Regional Administrator determines that the annual limit of AI Chinook salmon will be attained before April 15. From September 1 through December 31, if the Regional Administrator determines that the annual limit of AI Chinook salmon will be attained after April 15.

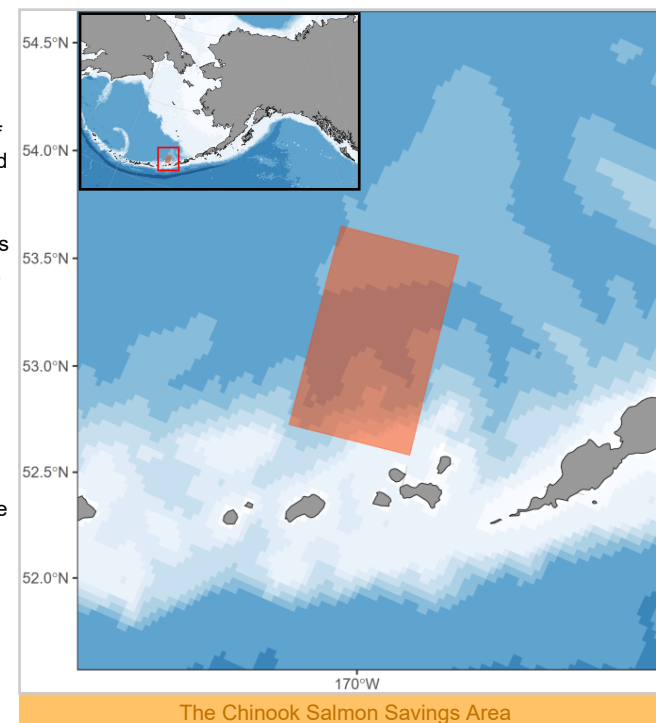
Under Amendment 110, vessels directed fishing for pollock in the Bering Sea, including pollock CDQ, and operating under an approved IPA are exempt from these closures. However, because all pollock vessels operate under an IPA, this closure has not been in effect since 2015.

Conservation Value

The central blocks in the Chinook Salmon Savings Area may reduce salmon bycatch in years when there is a AI pollock fishery.

Prohibitions

- Fishing for pollock with trawl gear if the Chinook Salmon PSC limit is hit and a vessel is not operating under an IPA



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Other Management	Bycatch Control	BSAI GF FMP Am 35	January 1995	April 25, 1995 60 FR 20253	July 5, 1995 60 FR 34904	August 1, 1995
		BSAI GF FMP Am 110	June 2014	Feb. 3, 2015 81 FR 5681	June 10, 2016 81 FR 37534	July 11, 2016

Purpose and Need

In 1993, the total chum salmon bycatch amount in the BSAI fisheries was 245,000 fish—approximately six times the bycatch level estimated for each of the previous 2 years and triple the previous highest bycatch amount of 72,000 chum salmon estimated in the 1984 foreign trawl fishery. To reduce chum salmon bycatch and address concerns for conservation of the salmon resource a specified area, the salmon savings area, which was renamed the chum salmon savings area (CSSA), was closed to trawling by emergency rule during the 1994 pollock non-roe season. The CSSA has historically accounted for a large proportion of chum salmon bycatch and a relatively small proportion of groundfish harvest.

Chum salmon bycatch control measures were thought to be needed for two reasons. First, many chum salmon stocks are fully utilized, and uncontrolled bycatch constitutes an additional, unaccounted for allocation of the resources. Second, uncontrolled bycatch levels exceeding recent highs may lead to conservation problems for Alaskan chum salmon populations. During the previous 10 years, several major river systems had experienced low levels of returns, particularly the Nushagak, Yukon, and Kuskokwim rivers.

BSAI Amendment 110 allowed an exemption from the Chum salmon regulatory closure area if participating in an Incentive Plan Agreement (IPA).

Analysis

A 132-page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated March 21, 1995) was prepared for BSAI GF FMP Amendment 35. Four alternatives including the status quo were considered, along with seven options for closure areas. The other alternatives not chosen would have established a year-round closure in hotspot areas or changed the starting date

for the pollock 'B' season. The alternative

chosen allowed for a time/area closure that would be expected to have high bycatch of chum salmon, allowing for continuation of the closure if salmon bycatch remained high.

An EA/RIR/IRFA was presented to the Council for BSAI GF FMP Amendment 110 at the December 2015 meeting that analyzed five action alternatives and a status quo alternative. The EA concluded that ecosystem management, rationalization, and traditional management tools were likely to improve the protection and

management of target and prohibited species, including pollock, Chinook, and chum salmon.

Regulation Summary

Directed fishing for pollock by vessels using trawl gear is prohibited from August 1 through August 31 in the Chum Salmon Savings Area. This closure will be continued or reinstated after September 1 if a bycatch limit of 42,000 chum salmon has been reached in the Catcher Vessel Operations Area (CVOA) through October 14.

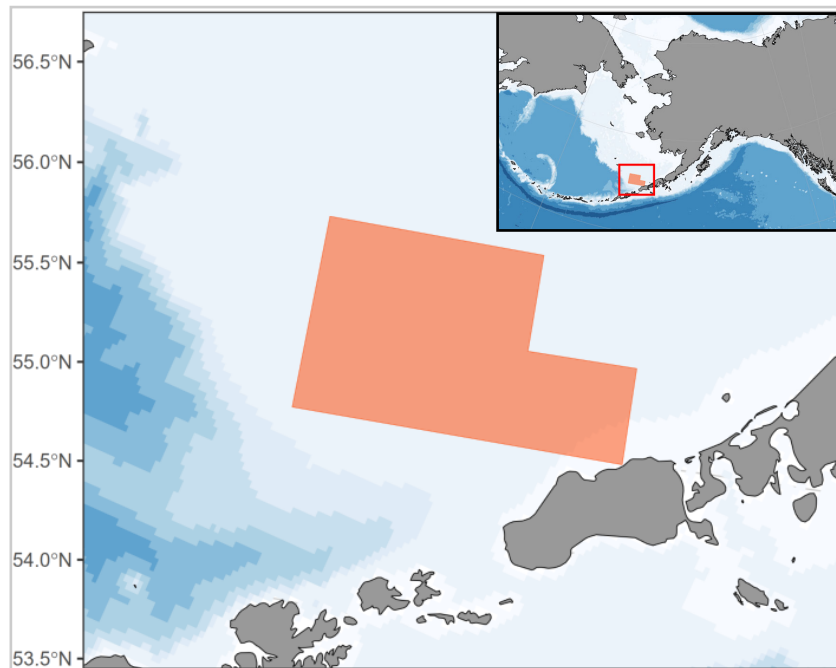
Under Amendment 110, vessels directed fishing for pollock in the Bering Sea, including pollock CDQ, and operating under an approved IPA are exempt from these closures. However, because all pollock vessels operate under an IPA, this closure has not been in effect since 2015.

Conservation Value

Bycatch of chum salmon has fluctuated over the years. Changes in annual bycatch amounts have been attributed to changes in chum salmon abundance, establishment of the Chum Salmon Savings Area and other regulatory changes, as well as bycatch avoidance measures and operational changes made by the fishing fleet.

Prohibitions

- Fishing for pollock with trawl gear August 1-31, and reinstated if the Chum Salmon PSC limit is hit, for vessels not operated under an IPA



The Chum Salmon Savings Area



C. opilio Bycatch Limitation Zone (COBLZ)

118,780 nm²

Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Other Management	Bycatch Control	BSAI GF FMP Am 40	December 1996	Aug. 13, 1997 62 FR 43307	Dec. 22, 1997 62 FR 66829	January 21, 1998

Purpose and Need

In 1996, NMFS bottom trawl surveys indicated that Bering Sea crab stocks were at relatively low levels. Crab fisheries were feeling the impact of these low stock sizes, with no Bristol Bay red king crab fishery occurring in 1994 and 1995, and harvests of Tanner and snow crab significantly reduced. The 1996 C. opilio season produced only 64.6 million lb for the 235 vessels participating, the lowest catch since 1984. Survey data from 1996 indicated that adult males were abundant, but females and pre-recruits were becoming less abundant. Before BSAI FMP amendment 40, no bycatch limits had even been established for snow crab in the Bering Sea. Based on input from its advisory bodies and public testimony, the Council adopted PSC limits for C. opilio snow crab taken in BSAI fisheries. An objective of this amendment was to minimize the impact of groundfish fisheries on crab and other PSC while providing for rational and optimal use of the region's fishery resources. These PSC limits would be based on the total abundance of opilio crab from the NMFS trawl survey. All gear types used to catch groundfish have some potential to incidentally catch crab, but the large majority of crab bycatch occurs in trawl fisheries for flatfish. The Council established the C. opilio Bycatch Limitation Zone (COBLZ) where fishing would be prohibited by a particular trawl fishery if that fishery were to reach its PSC cap in order to limit the bycatch of crab in these fisheries.

Analysis

A 44 page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated October 2, 1997) was prepared for this amendment. Four alternatives including the status quo were considered. The other alternatives and options that were not chosen would have established a fixed PSC limit of 6 million or 11 million crab, or a PSC limit that fluctuated with abundance at all stock sizes. The alternative chosen incorporated fixed limits at high and low stock sizes, and fluctuating levels at intermediate stock sizes and established the COBLZ.

Regulation Summary

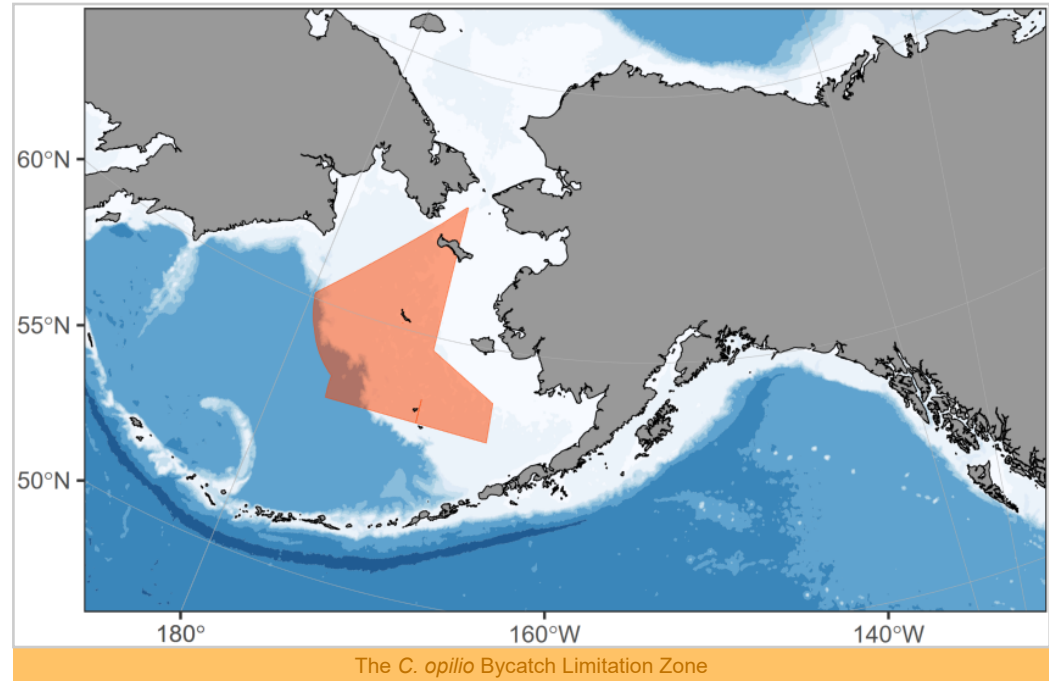
Under Amendment 40 of the BSAI Groundfish FMP, PSC limits for snow crab (opilio) taken in groundfish fisheries are based on total abundance of opilio crab as indicated by the NMFS standard trawl survey. The snow crab PSC cap is set at 0.1133% of the Bering Sea snow crab abundance index, with a minimum PSC of 4.5 million snow crab and a maximum of 13 million snow crab. Snow crab taken within the C. Opilio Bycatch Limitation Zone accrue towards the PSC limits established for individual trawl fisheries. Upon attainment of a snow crab PSC limit apportioned to a particular trawl target fishery, the COBLZ would be closed to directed fishing for species in that trawl fishery category, except for pollock with nonpelagic trawl gear.

Conservation Value

C. opilio bycatch has been significantly reduced following the establishment of the COBLZ.

Prohibitions

- Fishing in the COBLZ by specified fisheries that have attained the snow crab PSC limit



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Other Management	Bycatch Control	BSAI GF FMP Am 10	September 1986	Dec. 18, 1986 51 FR 45349	March 19, 1987 52 FR 8592	March 9, 1987
		BSAI GF FMP Am 41	September 1996	January 2, 1997 62 FR 85	March 24, 1997 62 FR 13839	April 23, 1997

Purpose and Need

Amendment 10 to the BSAI GF FMP was proposed in response to concerns over the contribution of commercial trawl fishing to the mortality of Tanner crabs and red king crabs through incidental capture and mutilation by trawl gear. At its January 1986 meeting, the Council determined stocks of Bering Sea Tanner and king crabs were low in abundance and threatened by trawling for groundfish, particularly yellowfin sole and other flatfish. In 1986, there were no regulations governing prohibited species catch (PSC) for Pacific halibut, Tanner crab, and king crab in the domestic fishery. Amendment 10 established PSC limits for Tanner crab of 1 million crab in Zone 1 of this area and 3 million crab in Zone 2. This PSC bycatch limitation zone was expected to protect about 70% of the mature female red king crab spawning stock.

In 1996, Bering Sea Tanner crab (*C. bairdi*) stock was measured to be near historically low levels, based on NMFS bottom trawl survey data, and preliminary 1996 survey data indicated the stock decline was likely to continue. The 1995 Tanner crab fishery had the lowest catch since the fishery reopened in 1988, with the 1995 season producing only 2017 mt for the 196 vessels participating. Amendment 41 was adopted in 1996 with the objective of reducing Tanner crab bycatch in trawl fisheries, particularly at low stock sizes, to assist in the recovery of the stock.

Analysis

A 79-page RIR/ IRFA (final draft dated November 1986) was prepared for BSAI GF FMP amendment 10. Six alternatives were considered for the proposed area closing, including no action. The alternatives included variations on the closed area, PSC limits, and bycatch limitation zones.

A 41-page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated November 20, 1996) was prepared for BSAI GF FMP amendment 41. Three alternatives including the status quo were considered. The other alternative that was not chosen would have reduced the PSC limits to a fixed level regardless of stock size (900,000 crab in Zone 1 and up to 2,100,000 crab in Zone 2). The alternative chosen was more conservative in that defining a larger area may offer more protection.

Regulation Summary

Bycatch Limitation Zone 1 means the area contained within Statistical Areas 508, 509, 512, and 516 of the Bering Sea Subarea.

It is prohibited for the operator of a vessel to use trawl gear to harvest groundfish CDQ in Zone 1 after the CDQ group's red king crab PSQ or *C. bairdi* Tanner crab PSQ in Zone 1 is attained.

Bycatch Limitation Zone 2 means the area contained within Statistical Areas 513, 517, and 521 of the Bering Sea Subarea.

It is prohibited for the operator of a vessel to use trawl gear to harvest groundfish CDQ in Zone 2 after the CDQ group's PSQ for *C. bairdi* Tanner crab in Zone 2 is attained.

Amendment 41 provides for the annual specification of the revised PSC limits based on the total estimated abundance of *C. bairdi* as shown in the figure below. *C. bairdi* taken as bycatch within the PSC Bycatch Limitation Zones accrue towards the PSC limits established for individual trawl fisheries. Upon attainment of a PSC limit apportioned to a particular trawl target

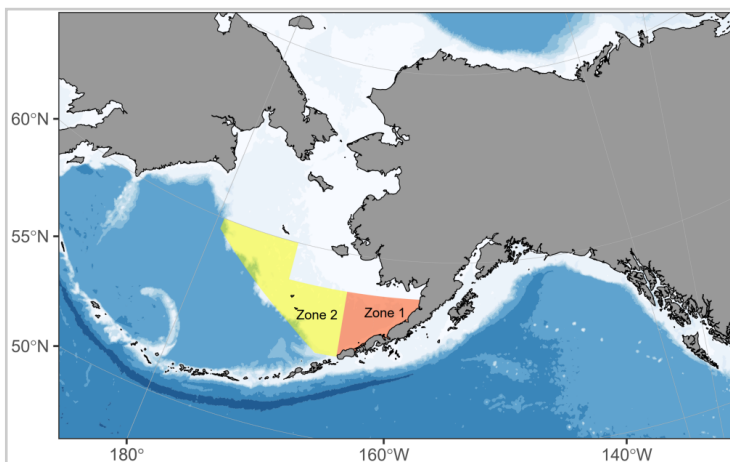
fishery, that fishery is prohibited from fishing within the specified zone. In 1998, the Council adopted a provision to reduce opilio crab bycatch by an additional 50,000 *C. bairdi* crab as part of the regulation prohibiting the use of bottom trawl gear for pollock fisheries.

Conservation Value

The establishment of these bycatch limitation zones caused a substantial change in the distribution of groundfish fishing effort, especially the joint venture yellowfin sole and other flatfish fisheries. The bycatch rates of red king crab, *C. bairdi*, and halibut declined following the implementation of BSAI amendment 10.

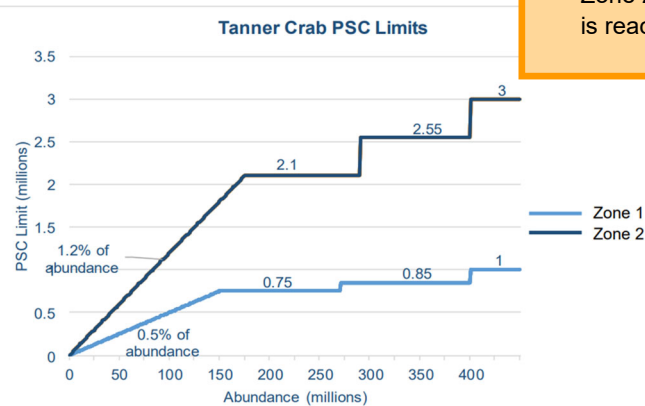
Prohibitions

- Trawl fishing for specified fisheries in Zone 1 after red king crab PSQ or PSC is reached
- Trawl fishing for specified fisheries in Zone 2 after Tanner crab PSQ or PSC is reached



The Tanner Crab PSC Bycatch Limitation Zones.

Zone 1 in orange, Zone 2 in yellow



Tanner Crab PSC limits from BSAI Amendment 41



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Other Management	Allocation	BSAI GF FMP Am 18	June 1991	Dec. 20, 1991 56 FR 66009	June 3, 1992 57 FR 23321	June 1, 1992

Purpose and Need

The purpose of BSAI GF FMP amendment 18 was to protect the inshore component of the BSAI pollock fishery from preemption by the offshore fleet. Indication of a preemption problem between these two sectors of the groundfish fishery became apparent early in 1989. Substantial processing of pollock by catcher/processor vessels contributed to an early closure of the pollock fishery in 1989, effectively preventing inshore components from realizing their anticipated economic benefit from pollock later in the fishing year.

An approved portion of amendment 18 provides for a CVOA in the Bering Sea in which access to pollock is limited only to catcher vessels that harvest pollock for delivery to either the offshore component or the inshore component. Fishing in this area was originally limited to only catcher vessels year-round but was revised to restrict fishing in the B season only and to allow motherships to operate in the B season in order to facilitate catcher vessels in the offshore sector.

Analysis

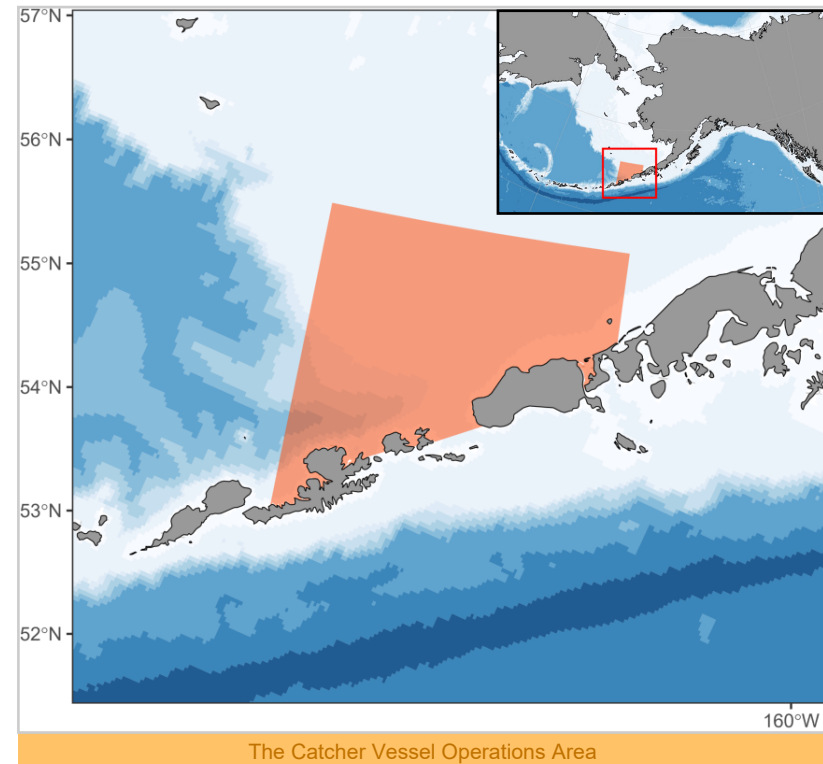
A 524-page final EIS and EA/RIR/IRFA was prepared for BSAI GF FMP 18 evaluating eight alternatives for allocating pollock and Pacific cod TAC between the inshore and offshore sectors and establishing the CVOA. A partial amendment was approved, which in part established the CVOA through 1992. In September 1992 the Council submitted a revised BSAI amendment 18 to NMFS for review, which altered the CVOA to only restrict fishing in the B season.

Regulation Summary

A catcher/processor vessel authorized to fish for BSAI pollock is prohibited from conducting directed fishing for pollock in the CVOA during the B pollock season unless it is directed fishing for pollock CDQ.

Prohibitions

- Fishing for pollock by CPs in the B season, except for pollock CDQ



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations	Effective
Other Management	Bycatch Control	BSAI GF FMP Am 16a	September 1990	April 15, 1991 56 FR 15063	July 18, 1991 56 FR 32984	July 12/Aug. 12, 1991

Purpose and Need

Amendment 16a was designed to address management of herring bycatch and other bycatch taken in domestic trawl fisheries. In particular, it defined the “hot spot authority,” intended to give the Regional Director flexibility to close specific small areas in-season when bycatch rates were high. This also allowed for limitation of the pollock TAC to gears other than pelagic trawl gear and established a prohibited species limit for herring. Herring in the eastern Bering Sea had declined from a peak in the mid 1980’s, and unconstrained bycatch in trawl fisheries had jumped to high levels relative to exploitable biomass in 1989. This was a cause for concern because when the bycatch mortality was added to the mortality due to the directed inshore fishery, exploitation rates exceeded the State’s harvest policy for herring. The ‘hot spot’ authority was proposed to reduce prohibited species bycatch rates and to provide fishermen a greater opportunity to harvest groundfish TAC prior to reaching established PSC limits. A limitation on bottom trawling for pollock was included in the amendment to reduce the amount of crab and halibut bycatch in this fishery.

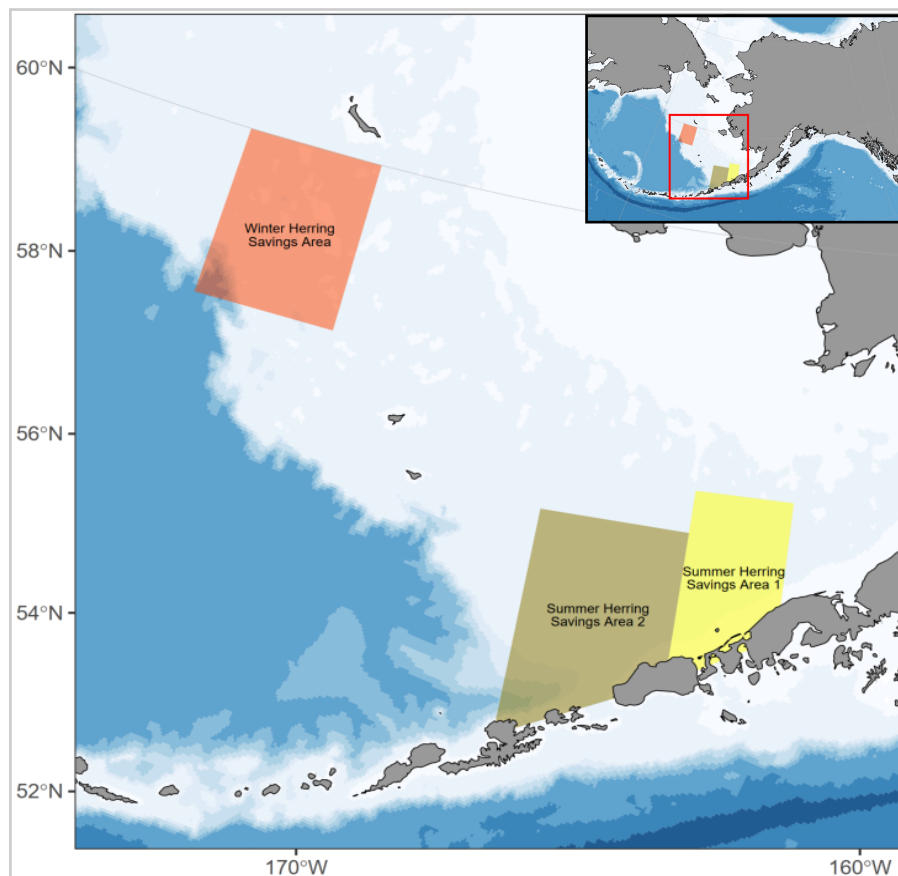
Prohibitions

- Fishing in a closed Herring savings area in a fishery that has hit the 1% Herring PSC trigger limit

Analysis

A 47-page EA/RIR (final draft dated March 1, 1991) plus tables, was prepared for Amendment 16a to the BSAI GF FMP. There were four alternatives, including the status quo, for herring savings areas considered. The alternatives not chosen would have established smaller or larger winter savings

areas. Options for trigger limits included 1%, 2%, 4%, and 8%. The alternative chosen was for the lowest PSC limit (1%) and an intermediate sized winter savings area.



The Herring Savings Areas

Regulation Summary

Amendment 16a established PSC limits for Pacific herring taken as bycatch in trawl fisheries. The annual PSC limit was set at 1% of the annual biomass of eastern Bering Sea herring, and is apportioned among trawl fishery

categories. Attainment of any apportionment triggers closure of herring savings areas to that fishery. The timing of closures if the 1% PSC biomass trigger is met are as follows:

- 1) Summer Herring Savings Area 1: from 12:00 noon June 15 through 12:00 noon July 1.
- 2) Summer Herring Savings Area 2: 12:00 noon July 1 through 12:00 noon August 15.
- 3) Winter Herring Savings Area: 12:00 noon September 1 through 12:00 noon March 1 of the succeeding year

The Regional Director may promulgate an inseason closure of an area (for up to 60 days) to reduce prohibited species bycatch rates. A number of factors must be considered when implementing any ‘hot spot’ closure.

Conservation Value

The time/area closures established were based on spatial analysis of bycatch rates and the seasonal migration of herring, so the closure areas encompass the times and places where herring are concentrated. The measures to control herring bycatch appear to be successful and may have contributed to a reduction in bycatch over time.



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Emergency Rule	Proposed Rule	Final Regulations
Other Management	Habitat	GOA GF FMP Am 15	September 1986	March 12, 1986 50 FR 8502	Dec. 12, 1986 51 FR 44812	April 15 1987 52 FR 12183
		GOA GF FMP Am 18	June 1989	Sept. 22, 1989 54 FR 39022	Dec. 6 1989 54 FR 50386	January 1, 1990
		GOA GF FMP Am 26	June 1992	Oct. 15, 1992 57 FR 47321	Jan. 6, 1993 58 FR 503	January 1, 1993

Purpose and Need

The red king crab stock around Kodiak Island peaked in 1965, with landings of 94 million pounds, and then declined and remained at moderately low levels through the 1970's. No fishery has been allowed since 1982 in an attempt to rebuild the stock. While the cause for the decline of red king crab is not known, most researchers believe the decline can be attributed to a variety of factors including overfishing, fish predation on king crab, and a warmer ocean environment. Fishery managers have enacted measures to provide an environment conducive to the recovery of the red king crab stock by minimizing impacts from other fisheries.

Analysis

A 193-page EA/RIR/IRFA (final draft dated July 21, 1989) was prepared for GOA Amendment 18, which included six actions that affected GOA groundfish management. In approving its action to delete fishing seasons from the FMPs, the Council also considered a framework procedure for annually setting fishing seasons.

An 18-page EA/RIR (final draft dated September 14, 1992) was prepared for GOA Amendment 26. Three alternatives including the status quo were considered. Under the status quo alternative, the time/area closures would have expired at the end of 1992. The other alternative not chosen would have extended the closures for another three years. The alternative adopted made these closures permanent.

Regulation Summary

Type III areas are adjacent to Type I and II areas and have been identified as important juvenile king crab rearing or migratory areas and become operational following a determination that a "recruitment event" has occurred. Type I areas have very high king crab concentrations and, to promote rebuilding of the crab stocks, are closed all year to all trawling except with pelagic gear. Type II areas have lower crab concentrations and are only closed to non-pelagic gear from February 15 through June 15. The Regional Administrator will classify the expanded Type III area as either Type I or II, depending on the information available. A "recruitment event" is defined as the appearance of female king crab in substantially increased numbers (when the total number of females estimated for a given district equals the number of females established as a threshold criterion for opening that district to commercial crab fishing). A recruitment event closure will continue until a commercial crab fishery opens for that district or the number of crabs drops below the threshold level for that district. When necessary, Type III areas will be closed by regulatory amendment; the Regional Administrator will specify which of the Type III areas are closed and whether the closure is for an entire year or only a portion of a year.

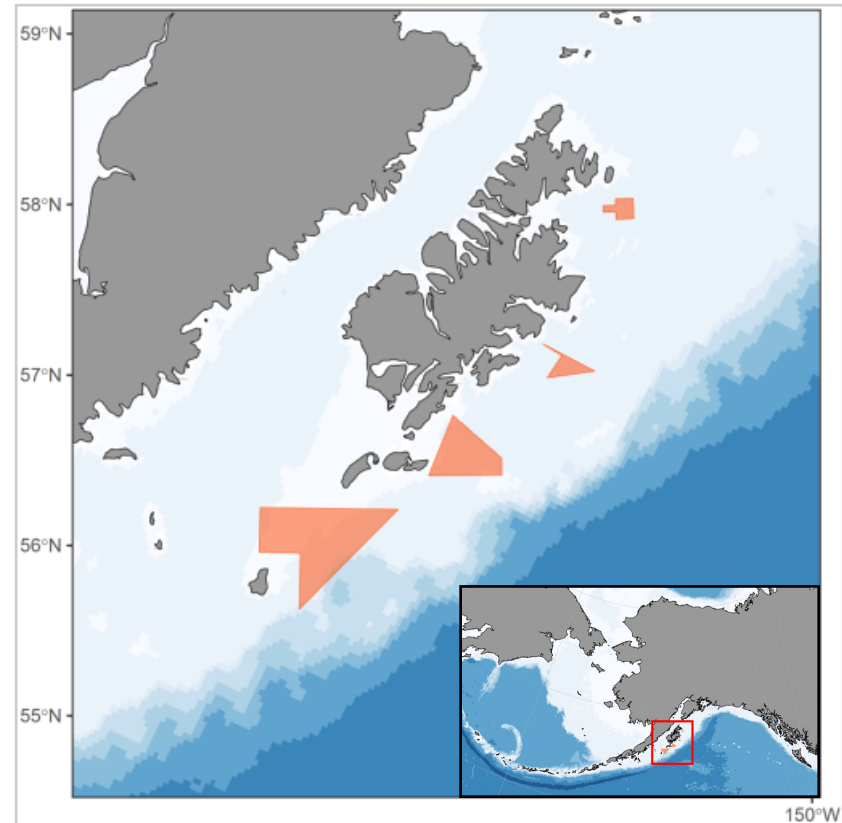
Type III areas are open unless otherwise designated as Type I or II areas and closed to trawling

Conservation Value

Despite being a tool created for the management of these areas, Type III closures have never been triggered from a lack of recruitment. Despite these long-term closures, adult and juvenile red king crab populations remain low as measured by trawl surveys in and around the Kodiak trawl closure areas.

Prohibitions

- Trawling in Type III areas if closed by the Regional Administrator



Type III Closures around Kodiak



Type: *Other Management*
 Focus: *Bycatch Control*

Effective
 1967

Purpose and Need

In 1967, the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) designated part of IPHC Regulatory Area 4E in Bristol Bay as a separate area closed to longline fishing, considering the area to be a nursery area for juvenile Pacific Halibut. The area was closed in order to protect nursery grounds from foreign fishing effort, particularly Japanese and Soviet trawl and longline fisheries, in response to severe declines in halibut abundance. This area had historically accounted for less than 10% of the directed halibut landings in the Bering Sea but was a major source of halibut mortality from foreign non-pelagic trawl gear. After the Americanization of the fishing fleet in the 1980s, excluding foreign fleets from fishing in US waters, American vessels were allowed to fish in the IPHC Closed Area. After excluding foreign fishing from US waters, the IPHC Closed Area no longer served its intended purpose of protecting immature halibut and the NPFMC chose other measures to reduce halibut bycatch such as fishery-specific bycatch limits and closed areas within the IPHC Closed Area, with only the directed commercial halibut longline fishery completely excluded from the area. This area was reduced in 1990 when the IPHC expanded regulatory area 4E, as IPHC survey data suggested relatively few juveniles would be vulnerable to capture in the longline fishery.

Conservation Value

Since 1998, the IPHC has considered removing the Closed Area. The purpose of this area was as a hedge against uncertainty in the assessment and management of Bering Sea Pacific halibut. Since 1998, the IPHC has accumulated sufficient data to generate stock assessments in the Bering Sea with much greater confidence. Between 2011 and 2013, the IPHC reviewed the purpose of the Closed Area, considering removing it or allowing directed commercial longline halibut fishing in the area. The IPHC did not approve removal of the area, noting that it is not a high priority issue and may be considered in the future. The IPHC again deferred removing the Closed Area in 2018.

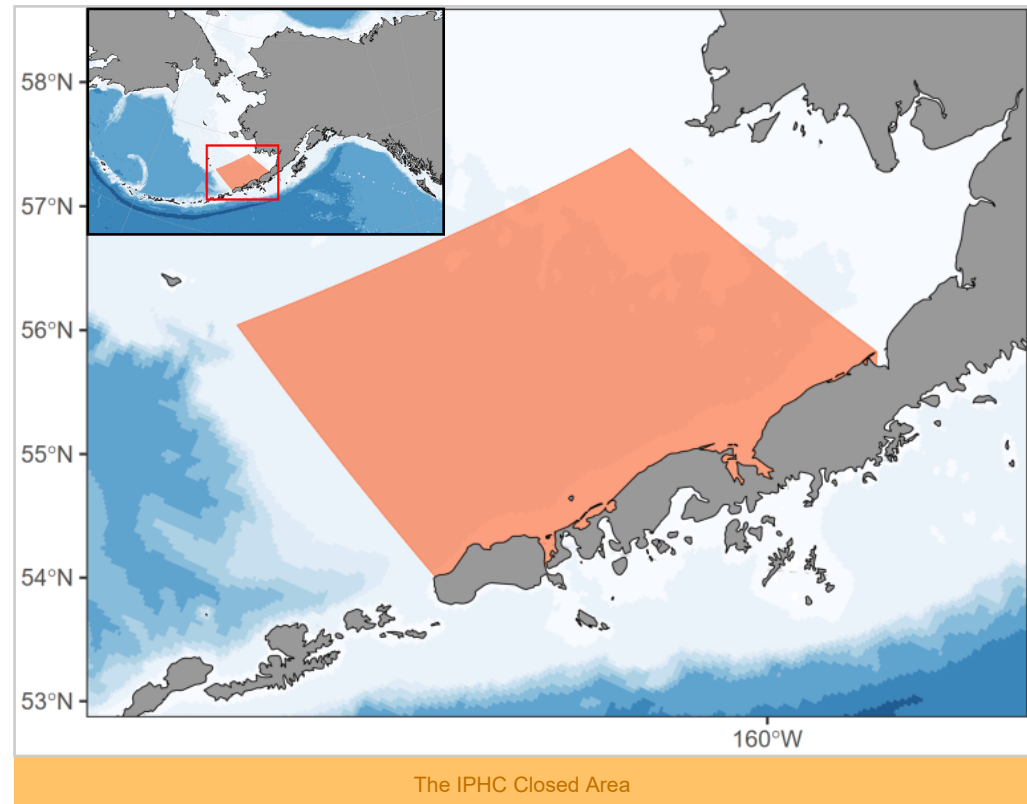
The IPHC has put off any further action on this area until the Council advises what IPHC regulatory subareas to which this area would be added. Which subarea is chosen will determine who gets to fish in this area.

Regulation Summary

Directed commercial Pacific halibut longline fishing is prohibited in the Closed Area.

Prohibitions

- Directed longline fishing for Pacific Halibut



Type:	Focus:	Related FMP Amendment	Council Action	Notice of Availability	Final Regulations	Effective
Other Management	Habitat	BSAI GF FMP Am 104	February 2013	Oct. 8, 2014 79 FR 60802	Jan. 5, 2015 80 FR 1378	January 9, 2015

Purpose and Need

In April 2010, the Council set skate nurseries as a habitat priority type in conjunction with the results of the 5-year EFH review process. In October 2010 the Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC) proposal for potential skate HPAC locations was accepted by the Council that identified six areas of relatively high concentrations of skate eggs (more than 1,000 egg cases per square kilometer in research bottom trawls) for several skate species in the Bering Sea. Skate stock experts identified these six sites as important nursery areas, noting repeated findings of egg cases in fishing gear contacting the sea floor.

The Council decided that the areas designated skate HAPCs in the Bering Sea were rare and provided an important ecological function. These HAPCs emphasized the importance of essential fish habitat by making the areas subject for consultation on fishing and non-fishing activities such as drilling, dredging and filling, and laying cables.

Analysis

A 100-page EA was prepared for BSAI Amendment 104 that analyzed three alternatives for the identification of skate egg concentration HAPCs and two options for gear-type prohibitions. The option to upgrade skate egg locations as a Council research priority was also analyzed. Alternative 2, which intended to identify the six areas of skate egg concentrations as HAPCs, was accepted. The alternative that would have restricted fishing in the HAPC with fixed gear was not selected by the council after it was decided that these gear types have minimal to no impacts on the proposed HAPCs. The analysis found there would be no significant impacts on the human environment from any proposed alternative or option with minor economic impacts.

Regulation Summary

The six areas designated as skate nursery HAPCs have no fishing restrictions.

Conservation Value

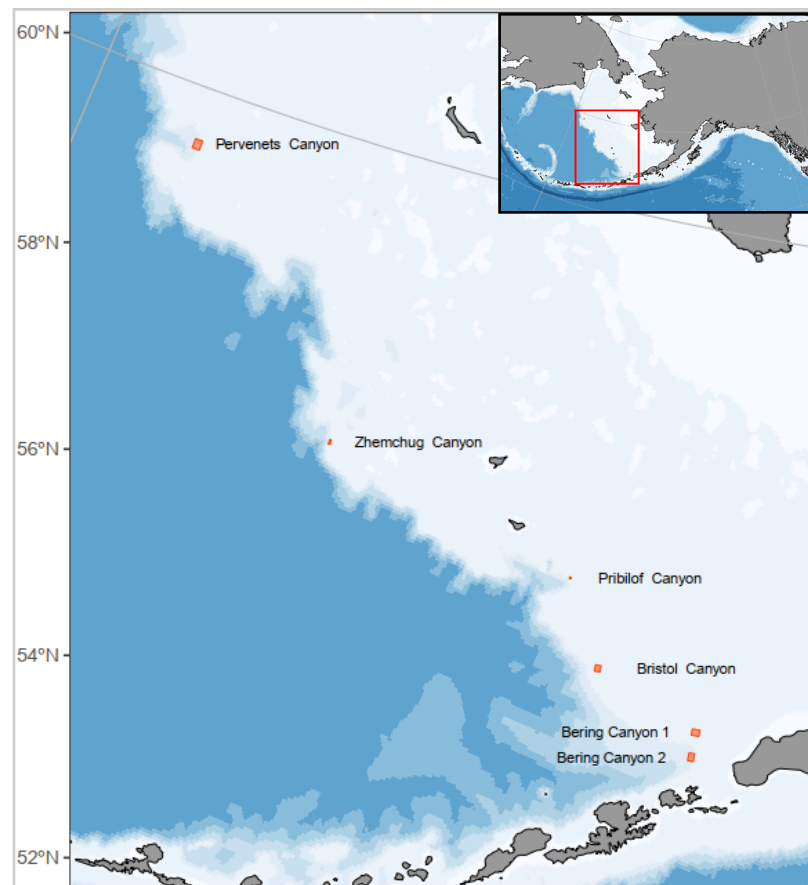
The Council identified these six areas as HAPCs in order to call attention to the importance of these sites for skate reproduction.

Prohibitions

- None

Site name ^a	Predominant skate species	Depth of max. egg density (m)	Maximum egg density (eggs/km ²)	Area of HAPC nm ²	Boundaries of HAPC (°N latitude or °W longitude)			
					North	South	West	East
1. Bering 1	Alaska	145	800,406	18.4	54°53'	54°49'	165°46'	165°38'
2. Bering 2	Aleutian	380	62,992	17.5	54°38'	54°33'	165°45'	165°34'
3. Bristol	Bering	156	6,188	13.7	55°21'	55°17'	167°40'	167°34'
4. Pribilof	Alaska	205	16,473	1.2	56°11'	56°10'	168°28'	168°26'
5. Zhemchug	Alaska	217	610,064	3.2	56°57'	56°54'	173°23'	173°21'
6. Pervenets	Alaska, Bering, Aleutian	316	334,163	27.7	59°28'	59°22'	177°43'	177°34'
Total area of the eastern Bering Sea proposed as HAPCs under Alternative 2 = 81.7 nm²								

Egg Concentrations in HAPC Areas. From March 2012 Initial Review



The Skate Nursery HAPC Areas



Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for each Conservation Area, by species and life stage (Adult: "A", Juvenile: "J")

Includes only EFH descriptions with EFH Level 2 (habitat related density) or higher information. Based on 2018 descriptions of EFH

<u>Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation</u>	<u>Bering Sea Habitat Conservation</u>	<u>Bowers Ridge Habitat Conservation</u>	<u>Gulf of Alaska Coral Habitat</u>	<u>Gulf of Alaska Slope Habitat</u>
<u>Area:</u>	<u>Area:</u>	<u>Zones:</u>	<u>Protection Areas:</u>	<u>Protection Areas:</u>
Alaska skate (A,J)	Alaska skate (A,J)	Alaska skate (J)	Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)	Aleutian skate (J)
Aleutian skate (J)	Aleutian skate (J)	Aleutian skate (J)	Dover sole (A,J)	Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)	Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)	Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)	Dusky rockfish (A)	Atka mackerel (A)
Atka mackerel (A,J)	Atka mackerel (A)	Atka mackerel (A,J)	Flathead sole (A,J)	Dover sole (A,J)
Bering skate (A,J)	Bering skate (A,J)	Bering skate (A,J)	Harlequin rockfish (A)	Dusky rockfish (A)
Bigmouth sculpin (A)	Bigmouth sculpin (A)	Dover sole (A,J)	Pacific cod (A,J)	Flathead sole (A,J)
Dover sole (A,J)	Dover sole (A,J)	Dusky rockfish (A)	Pacific ocean perch (A,J)	Harlequin rockfish (A)
Dusky rockfish (A)	Dusky rockfish (A)	Flathead sole (A,J)	Redbanded rockfish (J)	Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
Flathead sole (A,J)	Flathead sole (A,J)	Golden king crab (A)	Rex sole (A,J)	Northern rock sole (A,J)
Golden king crab (A)	Great sculpin (A,J)	Greenland turbot (A,J)	Rougheye rockfish (J)	Northern rockfish (A)
Great sculpin (A,J)	Greenland turbot (A,J)	Harlequin rockfish (A)	Sablefish (A,J)	Octopus
Greenland turbot (A,J)	Harlequin rockfish (A)	Kamchatka flounder (A,J)	Sharpchin rockfish (J)	Pacific cod (A,J)
Harlequin rockfish (A)	Kamchatka flounder (A,J)	Northern rock sole (A,J)	Shortraker rockfish (A)	Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
Kamchatka flounder (A,J)	Northern rock sole (A,J)	Northern rockfish (A)	Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)	Redbanded rockfish (J)
Northern rock sole (A,J)	Northern rockfish (A)	Octopus	Silvergrey rockfish (A)	Rex sole (A,J)
Northern rockfish (A)	Pacific cod (A,J)	Pacific cod (A,J)	Southern rock sole (A)	Rougheye rockfish (J)
Octopus	Pacific ocean perch (A,J)	Pacific ocean perch (A,J)	Walleye pollock (A,J)	Sablefish (A,J)
Pacific cod (A,J)	Red king crab (A)	Redbanded rockfish (J)		Sharpchin rockfish (J)
Pacific ocean perch (A,J)	Redbanded rockfish (J)	Rex sole (A,J)		Shortraker rockfish (A)
Redbanded rockfish (J)	Rex sole (A,J)	Rougheye rockfish (J)		Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)
Rex sole (A,J)	Rougheye rockfish (J)	Sablefish (A)		Silvergrey rockfish (A)
Rougheye rockfish (J)	Sablefish (A,J)	Shortraker rockfish (A)		Southern rock sole (A,J)
Sablefish (A,J)	Sharpchin rockfish (J)	Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)		Walleye pollock (A,J)
Sharpchin rockfish (J)	Shortraker rockfish (A)	Southern tanner crab (A)		Yellow Irish lord (A)
Shortraker rockfish (A)	Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)	Walleye pollock (A,J)		
Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)	Silvergrey rockfish (A)	Yellow Irish lord (A)		
Silvergrey rockfish (A)	Snow crab (A)	Yellowfin sole (A,J)		
Snow crab (A)	Southern rock sole (A,J)			
Southern rock sole (A,J)	Southern tanner crab (A)			
Southern tanner crab (A)	Walleye pollock (A,J)			
Walleye pollock (A,J)	Yellow Irish lord (A)			
Yellow Irish lord (A)	Yellowfin sole (A,J)			
Yellowfin sole (A,J)				



Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for each Conservation Area, by species and life stage (Adult: "A", Juvenile: "J")

Includes only EFH descriptions with EFH Level 2 (habitat related density) or higher information. Based on 2018 descriptions of EFH

Northern Bering Sea Research Area:

Alaska skate (A,J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (J)
 Bering skate (A)
 Blue king crab (A)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Great sculpin (A,J)
 Greenland turbot (A,J)
 Kamchatka flounder (J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Red king crab (A)
 Snow crab (A)
 Southern tanner crab (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Nunivak Island, Etolin Strait, and
 Kuskokwim Bay Habitat Conservation

Area:

Alaska skate (A,J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (J)
 Bering skate (A)
 Blue king crab (A)
 Flathead sole (J)
 Great sculpin (J)
 Kamchatka flounder (J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Red king crab (A)
 Snow crab (A)
 Southern tanner crab (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellowfin sole (A,J)

St. Lawrence Island Habitat
 Conservation Area:

Alaska skate (J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Blue king crab (A)
 Flathead sole (J)
 Greenland turbot (A,J)
 Kamchatka flounder (J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Red king crab (A)
 Snow crab (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellowfin sole (A,J)

St. Matthew Island Habitat
 Conservation Area:

Alaska skate (A,J)
 Aleutian skate (J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Bering skate (A)
 Bigmouth sculpin (A)
 Blue king crab (A)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Great sculpin (A,J)
 Greenland turbot (A,J)
 Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Snow crab (A)
 Southern tanner crab (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)
 Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Southeast Alaska Trawl Closure:

Aleutian Skate (J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Dover sole (A,J)
 Dusky rockfish (A)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Harlequin rockfish (A)
 Northern rock sole (A)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Redbanded rockfish (J)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Rougheye rockfish (J)
 Sablefish (A,J)
 Sharpchin rockfish (J)
 Shortraker rockfish (A)
 Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)
 Silvergrey rockfish (A)
 Southern rock sole (A,J)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)



Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for each Conservation Area, by species and life stage (Adult: "A", Juvenile: "J")

Includes only EFH descriptions with EFH Level 2 (habitat related density) or higher information. Based on 2018 descriptions of EFH

Kodiak Island Trawls, Other Than Pelagic Trawls—Type I Closures:

Aleutian skate (J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Atka mackerel (A)
 Dover sole (A,J)
 Dusky rockfish (A)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Harlequin rockfish (A)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Northern rockfish (A)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A)
 Redbanded rockfish (J)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Rougheye rockfish (J)
 Sablefish (A,J)
 Shortraker rockfish (A)
 Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)
 Southern rock sole (A,J)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)

Nearshore Bristol Bay Trawl Closure:

Alaska skate (A,J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Great sculpin (A,J)
 Kamchatka flounder (J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Red king crab (A)
 Rex sole (A)
 Snow crab (A)
 Southern tanner crab (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)
 Yellowfish sole (A,J)

Pribilof Islands Habitat Conservation

Zone:
 Alaska skate (A,J)
 Aleutian skate (J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Bering skate (A,J)
 Bigmouth sculpin (A)
 Blue king crab (A)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Great sculpin (A,J)
 Greenland turbot (A,J)
 Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Red king crab (A)
 Rex sole (A)
 Snow crab (A)
 Southern tanner crab (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)
 Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Red King Crab Savings Area:

Alaska skate (A,J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Great sculpin (A,J)
 Kamchatka flounder (J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Red king crab (A)
 Rex sole (A)
 Snow Crab (A)
 Southern tanner crab (A)
 Walleye Pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)
 Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Aleutian Islands Coral Habitat Protection Area:

Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Atka mackerel (A,J)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Golden king crab (A)
 Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Northern rockfish (A)
 Octopus
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Shortraker rockfish (A)
 Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)



Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for each Conservation Area, by species and life stage (Adult: "A", Juvenile: "J")

Includes only EFH descriptions with EFH Level 2 (habitat related density) or higher information. Based on 2018 descriptions of EFH

Sitka Pinnacles Marine Reserve:

Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Dover sole (A,J)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Harlequin rockfish (A)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Redbanded rockfish (J)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Sablefish (A,J)
 Sharpchin rockfish (J)
 Silvergrey rockfish (A)
 Southern rock sole (A,J)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)

Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas—

Aleutian Islands Subarea:

Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Atka mackerel (A,J)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Golden king crab (A)
 Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Northern rockfish (A)
 Octopus
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Shortraker rockfish (A)
 Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)

Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas—

Seguam Foraging Area:

Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Atka mackerel (A,J)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Golden king crab (A)
 Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Northern rockfish (A)
 Octopus
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Shortraker rockfish (A)
 Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)

Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas—

Bogoslof Area:

Aleutian skate (J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Atka mackerel (A,J)
 Bering skate (A,J)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Golden king crab (A)
 Greenland turbot (A,J)
 Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Northern rockfish (A)
 Octopus
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Shortraker rockfish (A,J)
 Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A)
 Southern tanner crab (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)
 Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas—

Bering Sea Subarea:

Alaska skate (A,J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Atka mackerel (A,J)
 Bering skate (A,J)
 Bigmouth sculpin (A)
 Blue king crab (A)
 Dover sole (A,J)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Great sculpin (A,J)
 Greenland turbot (A,J)
 Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Northern rockfish (A)
 Octopus
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Red king crab (A)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Shortraker rockfish (A)
 Shortspine thornyhead (A,J)
 Snow crab (A)
 Southern rock sole (A,J)
 Southern tanner crab (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)
 Yellowfin sole (A,J)



Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for each Conservation Area, by species and life stage (Adult: “A”, Juvenile: “J”)

Includes only EFH descriptions with EFH Level 2 (habitat related density) or higher information. Based on 2018 descriptions of EFH

Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas—
Pollock Restriction Area:

Alaska skate (A,J)
Aleutian skate (J)
Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
Atka mackerel (A,J)
Bering skate (A,J)
Dover sole (A,J)
Flathead sole (A,J)
Great sculpin (A,J)
Greenland turbot (A,J)
Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
Northern rock sole (A,J)
Northern rockfish (A)
Octopus
Pacific cod (A,J)
Pacific ocean perch (A)
Red king crab (A)
Rex sole (A,J)
Shortraker rockfish (A)
Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)
Snow crab (A)
Southern rock sole (A,J)
Southern tanner crab (A)
Walleye pollock (A,J)
Yellow Irish lord (A)
Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Steller Sea Lion Protection Areas—
Gulf of Alaska:

Aleutian Skate (J)
Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
Atka mackerel (A,J)
Dover sole (A,J)
Dusky rockfish (A)
Flathead sole (A,J)
Golden king crab (A)
Harlequin rockfish (A)
Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
Northern rock sole (A,J)
Northern rockfish (A)
Octopus
Pacific cod (A,J)
Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
Redbanded rockfish (J)
Rex sole (A,J)
Rougheye rockfish (J)
Sablefish (A,J)
Sharpchin rockfish (J)
Shortraker rockfish (A)
Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)
Silvergrey rockfish (A)
Southern rock sole (A,J)
Walleye pollock (A,J)
Yellow Irish lord (A)

Walrus Protection Areas—Cape
Peirce, Round, and the Twins:

Alaska skate (J)
Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
Flathead sole (A,J)
Great sculpin (J)
Kamchatka flounder (J)
Northern rock sole (A,J)
Pacific cod (A,J)
Red king crab (A)
Southern tanner crab (A)
Walleye pollock (A,J)
Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Cook Inlet Non-Pelagic Trawl Closure: Marmot Bay Tanner Crab Protection
Area:

Aleutian skate (J)
Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
Dover sole (A,J)
Dusky rockfish (A)
Flathead sole (A,J)
Northern rock sole (A,J)
Pacific cod (A,J)
Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
Rex sole (A,J)
Rougheye rockfish (J)
Sablefish (A,J)
Southern rock sole (A,J)
Walleye pollock (A,J)
Yellow Irish lord (A)

Aleutian Skate (J)
Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
Dover sole (A,J)
Dusky rockfish (A)
Flathead sole (A,J)
Northern rock sole (A,J)
Pacific cod (A,J)
Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
Rex sole (A,J)
Rougheye rockfish (J)
Sablefish (A,J)
Shortraker rockfish (A)
Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)
Southern rock sole (A,J)
Walleye pollock (A,J)
Yellow Irish Lord (A)



Appendix

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for each Conservation Area, by species and life stage (Adult: "A", Juvenile: "J")

Includes EFH descriptions with EFH Level 2 (habitat related density) or higher information*. Based on 2018 descriptions of EFH

Arctic Closure*:

Arctic cod (A,J) level 1
Saffron cod (A,J) level 1
Snow crab (A,J) level 1

*No Level 2 or higher EFH is available for the Arctic, Level 1 EFH is reported for this area

Area 512 Closure:

Alaska skate (A,J)
Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
Flathead sole (A,J)
Great sculpin (A,J)
Kamchatka flounder (J)
Northern rock sole (A,J)
Pacific cod (A,J)
Red king crab (A)
Rex sole (A)
Snow crab (A)
Southern tanner crab (A)
Walleye pollock (A,J)
Yellow Irish lord (A)
Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Area 516 Closure:

Alaska skate (A,J)
Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
Flathead sole (A,J)
Great sculpin (A,J)
Kamchatka flounder (J)
Northern rock sole (A,J)
Pacific cod (A,J)
Red king crab (A)
Rex sole (A)
Snow crab (A)
Southern tanner crab (A)
Walleye pollock (A,J)
Yellow Irish lord (A)
Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Salmon Management Area West:

Alaska skate (A,J)
Aleutian skate (J)
Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
Atka mackerel (A,J)
Bering skate (A,J)
Bigmouth sculpin (A)
Blue king crab (A)
Dover sole (A,J)
Dusky rockfish (A)
Flathead sole (A,J)
Golden king crab (A)
Great sculpin (A,J)
Greenland turbot (A,J)
Harlequin rockfish (A)
Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
Northern rock sole (A,J)
Northern rockfish (A)
Octopus
Pacific cod (A,J)
Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
Red king crab (A)
Redbanded rockfish (J)
Rex sole (A,J)
Rougheye rockfish (J)
Sablefish (A,J)
Sharpchin rockfish (J)
Shortraker rockfish (A)
Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)
Silvergrey rockfish (A)
Snow crab (A)
Southern rock sole (A,J)
Southern tanner crab (A)
Walleye pollock (A,J)
Yellow Irish lord (A)
Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Modified Gear Trawl Zone:

Alaska skate (A,J)
Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
Blue king crab (A)
Flathead sole (A,J)
Great sculpin (J)
Kamchatka flounder (J)
Northern rock sole (A,J)
Pacific cod (A,J)
Red king crab (A)
Snow crab (A)
Southern tanner crab (A)
Walleye pollock (A,J)
Yellowfin sole (A,J)



Appendix

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for each Conservation Area, by species and life stage (Adult: “A”, Juvenile: “J”)

Includes only EFH descriptions with EFH Level 2 (habitat related density) or higher information. Based on 2018 descriptions of EFH

Kodiak Island Trawls, Other Than Pelagic Trawls—Type II Closures:

Aleutian skate (J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Atka mackerel (A)
 Dover sole (A,J)
 Dusky rockfish (A)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Harlequin rockfish (A)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Northern rockfish (A)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Redbanded rockfish (J)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Rougheye rockfish (J)
 Sablefish (A)
 Shortraker rockfish (A)
 Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)
 Silvergrey rockfish (A)
 Southern rock sole (A,J)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)

Steller Sea Lion Conservation Area:

Alaska skate (A,J)
 Aleutian skate (J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Atka mackerel (A,J)
 Bering skate (A,J)
 Bigmouth sculpin (A)
 Dover sole (A,J)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Golden king crab (A)
 Great sculpin (A,J)
 Greenland turbot (A,J)
 Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Northern rockfish (A)
 Octopus
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Red king crab (A)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Shortraker rockfish (A)
 Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)
 Snow crab (A)
 Southern rock sole (A,J)
 Southern tanner crab (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)
 Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Scallop Closed Areas—Aleutian

Islands:
 Alaska skate (A,J)
 Aleutian skate (J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Atka mackerel (A,J)
 Bering skate (A,J)
 Bigmouth sculpin (A)
 Blue king crab (A)
 Dover sole (A,J)
 Dusky rockfish (A)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Golden king crab (A)
 Greenland turbot (A,J)
 Harlequin rockfish (A)
 Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Northern rockfish (A)
 Octopus
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Red king crab (A)
 Redbanded rockfish (J)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Rougheye rockfish (J)
 Sablefish (A,J)
 Sharpchin rockfish (J)
 Shortraker rockfish (A)
 Shortspine thornyhead (A,J)
 Silvergrey rockfish (A)
 Snow crab (A)
 Southern rock sole (A,J)
 Southern tanner crab (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)
 Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Scallop Closed Areas—Gulf of Alaska:

Aleutian skate (J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Atka mackerel (A,J)
 Dover sole (A,J)
 Dusky rockfish (A)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Golden king crab (A)
 Harlequin rockfish (A)
 Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Northern rockfish (A)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Redbanded rockfish (J)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Rougheye rockfish (J)
 Sablefish (A,J)
 Sharpchin rockfish (J)
 Shortraker rockfish (A)
 Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)
 Silvergrey rockfish (A)
 Southern rock sole (A,J)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellow Irish lord (A)

Bering/Kotzebue Herring Closed Area:

Alaska skate (A,J)
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Bering skate (A,J)
 Bigmouth sculpin (A)
 Blue king crab (A)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Great sculpin (A,J)
 Greenland turbot (A,J)
 Kamchatka flounder (A,J)
 Northern rock sole (A,J)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Red king crab (A)
 Snow crab (A)
 Southern tanner crab (A)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)
 Yellowfin sole (A,J)

Black Rockfish Closure Area:
 Arrowtooth flounder (A,J)
 Dover sole (A,J)
 Dusky rockfish (A)
 Flathead sole (A,J)
 Harlequin rockfish (A)
 Northern rock sole (A)
 Pacific cod (A,J)
 Pacific ocean perch (A,J)
 Redbanded rockfish (J)
 Rex sole (A,J)
 Rougheye rockfish (J)
 Sablefish (A,J)
 Sharpchin rockfish (J)
 Shortraker rockfish (A)
 Shortspine thornyhead rockfish (A,J)
 Silvergrey rockfish (A)
 Southern rock sole (A,J)
 Walleye pollock (A,J)



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Produced by NPFMC under NOAA Award
#FNA20NMF4410003

Oceanographic maps produced using the ggOceanMaps package in R.
Vihtakari M (2022). `_ggOceanMaps: Plot Data on Oceanographic Maps`
using 'ggplot2'. R package version 1.3.7,
<https://mikkovihtakari.github.io/ggOceanMaps/>.

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