

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC, and AP Members

FROM: Chris Oliver *DO FOR*  
Executive Director

DATE: September 19, 2011

SUBJECT: 2012/2013 BSAI and GOA Proposed Annual Harvest Specifications

|   |
|---|
| ESTIMATED TIME<br>12 HOURS<br>ALL C-2 ITEMS |
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**ACTION REQUIRED**

- (a) Adopt proposed groundfish harvest specifications for 2012/2013

**BACKGROUND**

During their meetings on August 30 - September 1, 2011, the BSAI and GOA Groundfish Plan Teams recommended proposed groundfish harvest specifications for 2012 and 2013, adopted revisions to the 2012 research priorities, and considered numerous informational reports. The reports from the meetings (including proposed harvest specifications) of the Joint BSAI/GOA Groundfish Plan Team, and BSAI Groundfish Plan Team (page 22), GOA Groundfish Plan Team (page 29), are attached under Item C-2(a).

The Council is scheduled at this meeting to recommend proposed BSAI and GOA groundfish harvest specifications for the next two-year period for the sole purpose of notifying the public of likely outcomes for Council action to set final harvest specifications in December. The Teams' recommendations for the next two fishing years are based on rollovers of the established 2012 final specifications, with minor exceptions. The rollover approach was adopted by the Council in 2007. Following this practice, 2012 specifications, which were adopted in December 2010, were published in the *Federal Register* in March 2011 and will start the groundfish fisheries in January 2012. Proposed specifications for 2013 will be adopted at this meeting and are set equal to the 2012 specifications. Any proposed specifications for 2012/2013, including Prohibited Species Catch (PSC) limits for halibut, red king crab, Tanner crab, opilio crab, and herring and their gear type and target fishery apportionments, should be adopted by the Council at this meeting so that the final rule, based on final specifications from December 2011, is a logical outgrowth of the proposed rule. Final harvest specifications will be based on stock assessments included in the respective Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation Reports for the BSAI and GOA.

***Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands*** The BSAI Plan Team recommendations for proposed 2012/2013 BSAI groundfish harvest specifications are attached under Item C-2(a). Final BSAI harvest specifications include PSC limits for halibut, red king crab, Tanner crab, opilio crab, and herring and their gear type and target fishery apportionments, which are set in federal regulations. Draft tables intended to assist the Council at this meeting in setting proposed PSC limits and seasonal apportionments for 2012/2013 are provided below. NMFS staff will be available to assist in setting PSC amounts using using draft proposed amounts from the final 2012 amounts.

**TABLE 7a-PROPOSED 2012 AND 2013 APPORTIONMENT OF PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES TO NON-TRAWL GEAR, THE CDQ PROGRAM, AMENDMENT 80, AND THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTORS**

| PSC species   | Total non-trawl PSC | Non-trawl PSC remaining after CDQ | Total trawl PSC | Trawl PSC remaining after CDQ PSQ <sup>1</sup> | CDQ PSQ reserve <sup>1</sup> | Amendment 80 sector | BSAI trawl limited access fishery |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|--|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI                         | 900                 | 832                               | 3,675           | 3,349  | 393                          | 2,325               | 875                               |
| Herring (mt) BSAI                                   | n/a                 | n/a                               | 2,273           | n/a  | n/a                          | n/a                 | n/a                               |
| Red king crab (animals) Zone 1 <sup>1</sup>         | n/a                 | n/a                               | 197,000         | 175,921  | 21,079                       | 87,925              | 53,797                            |
| <i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBL <sup>2</sup>        | n/a                 | n/a                               | 8,310,480       | 7,421,259                                      | 889,221                      | 3,647,549           | 2,385,193                         |
| <i>C. bairdi</i> crab (animals) Zone 1 <sup>2</sup> | n/a                 | n/a                               | 830,000         | 741,190  | 88,810                       | 312,115             | 348,285                           |
| <i>C. bairdi</i> crab (animals) Zone 2              | n/a                 | n/a                               | 2,520,000       | 2,250,360                                      | 269,640                      | 532,660             | 1,053,394                         |

<sup>1</sup> Section 679.21(e)(3)(i)(A)(2) allocates 326 mt of the trawl halibut mortality limit and § 679.21(e)(4)(i)(A) allocates 7.5 percent, or 67 mt, of the non-trawl halibut mortality limit as the PSQ reserve for use by the groundfish CDQ program. The PSQ reserve for crab species is 10.7 percent of

<sup>2</sup> Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of zones.

**TABLE 7b-PROPOSED 2012 AND 2013 HERRING AND RED KING CRAB SAVINGS SUBAREA PROHIBITED SPECIES CATCH ALLOWANCES FOR ALL TRAWL SECTORS**

| Fishery categories  | Herring (mt) BSAI | Red king crab (animals) Zone 1 |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Yellowfin sole  | 195               | n/a                            |
| Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish <sup>1</sup>               | 33                | n/a                            |
| Greenland turbot/arrowtooth/sablefish <sup>2</sup>                | 16                | n/a                            |
| Rockfish  | 12                | n/a                            |
| Pacific cod   | 33                | n/a                            |
| Midwater trawl pollock  | 1,737             | n/a                            |
| Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species <sup>3,4</sup>                | 247               | n/a                            |
| Red king crab savings subarea non-pelagic trawl gear <sup>3</sup> | n/a               | 49,250                         |
| Total trawl PSC   | 2,273             | 197,000                        |

<sup>1</sup> "Other flatfish" for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), arrowtooth flounder, flathead sole, Greenland turbot, Kamchatka flounder, rock sole, and yellowfin sole.

<sup>2</sup> "Arrowtooth flounder" for PSC monitoring includes Kamchatka flounder.

<sup>3</sup> Pollock other than pelagic trawl pollock, Atka mackerel, and "other species" fishery category.

<sup>4</sup> "Other species" for PSC monitoring includes sculpins, sharks, skates, and octopuses.

<sup>3</sup> In October 2010 the Council recommended that the red king crab bycatch limit for non-pelagic trawl fisheries within the RKCSS be limited to 25 percent of the red king crab PSC allowance (see § 679.21(e)(3)(ii)(B)(2)).

**TABLE 7c-PROPOSED 2012 AND 2013 PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTOR AND NON-TRAWL FISHERIES**

| BSAI trawl limited access fisheries                 | Prohibited species and area <sup>1</sup> |                                |                           |                     |                  |
|---|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
|   | Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI              | Red king crab (animals) Zone 1 | C. opilio (animals) COBLZ | C. bairdi (animals) |                  |
|   |  |                                |                           | Zone 1              | Zone 2           |
| Yellowfin sole                                      | 167                                      | 47,397                         | 2,247,640                 | 293,234             | 1,005,879        |
| Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish <sup>2</sup> | 0  | 0                              | 0                         | 0                   | 0                |
| Turbot/arrowtooth/sablefish <sup>3</sup>            | 0  | 0                              | 0                         | 0                   | 0                |
| Rockfish April 15-December 31                       | 5  | 0                              | 3,821                     | 0                   | 848              |
| Pacific cod   | 453                                      | 6,000                          | 95,523                    | 50,816              | 42,424           |
| Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species <sup>4</sup>    | 250                                      | 400                            | 38,209                    | 4,235               | 4,242            |
| <b>Total BSAI trawl limited access PSC</b>          | <b>875</b>                               | <b>53,797</b>                  | <b>2,385,193</b>          | <b>348,285</b>      | <b>1,053,394</b> |
| <b>Non-trawl fisheries</b>                          | <b>Catcher processor</b>                 | <b>Catcher vessel</b>          |                           |                     |                  |
| Pacific cod-Total                                   | 760                                      | 15                             |                           |                     |                  |
| January 1-June 10                                   | 455                                      | 10                             |                           |                     |                  |
| June 10-August 15                                   | 190                                      | 3                              |                           |                     |                  |
| August 15-December 31                               | 115                                      | 2                              |                           |                     |                  |
| <b>Other non-trawl-Total</b>                        | <b>58</b>                                |                                |                           |                     |                  |
| May 1-December 31                                   | 58                                       |                                |                           |                     |                  |
| Groundfish pot and jig                              |  | Exempt                         |                           |                     |                  |
| Sablefish hook-and-line                             |  | Exempt                         |                           |                     |                  |
| <b>Total non-trawl PSC</b>                          | <b>833</b>                               |                                |                           |                     |                  |

<sup>1</sup> Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of areas.

<sup>2</sup> "Other flatfish" for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), arrowtooth flounder, flathead sole, Greenland turbot, Kamchatka flounder, rock sole, and yellowfin sole.

<sup>3</sup> "Arrowtooth flounder" for PSC monitoring includes Kamchatka flounder.

<sup>4</sup> "Other species" for PSC monitoring includes sculpins, sharks, skates, and octopuses.

**Gulf of Alaska** The GOA Plan Team recommendations for proposed 2012/2013 GOA groundfish harvest specifications are attached under Item C-2(a). The Team modified some of the rockfish categories, compared with current 2012 harvest specifications. Prohibited Species Catch limits are established through the harvest specification process for halibut. Since 1995, total halibut PSC limits have totaled 2,300 t. The GOA halibut PSC apportionments in 2011 are shown below, but the Council likely will defer adopting halibut PSC limits to the next agenda item (Item C-2(b)).

**GOA Pacific halibut PSC Limits**

| 2012-2013 Trawl |                | 2012-2013 Hook and Line |                 |              |
|-----------------|----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Jan 20 - Apr 1  | 550 t          | 1st trimester           | Jan 1 - Jun 10  | 250 t        |
| Apr 1 - Jul 1   | 400 t          | 2nd trimester           | Jun 10 - Sep 1  | 5 t          |
| Jul 1 - Sep 1   | 600 t          | 3rd trimester           | Sept 1 - Dec 31 | 35 t         |
| Sept 1 - Oct 1  | 150 t          |                         |                 |              |
| Oct 1 - Dec 31  | 300 t          | DSR                     | Jan 1 - Dec 31  | 10 t         |
| <b>TOTAL</b>    | <b>2,000 t</b> |                         |                 | <b>300 t</b> |

| Trawl fishery categories |                  |              |                |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Season                   | Shallow Water    | Deep Water   | Total          |
| Jan 1 - Apr 1            | 450 t            | 100 t        | 550 t          |
| Apr 1 - Jul 1            | 100 t            | 300 t        | 400 t          |
| Jul 1 - Sep 1            | 200 t            | 400 t        | 600 t          |
| Sept 1 - Oct 1           | 150 t            | any rollover | 150 t          |
| Oct 1 - Dec 31           | no apportionment |              | 300 t          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>             | <b>900 t</b>     | <b>800 t</b> | <b>2,000 t</b> |

**GOA TAC Considerations for State Pacific Cod Fishery** Since 1997, the Council has reduced the GOA Pacific cod TAC to account for removals of not more than 25 percent of the federal P. cod TAC from the State parallel fisheries. Using the area apportionments of the proposed 2012 P. cod ABC that was recommended by the Plan Team, the 2012/2013 federal TACs for P. cod would be adjusted as listed below.

**Proposed 2012 and 2013 Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod ABCs, TACs and state Guideline Harvest Levels (GHLs) (mt).**

| Specifications     | Western | Central | Eastern | Total  |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| <b>ABC</b>         | 27,370  | 48,484  | 2,346   | 78,200 |
| <b>State GHL</b>   | 6,843   | 12,121  | 587     | 19,550 |
| <b>(%)</b>         | 25      | 25      | 25      | 25     |
| <b>Federal TAC</b> | 20,528  | 36,363  | 1,760   | 58,650 |