



C1 Central GOA Rockfish Adjustment – Final Action

June 2022 Council Meeting

Action Memo

Council Staff: Jon McCracken and Sarah Rheinsmith

Action Required: 1. Review analysis
2. If appropriate, designate a preferred alternative

Background

The Council will receive the final action draft of an analysis to modify the Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program. The Council designated a preliminary preferred alternative at initial review in April 2022. The following are the measures under consideration (bold indicates the preliminary preferred alternative):

- 1) **change the season start date from May 1 to April 1**
- 2) **eliminate the catcher vessel (CV) cooperative holding cap of 30 percent**
- 3) **increase the processing cap to 35 percent – 40 percent of the CV quota share pool for sablefish, Pacific cod, and/or primary rockfish, and**
- 4) **revise the CV aggregated primary rockfish (Pacific Ocean perch (POP), northern rockfish, and dusky rockfish) harvesting cap by capping only POP harvest at 8 percent of the CV POP share pool.**

Since presentation of the initial review draft during the April Council meeting, staff has updated the existing Regulatory Impact Review (RIR) as requested by the Council. In addition, staff prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to address questions concerning the May 1 start date. Since the SSC has already reviewed and recommended release of the RIR during the April Council meeting, the SSC will limit its review to the EA at this meeting.

The purpose of this action is to address changes in the fishery which would increase flexibility and efficiency, improve functionality, and better ensure the total allowable catch (TAC) for the primary rockfish species is fully harvested and landed in Kodiak as intended. Unforeseen changes in the Central GOA rockfish fishery in recent years to include the continuing Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic conditions, impacts to the GOA flatfish market due to the continuing foreign trade tariffs, and the loss of several shorebased processing facilities in Kodiak have resulted in difficulties in processing all the trawl CV rockfish quota, especially later in the season as processors approach their current processing caps or close for seasonal maintenance. In addition, dusky rockfish and northern rockfish CV quota are not fully harvested, so modifying the aggregate harvest cap for the primary rockfish species to apply only to POP could facilitate a greater percentage of dusky rockfish and northern rockfish quota being harvested.