



# NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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## Meeting Summary

266th Plenary Session  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
October 5-10, 2023  
Hybrid – Anchorage, AK Hilton Hotel and Zoom Webinar

### CONTENTS

A1	Call Meeting to Order .....	3
B	Reports.....	3
C1	BSAI Crab Harvest Specifications – SAFE Report, ABCs/OFLs, Plan Team Report .....	4
C2	Observer Reports .....	5
C3	BSAI/GOA Groundfish .....	7
C4	Bering Sea Chum Salmon Bycatch .....	17
C5	Crab Facility Use Caps .....	20
D1	Bering Sea LKTKS Protocol and Onramps .....	20
D2	BSAI Crab Program Review .....	22
D3	IFQ Review Workplan.....	23
E1	Staff Tasking.....	24

### Attachments

- 1) [Time Log](#)
- 2) [Newsletter](#)

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council met October 5-10, 2023 at the Hilton Hotel, Anchorage, Alaska. The following Council members, Council staff, SSC, and AP members attended the meetings either in person or virtually.

*The time log is included as a reference attachment for names, dates and times of each agenda item, and the newsletter is included to provide details of the agenda items and the meeting as a whole. All documents and information related to the meeting are accessible online at: <https://meetings.npfmc.org>*

**Council Members**

Rachel Baker/Karla Bush (for Doug Vincent-Lang) <i>Alaska Department Fish and Game</i>	Chris Oliver <i>Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission</i>
Kenny Down <i>Appointed</i>	LCDR Jed Raskie <i>United States Coast Guard</i>
Angel Drobnica <b>Chair</b> <i>Appointed</i>	Bill Tweit (for Kelly Susewind), <b>Vice Chair</b> <i>Washington Department Fish &amp; Wildlife</i>
Pete Fasbender (for Sara Boario) <i>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service</i>	Anne Vanderhoeven <i>Appointed</i>
John Jensen <i>Appointed</i>	Steve Williams/John Seabourne (for Curt Melcher) <i>Oregon Department Fish &amp; Wildlife</i>
Nicole Kimball <i>Appointed</i>	Rudy Tsukada <i>Appointed</i>
Jon Kurland <i>National Marine Fisheries Service</i>	Demian Shane/Josh Fortenberry <i>NOAA General Counsel</i>
Andy Mezirow <i>Appointed</i>	

**Council Staff**

Cleaver, Sara	Haapala, Kate	Schmidt, Nicole
Cochran, Shannon	Hillary, Kaylah (contractor)	Stram, Diana
Cunningham, Sam	La Belle, Sarah	Watson, Nicole
Davis, Maria	Marrinan, Sarah	Witherell, Dave (ED)
Evans, Diana (DD)	Rheinsmith, Sarah	

**Scientific and Statistical Committee**

The SSC met October 2-4, at the Hilton Hotel, Anchorage AK. The following members were present for all or part of the meetings (absent members are ~~stricken~~).

Sherri Dressel, Co-Chair <i>Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game</i>	Mike Downs <i>Wislow Research</i>	<del>Kathryn Meyer</del> <del><i>Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife</i></del>
Franz Mueter, Co-Chair <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Robert Foy <i>NOAA Fisheries—AFSC</i>	Andrew Munro <i>Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game</i>
Alison Whitman, Vice Chair <i>Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife</i>	Jason Gasper <i>NOAA Fisheries—Alaska Regional Office</i>	Chris Siddon <i>Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game</i>
Chris Anderson <i>University of Washington</i>	Dana Hanselman <i>NOAA Fisheries—AFSC</i>	Ian Stewart <i>Intl. Pacific Halibut Commission</i>
Amy Bishop <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Brad Harris <i>Alaska Pacific University</i>	Patrick Sullivan <i>Cornell University</i>
Curry Cunningham <i>University of Alaska Fairbanks</i>	Michael Jepson <i>Independent</i>	Robert Suryan <i>Alaska Fisheries Science Center</i>
Martin Dorn <i>University of Washington</i>	Kailin Kroetz <i>Arizona State University</i>	

### Advisory Panel

The Advisory Panel met October 3-6, at the Hilton Hotel, Anchorage AK. The following members were present for all or part of the meetings (absent members are ~~stricken~~):

Briggie, Tamara	Johnson, Mellisa	Price, Landry
Edson, Jessie	Kavanaugh, Julie	Radell, Chelsae
Gudmundsson, Gretar	Laitinen, Rick	Ritchie, Brian (Chair)
<del>Heuker, Tim</del>	Mann, Heather	Upton, Matt
Howard, Lauren (Co-VC)	O'Donnell, Paddy	Wilkins, Paul (Co-VC)
Johnson, Jim	O'Neil, Megan	Zagorski, Suzie

## A1 Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Tsukada and Mr. Down were sworn into office as new and returning members, respectively. The Council elected Ms. Angel Drobnica as the Council Chair and Mr. Bill Tweit as the Council Vice-Chair. The Council approved the agenda without objection.

## B Reports

The following reports were provided in writing and discussed.

### **B1 Executive Director's Report** – David Witherell

- Presentation Inflation Reduction Act Overview – Dr. Robert Foy
- Presentation on Inflation Reduction Act Staff Paper – Diana Evans

### **B2 NMFS Management Report** – Gretchen Harrington

### **B3 NOAA General Counsel Report** – written report only

### **B4 AFSC Report**— Dr. Robert Foy

### **B5 ADF&G Report** – written report only

### **B6 USCG Report** – LCDR Jed Raskie

### **B7 USFWS Report** – written report only

### **B8 North Pacific Fisheries Commission Report** – Dan Hull & Michael Brakke

### **B9 North Pacific Research Board Report** – Lynn Palensky & Dr. Matthew Baker

Public comment was taken, no motions were made for these agenda items.

# C1 BSAI Crab Harvest Specifications – SAFE Report, ABCs/OFLs, Plan Team Report

- Council Staff:** Sarah Rheinsmith
- Other Presenters:** Katie Palof, (ADF&G, BSAI Crab Plan Team Co-Chair), Dr. Mike Litzow (NMFS, BSAI Crab Plan Team Co-Chair)
- Action Required:**
1. EBS Snow crab – Specify OFL/ABC for 2023/24
  2. Bristol Bay Red King Crab - Specify OFL/ABC for 2023/24
  3. Pribilof Island Blue King Crab - Specify OFL/ABC for 2023/24 and 2024/25
  4. Tanner Crab - Specify OFL/ABC for 2023/24
  5. Review Crab Plan Team Report for the September 2023 meeting
  6. Review/approve final BSAI Crab SAFE report

**Summary:** *The BSAI Crab Plan Team (CPT) met in Seattle, WA, September 2023, to discuss the 2023 stock assessments for various types of crabs in the Bering Sea. They also talked about issues including upcoming assessments, overfishing updates, survey results, and the fishery's economic status. The Council reviewed the report and recommendations of the Plan Team and set harvest limits based on that information.*

After staff presentations, the SSC and AP report, and public comment, Ms. Baker made the following motion that was seconded by Ms. Vanderhoeven:

**MOTION 1 – Crab Specifications**

The Council accepts the Crab SAFE report and adopts the following OFLs and ABCs as recommended by the SSC:

Species	OFL (kt)	ABC (kt)	YEARS
Eastern Bering Sea snow crab	15.44	7.72	2023/24
Bristol Bay red king crab	4.42	3.54	2023/24
Eastern Bering Sea Tanner crab	36.20	28.96	2023/24
	OFL (t)	ABC (t)	
Pribilof Islands blue king crab	1.16	0.87	2023/24, 2024/25

*kt = thousand metric tons, t = metric ton*

**VOTE MOTION 1:** The motion passed unanimously.

**MOTION 2 – Crab Risk Tables**

Ms. Kimball, seconded by Mr. Mezirow, made the following motion: The Council supports developing the risk table approach for crab stocks to provide a more comprehensive, transparent, and defensible justification for SSC recommendations on ABC buffers with the following guidance and any lessons learned from the groundfish plan teams as provided by staff:

The risk tables are intended to inform the SSC determination of adjusting ABC from maximum permissible when needed, to account for uncertainty that is not already included in the model or the tier system. Previous reductions to maxABC should not be the basis for reducing maxABC unless relevant risk factors for a stock continue to be present.

The Council recommends that the consideration of risk and its incorporation into the assessment process continue to be regularly reviewed by the Council and SSC.

**VOTE MOTION 2:** The motion passed unanimously.

## C2 Observer Reports

**Council Staff:** Sara Cleaver  
**Other Presenters:** Jennifer Ferdinand (AFSC)

**Action Required:**

1. Review the draft 2024 ADP and cost efficiencies analysis.
2. Receive the PCFMAC Report.
3. Provide recommendations to NMFS for the final 2024 ADP, and other recommendations as necessary.

**Summary:** *The Council evaluated the Draft 2024 Annual Deployment Plan (ADP) for the North Pacific Observer Program's partial coverage category and made suggestions for the Final 2024 ADP, which is published annually in December. The ADP outlines how the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) plans to assign observers and electronic monitoring to fishing vessels in the partial coverage category, following a cost-efficiency analysis carried out in 2022 and 2023, which was reviewed and incorporated into the 2024 ADP. The Partial Coverage Fishery Monitoring and Advisory Committee (PCFMAC) met in September 2023 to review the draft 2024 ADP and the cost-efficiency analysis. During the meeting, the PCFMAC discussed allocation methods and budget updates, along with proposals for changes to the observer service delivery model, and their recommendations are outlined in the report.*

After staff presentations, the AP report, and public comments, Ms. Kimball made the motion below. It was seconded by Mr. Down.

### **MOTION:**

#### 2024 ADP

The Council supports the following for the 2024 draft Observer Annual Deployment Plan (ADP) for partial coverage fisheries. Observer coverage rates resulting from the selected design and the final budget are expected in the final ADP in December 2023. Fisheries with 100% and 200% coverage requirements in regulation are not covered under the ADP. For the 2024 ADP:

- Use combined fixed gear-FMP stratification scheme:
  - Gear: Hook-and-line/pot gear (combined); trawl gear
  - Monitoring method: Observer; fixed gear electronic monitoring (EM); pelagic trawl gear EM
  - FMP: BSAI; GOA
- Use proximity allocation scheme with the exception of the pelagic trawl EM EFP.
- 100% EM on pelagic trawl vessels participating in the EFP, plus 33% observer shoreside sampling rate for partial coverage EM EFP trips.
- Remove fixed-gear vessels which have not fished nor used their EM systems for 3 or more years from the EM stratum. Place such vessels under 50 feet into the zero-selection pool and larger vessels into the observer-selection pool.

The Council requests NMFS re-evaluate the cost estimates for both fixed gear and trawl EM, which directly affect the cost efficiencies analysis and the resulting coverage rates.

If the final ADP combines fixed gear types for selection, the Council recommends NMFS make clear to fishermen, NMFS staff, and OLE that there is no prohibition on vessels fishing both FMP areas in one trip, despite needing to choose a predominant area when logging trips into ODDS.

The Council supports additional fixed gear EM vessels added to the EM pool in 2024 (up to 200 total vessels) provided they opt-in prior to November 1, 2023, funding is available, and they meet the criteria in the ADP.

#### Future work (2025 ADP)

For the 2025 ADP, the Council recommends exploration of a revised hurdle and an analysis of how to effectively deploy days in addition to that hurdle, per the PCFMAC recommendation. The intent is to base the hurdle on the appropriate time and proximity scale to meet biological data collection needs, and then deploy additional monitoring, using at-sea observers, shoreside observers, and/or EM, to be placed where they are most cost effective for catch accounting purposes and for targeting specific types of information deemed necessary to meet legal mandates or assessment purposes. This will require further evaluation of the needed time/space scale for biological samples.

The Council requests NMFS re-evaluate the cost estimates for both fixed gear and trawl EM without including the cost of initially purchasing the EM hardware for both fixed and trawl gear, clearly separating ongoing costs from start-up costs.

#### Pilot project proposal

The Council encourages submittal of an industry cooperative research grant proposal and encourages NMFS to provide data to support the project: 1) the ports of departure and return for the partial coverage fleet (e.g., how many vessels/trips/catch are associated with smaller remote ports, aggregated as necessary to protect confidentiality); and 2) data on the amount of prior notice vessels are providing when registering trips in ODDS (e.g., is it the 72 hour minimum or are many vessels providing more notice). This project envisions a group of partial coverage fixed gear vessels continue to be selected for coverage through ODDS but procure observers through a private contract with an observer provider (remove the Federal contract component).

#### 2024 NFWF proposals

The Council will provide written support for the proposals on p. 6 of the September 2023 PCFMAC report submitted for funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) for the 2024 Electronic Monitoring and Reporting Grant Program. Funding for continuation of the pelagic trawl EM EFP is the highest priority, until NMFS completes regulations for the program (anticipated 2025).

**VOTE ON MOTION:** The motion passed without objection.

## C3 BSAI/GOA Groundfish

**Council Staff:** Dr. Diana Stram (BSAI) & Sara Cleaver (GOA)

**Other Presenters:** Dr. Kalei Shotwell (AFSC, BSAI Groundfish Plan Team Co-Chair), Dr. Jim Ianelli (AFSC, GOA Groundfish Plan Team Co-Chair), Chris Lunsford (AFSC, GOA Groundfish Plan Team Co-Chair), Dr. Steve Barbeaux (AFSC, BSAI Groundfish Plan Team Co-Chair)

**Action Required:**

1. Review Joint, BSAI, and GOA Groundfish Plan Team reports
2. Recommend proposed BSAI and GOA groundfish harvest limits, prohibited species catch limit apportionments, and halibut discard mortality rates for 2024-2025
3. Review results from GOA DSR/Other rockfish spatial management paper and take action as needed

**Summary:** *The Council reviewed Joint, BSAI, and GOA Groundfish Plan Team reports and the the GOA DSR/Other rockfish spatial management paper, and set proposed harvest limits for BSAI and GOA groundfish, allocations for prohibited species catch limits, and halibut discard mortality rates for 2024-2025.*

After staff presentations, the AP report, and having considered the SSC report given earlier during the day, Ms. Vanderhoeven made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Jensen:

### **MOTION 1 – BSAI Harvest Specifications:**

The Council adopts the proposed 2024 and 2025 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands groundfish harvest specifications for OFLs and ABCs as recommended by the SSC and sets the TACs as shown in the attached BSAI Table 1 with all proposed specifications consisting of rollovers of 2024 final specifications from the 2023/2024 harvest specifications approved in December 2022. The TACs for both Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Pacific cod have been adjusted to account for the state waters GHL fishery. The Bering Sea sablefish TAC has been adjusted to account for the state waters GHL fishery.

The Council adopts the proposed flatfish ABC reserves, 2024 and 2025 annual and seasonal PSC limits and apportionments in the BSAI as proposed in Tables 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 for halibut, red king crab, Tanner crab, opilio crab and herring and their gear type and target fishery apportionments. The 2024 and 2025 crab PSC limits have been revised using current biomass estimates.

The Council adopts the proposed 2024 and 2025 halibut discard mortality rates (DMRs) for the BSAI as shown in Table 13.

Table 1. Council recommended OFLs, ABCs and Council recommended TACs for Groundfish in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (metric tons) for 2024-2025

Species	Area	2022				Catch as of 12/31/2022	2023				SSC recommended			Council 2024/2025		
		OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL		ABC	TAC	Catch as of 9/13/2023	OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	TAC	
EBS		1,469,000	1,111,000	1,111,000	1,105,677	3,381,000	1,910,000	1,300,000	1,250,856	4,639,000	2,275,000	1,302,000				
<b>Pollock</b>	AI	61,264	50,752	19,000	3,058	52,383	43,413	19,000	2,694	52,043	43,092	19,000				
Bogoslof		113,479	85,109	250	259	115,146	86,360	300	117	115,146	86,360	300				
<b>Pacific cod</b>	BS	183,012	153,383	136,466	120,448	172,495	144,834	127,409	82,262	166,814	140,159	123,295				
AI		27,400	20,600	13,796	6,450	18,416	13,812	8,425	2,763	18,416	13,812	8,425				
<b>Sablefish</b>	BSAI/GOA	40,432	34,521	n/a		47,390	40,502			48,561	41,539					
	BS	n/a	5,264	5,264	5,514	n/a	8,417	7,996	4,796	n/a	10,185	9,676				
	AI	n/a	6,463	6,463	2,230	n/a	8,884	8,440	1,919	n/a	10,308	9,793				
<b>Yellowfin sole</b>	BSAI	377,071	354,014	250,000	154,253	404,882	378,499	230,000	71,967	495,155	462,890	230,656				
<b>Greenland turbot</b>	BSAI	7,687	6,572	6,572	1,478	4,645	3,960	3,960	1,248	3,947	3,364	3,364				
	BS	n/a	5,540	5,540	1,038	n/a	3,338	3,338	771	n/a	2,836	2,836				
	AI	n/a	1,032	1,032	440	n/a	622	622	477	n/a	528	528				
<b>Arrowtooth flounder</b>	BSAI	94,445	80,389	20,000	7,857	98,787	83,852	15,000	5,910	103,070	87,511	15,000				
<b>Kamchatka flounder</b>	BSAI	10,903	9,214	9,214	8,369	8,946	7,579	7,579	6,753	8,776	7,435	7,435				
<b>Northern rock sole</b>	BSAI	214,084	206,896	66,000	18,399	166,034	121,719	66,000	22,833	196,011	119,969	66,000				
<b>Flathead sole</b>	BSAI	77,967	64,288	35,500	14,690	79,256	65,344	35,500	7,522	81,167	66,927	35,500				
<b>Alaska plaice</b>	BSAI	39,305	32,697	29,221	11,253	40,823	33,946	17,500	9,489	43,328	36,021	18,000				
<b>Other flatfish</b>	BSAI	22,919	17,189	10,000	2,559	22,919	17,189	4,500	2,874	22,919	17,189	4,500				
<b>Pacific Ocean perch</b>	BSAI	42,605	35,688	35,385	34,782	50,133	42,038	37,703	29,580	49,279	41,322	38,264				
	BS	n/a	10,352	10,352	10,066	n/a	11,903	11,903	8,078	n/a	11,700	11,700				
	EAI	n/a	8,083	8,083	7,996	n/a	8,152	8,152	5,494	n/a	8,013	8,013				
	CAI	n/a	5,950	5,950	5,837	n/a	5,648	5,648	4,792	n/a	5,551	5,551				
WAI		n/a	11,303	11,000	10,882	n/a	16,335	12,000	11,216	n/a	16,058	13,000				
<b>Northern rockfish</b>	BSAI	23,420	19,217	17,000	7,898	22,776	18,687	11,000	9,867	22,105	18,135	11,000				
<b>Blackspotted/Rougheye</b>	BSAI	598	503	503	455	703	525	525	489	763	570	570				
<b>Rockfish</b>	EBS/EAI	n/a	326	326	204		359	359	190	n/a	388	388				
	CAI/WAI	n/a	177	177	250		166	166	299	n/a	182	182				
<b>Shortraker rockfish</b>	BSAI	722	541	541	284	706	530	530	199	706	530	530				
<b>Other rockfish</b>	BSAI	1,751	1,313	1,144	1,308	1,680	1,260	1,260	1,034	1,680	1,260	1,260				
	BS	n/a	919	750	651		880	880	576	n/a	880	880				
	AI	n/a	394	394	657		380	380	458	n/a	380	380				
<b>Atka mackerel</b>	BSAI	91,870	78,510	66,481	58,107	118,787	98,588	69,282	55,903	101,188	86,464	66,855				
	EAI/BS	n/a	27,260	27,260	19,138	n/a	43,281	27,260	15,369	n/a	37,958	30,000				
	CAI	n/a	16,880	16,880	16,761	n/a	17,351	17,351	16,601	n/a	15,218	15,218				
WAI		n/a	34,370	22,341	22,208	n/a	37,956	24,671	23,932	n/a	33,288	21,637				
<b>Skates</b>	BSAI	47,790	39,958	30,000	29,236	46,220	38,605	27,441	20,205	44,168	36,837	27,927				
<b>Sharks</b>	BSAI	689	517	500	127	689	450	250	307	689	450	250				
<b>Octopuses</b>	BSAI	4,769	3,576	700	251	4,769	3,576	400	119	4,769	3,576	400				
<b>Total</b>	BSAI	2,953,182	2,383,653	1,871,000	1,594,941	4,859,585	3,155,268	2,000,000	1,591,707	6,219,700	3,590,412	2,000,000				

Sources: 2022 OFLs, ABCs, and TACs and 2023 OFLs and ABCs are from harvest specifications adopted by the Council in December 2021 and December 2022 respectively; 2022 catches through December 31, and 2023 catches through September 13, 2023 from AKR Catch Accounting.



Table 7–Proposed 2024 and 2025 ABC Surplus, ABC Reserves, Community Development Quota (CDQ) ABC Reserves, and Amendment 80 ABC Reserves in the BSAI for Flathead Sole, Rock Sole, and Yellowfin Sole

[Amounts are in metric tons]			
Sector	Flathead sole	Rock sole	Yellowfin sole
ABC	66,927	119,969	462,890
TAC	35,500	66,000	230,656
ABC surplus	31,427	53,969	232,234
ABC reserve	31,427	53,969	232,234
CDQ ABC reserve	3,363	5,775	24,849
Amendment 80 ABC reserve	28,064	48,194	207,385

Table 8–Proposed 2024 and 2025 Apportionment of Prohibited Species Catch Allowances to Non-Trawl Gear, the CDQ Program, Amendment 80, and the BSAI Trawl Limited Access Sectors

PSC species and area <sup>1</sup>	Total PSC	Non-trawl PSC	CDQ PSQ reserve <sup>2</sup>	Trawl PSC remaining after CDQ PSQ	Amendment 80 sector <sup>3</sup>	BSAI trawl limited access sector	BSAI PSC limits not allocated <sup>2</sup>
Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	3,515	710	315	n/a	1,745	745	n/a
Herring (mt) BSAI	3,444	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Red king crab (animals) Zone 1	97,000	n/a	10,379	86,621	43,293	26,489	16,839
<i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBLZ	4,350,000	n/a	465,450	3,884,550	1,909,256	1,248,494	726,799
<i>C. bairdi</i> crab (animals) Zone 1	980,000	n/a	104,860	875,140	368,521	411,228	95,390
<i>C. bairdi</i> crab (animals) Zone 2	2,970,000	n/a	317,790	2,652,210	627,778	1,241,500	782,932

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

<sup>2</sup> The PSQ reserve for crab species is 10.7 percent of each crab PSC limit.

<sup>3</sup> The Amendment 80 program reduced apportionment of the trawl PSC limits for crab below the total PSC limit. These reductions are not apportioned to other gear types or sectors.

Table 9-Proposed 2024 and 2025 Herring and Red King Crab Savings Subarea Prohibited Species Catch Allowances for All Trawl Sectors

Fishery categories	Herring (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1
Yellowfin sole	200	n/a
Rock sole/flathead sole/Alaska plaice/other flatfish <sup>1</sup>	99	n/a
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish	10	n/a
Rockfish	10	n/a
Pacific cod	18	n/a
Midwater trawl pollock	3,066	n/a
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species <sup>2,3</sup>	41	n/a
2024 Red king crab savings subarea non-pelagic trawl gear <sup>4</sup>	n/a	24,250
Total trawl PSC	3,444	97,000

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

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

<sup>3</sup>“Other species” for PSC monitoring includes skates, sharks, and octopuses.

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

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

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

Table 10–Proposed 2024 Prohibited Species Bycatch Allowances for the BSAI Trawl Limited Access Sectors and Pacific Cod Trawl Cooperative Program

BSAI trawl limited access sector fisheries	Prohibited species and area <sup>1</sup>				
	Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1	<i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBLZ	<i>C. bairdi</i> (animals)	
				Zone 1	Zone 2
Yellowfin sole	265	23,337	1,192,179	346,228	1,185,500
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish <sup>2</sup>	-	-	-	-	-
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish	-	-	-	-	-
Rockfish, April 15-December 31	5	-	1,006	-	1,000
Total Pacific cod <sup>4</sup>	300	2,955	50,281	60,000	50,000
AFA CP Pacific cod	6	278	4,726	5,640	4,700
PCTC Program Pacific cod, January 20-June 10	244	1,653	28,130	33,567	27,973
Trawl CV Pacific cod, June 10-November 1	15	134	2,278	2,718	2,265
PCTC Program unallocated reduction	35	890	15,147	18,075	15,062
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species <sup>3</sup>	175	197	5,028	5,000	5,000
Total BSAI trawl limited access sector PSC	745	26,489	1,248,494	411,228	1,241,500

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

<sup>2</sup> “Other flatfish” for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), Alaska plaice,

<sup>3</sup> “Other species” for PSC monitoring includes skates, sharks, and octopuses.

<sup>4</sup> The Pacific cod fishery is further apportioned between the PCTC Program, the trawl catcher vessel limited access C season, and AFA catcher/processors as established at § 679.131(c) and (d).

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

Table 11—Proposed 2025 Prohibited Species Bycatch Allowances for the BSAI Trawl Limited Access Sectors and Pacific Cod Trawl Cooperative Program

BSAI trawl limited access sector fisheries	Prohibited species and area <sup>1</sup>				
	Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	Red king crab (animals) Zone 1	<i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBLZ	<i>C. bairdi</i> (animals)	
				Zone 1	Zone 2
Yellowfin sole	265	23,337	1,192,179	346,228	1,185,500
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish <sup>2</sup>	-	-	-	-	-
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish	-	-	-	-	-
Rockfish April 15-December 31	5	-	1,006	-	1,000
Total Pacific cod <sup>4</sup>	300	2,955	50,281	60,000	50,000
AFA CP Pacific cod	6	278	4,726	5,640	4,700
PCTC Program Pacific cod, January 20-June	209	1,653	28,130	33,567	27,973
Trawl CV Pacific cod, June 10-November 1	15	134	2,278	2,718	2,265
PCTC Program unallocated reduction	70	890	15,147	18,075	15,062
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species <sup>3</sup>	175	197	5,028	5,000	5,000
Total BSAI trawl limited access sector PSC	745	26,489	1,248,494	411,228	1,241,500

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

<sup>2</sup> “Other flatfish” for PSC monitoring includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), Alaska plaice,

<sup>3</sup> “Other species” for PSC monitoring includes skates, sharks, and octopuses.

<sup>4</sup> The Pacific cod fishery is further apportioned between the PCTC Program, the trawl catcher vessel limited access C season, and AFA catcher/processors as established at § 679.131(c) and (d).

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

Table 12—Proposed 2024 and 2025 Halibut Prohibited Species Bycatch Allowances for Non- Trawl Fisheries

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

Table 13—Proposed 2024 and 2025 Pacific Halibut Discard Mortality Rates (DMR) for the BSAI

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

**VOTE ON MOTION:** The motion passed unanimously, with Mr. Down absent.

**MOTION 2 – GOA Harvest Specifications:**

Ms. Kimball, seconded by Mr. Mezirow made the following motion:

The Council adopts the proposed 2024 and 2025 Gulf of Alaska groundfish specifications for OFLs and ABCs as recommended by the SSC and the TACs shown in Table 1. Final specifications will be approved in December. The TACs for both Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod and pollock have been adjusted to account for the State water GHL fisheries. The proposed Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod adjustments for state water GHL fisheries are shown in Table 2.

The Council adopts the proposed 2024 and 2025 annual and seasonal Pacific halibut PSC limits and apportionments in the Gulf of Alaska as provided in Tables 9, 10, and 11.

The Council adopts the proposed 2024 and 2025 halibut discard mortality rates for the Gulf of Alaska as shown in Table 12.

The Council recommends moving the seven demersal shelf rockfish (DSR) species which currently occur in the 'other rockfish' complex (i.e., those occurring to the west of EY/SEO) into a separate DSR complex for WG/CG/WY during the 2024 Plan Team cycle for implementation in the 2025 fisheries. This change would result in ABCs and OFLs being spatially apportioned in the following ways:

Other Rockfish: One Gulf-wide OFL with three separate ABCs for WG/CG, WY,Y/SEO.

DSR: Two stock complexes with separate OFLs and ABCs for WG/CG/WY and EY/SEO.

Table 1. SSC recommended OFLs and ABCs and Council recommended TACs for Proposed Harvest Specifications for Groundfish in the Gulf of Alaska (metric tons) for 2024 and 2025.

Species	Area	2022				2023				2024/25		
		OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch 12/31/2022	OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch 9/14/2023	OFL	ABC	TAC
Pollock	State GHJ	n/a	3,327	n/a		n/a	3,723	n/a	3,261	n/a	4,027	n/a
	W (610)	n/a	23,714	23,714	23,615	n/a	26,958	26,958	6,033	n/a	29,156	29,156
	C (620)	n/a	69,250	69,250	69,341	n/a	77,005	77,005	58,327	n/a	83,283	83,283
	C (630)	n/a	30,068	30,068	30,505	n/a	33,729	33,729	13,052	n/a	36,478	36,478
	WYAK	n/a	6,722	6,722	6,441	n/a	7,523	7,523	6,888	n/a	8,136	8,136
	Subtotal	154,983	133,081	129,754	129,902	173,470	148,938	145,215	84,300	186,101	161,080	157,053
	EYAK/SEO	15,150	11,363	11,363	-	15,150	11,363	11,363	1	15,150	11,363	11,363
Total	170,133	144,444	141,117	129,902	188,620	160,301	156,578	84,300	201,251	172,443	168,416	
Pacific Cod	W	n/a	9,942	6,959	5,320	n/a	7,464	5,225	3,233	n/a	6,873	4,811
	C	n/a	19,752	14,814	13,195	n/a	14,830	11,123	8,501	n/a	13,655	10,241
	E	n/a	3,117	2,338	298	n/a	2,340	1,755	510	n/a	2,155	1,616
	Total	39,555	32,811	24,111	18,813	29,737	24,634	18,103	12,245	27,507	22,683	16,668
Sablefish	W	n/a	3,727	3,727	3,035	n/a	4,473	4,473	2,313	n/a	4,626	4,626
	C	n/a	9,965	9,965	8,189	n/a	9,921	9,921	5,456	n/a	8,819	8,819
	WYAK	n/a	3,437	3,437	2,746	n/a	3,205	3,205	2,043	n/a	2,669	2,669
	SEO	n/a	5,665	5,665	5,237	n/a	5,602	5,602	3,596	n/a	4,981	4,981
	GOA Total	n/a	22,794	22,794	19,207	n/a		23,201	13,409	n/a	n/a	21,095
Alaska-wide OFL and ABC	AK Total	40,432	34,521	n/a		47,390	40,502	n/a	48,561	41,539	n/a	
Shallow-Water Flatfish	W	n/a	21,256	13,250	33	n/a	22,485	13,250	33	n/a	23,299	13,250
	C	n/a	25,305	25,305	1,264	n/a	26,769	26,769	589	n/a	27,737	27,737
	WYAK	n/a	2,531	2,531	8	n/a	2,677	2,677	6	n/a	2,774	2,774
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	1,518	1,518	2	n/a	1,606	1,606	1	n/a	1,664	1,664
	Total	62,273	50,610	42,604	1,307	65,736	53,537	44,302	630	68,015	55,474	45,425
Deep-Water Flatfish	W	n/a	256	256	3	n/a	256	256	11	n/a	255	255
	C	n/a	2,139	2,139	117	n/a	2,105	2,105	68	n/a	2,068	2,068
	WYAK	n/a	1,431	1,431	3	n/a	1,407	1,407	3	n/a	1,383	1,383
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	2,082	2,082	8	n/a	2,048	2,048	2	n/a	2,013	2,013
	Total	7,026	5,908	5,908	131	6,918	5,816	5,816	84	6,802	5,719	5,719
Rex Sole	W	n/a	2,981	2,981	40	n/a	3,236	3,236	21	n/a	3,314	3,314
	C	n/a	12,076	12,076	655	n/a	13,110	13,110	355	n/a	13,425	13,425
	WYAK	n/a	1,361	1,361	-	n/a	1,439	1,439	-	n/a	1,453	1,453
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	2,723	2,723	-	n/a	2,879	2,879	-	n/a	2,905	2,905
	Total	23,302	19,141	19,141	695	25,135	20,664	20,664	376	25,652	21,097	21,097
Arrowtooth Flounder	W	n/a	33,658	14,500	446	n/a	30,469	14,500	133	n/a	30,093	14,500
	C	n/a	68,394	68,394	11,092	n/a	65,000	65,000	8,102	n/a	64,200	64,200
	WYAK	n/a	6,707	6,707	38	n/a	7,886	7,886	28	n/a	7,789	7,789
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	11,020	6,900	67	n/a	16,130	6,900	25	n/a	15,932	6,900
	Total	143,100	119,779	96,501	11,643	142,749	119,485	94,286	8,287	141,008	118,014	93,389
Flathead Sole	W	n/a	14,755	8,650	43	n/a	12,793	8,650	12	n/a	13,033	8,650
	C	n/a	22,033	15,400	521	n/a	21,487	21,487	364	n/a	21,892	21,892
	WYAK	n/a	1,511	1,511	-	n/a	2,320	2,320	-	n/a	2,363	2,363
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	1,876	1,876	-	n/a	2,880	2,880	-	n/a	2,934	2,934
	Total	48,928	40,175	27,437	564	48,161	39,480	35,337	376	49,073	40,222	35,839

Species	Area	2022				2023				2024/25		
		OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch 12/31/2022	OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch 9/14/2023	OFL	ABC	TAC
Pacific ocean perch	W	n/a	2,602	2,602	2,506	n/a	2,529	2,529	2,312	n/a	2,461	2,461
	C	n/a	30,806	30,806	25,548	n/a	29,940	29,940	23,288	n/a	29,138	29,138
	WYAK	n/a	1,409	1,409	1,398	n/a	1,370	1,370	1,366	n/a	1,333	1,333
	W/C/WYAK	41,470	34,817	34,817	29,452	40,308	33,839	33,839	26,967	39,229	32,932	32,932
	SEO	4,110	3,451	3,451	-	3,994	3,354	3,354	-	3,888	3,264	3,264
	Total	45,580	38,268	38,268	29,452	44,302	37,193	37,193	26,967	43,117	36,196	36,196
Northern Rockfish	W	n/a	1,944	1,944	474	n/a	2,614	2,614	360	n/a	2,497	2,497
	C	n/a	3,202	3,202	1,424	n/a	2,350	2,350	934	n/a	2,244	2,244
	E	n/a	-	-	-	n/a	-	-	-	n/a	-	-
	Total	6,143	5,146	5,146	1,898	5,927	4,964	4,964	1,295	5,661	4,741	4,741
Shortraker Rockfish	W	n/a	51	51	7	n/a	51	51	6	n/a	51	51
	C	n/a	280	280	294	n/a	280	280	133	n/a	280	280
	E	n/a	374	374	171	n/a	374	374	186	n/a	374	374
	Total	940	705	705	472	940	705	705	325	940	705	705
Dusky Rockfish	W	n/a	269	269	106	n/a	149	149	56	n/a	141	141
	C	n/a	4,534	4,534	2,472	n/a	7,647	7,647	3,376	n/a	7,264	7,264
	WYAK	n/a	427	427	6	n/a	90	90	1	n/a	85	85
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	142	142	-	n/a	31	31	-	n/a	30	30
	Total	8,614	5,372	5,372	2,584	9,638	7,917	7,917	3,433	9,154	7,520	7,520
Rougheye and Blackspotted Rockfish	W	n/a	184	184	95	n/a	180	180	101	n/a	180	180
	C	n/a	235	235	185	n/a	232	232	133	n/a	231	231
	E	n/a	369	369	190	n/a	363	363	148	n/a	361	361
	Total	947	788	788	470	930	775	775	381	927	772	772
Demersal shelf rockfish	Total	579	365	365	166	376	283	283	197	376	283	283
Thornyhead Rockfish	W	n/a	352	352	110	n/a	314	314	49	n/a	314	314
	C	n/a	910	910	173	n/a	693	693	87	n/a	693	693
	E	n/a	691	691	76	n/a	621	621	44	n/a	621	621
	Total	2,604	1,953	1,953	359	2,170	1,628	1,628	179	2,170	1,628	1,628
Other Rockfish	W/C	n/a	940	940	1,122	n/a	940	940	868	n/a	940	940
	WYAK	n/a	370	370	78	n/a	370	370	46	n/a	370	370
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	2,744	300	50	n/a	2,744	300	24	n/a	2,744	300
	Total	5,320	4,054	1,610	1,250	5,320	4,054	1,610	938	5,320	4,054	1,610
Atka mackerel	Total	6,200	4,700	3,000	880	6,200	4,700	3,000	435	6,200	4,700	3,000
Big Skate	W	n/a	591	591	174	n/a	591	591	47	n/a	591	591
	C	n/a	1,482	1,482	735	n/a	1,482	1,482	619	n/a	1,482	1,482
	E	n/a	794	794	116	n/a	794	794	117	n/a	794	794
	Total	3,822	2,867	2,867	1,025	3,822	2,867	2,867	783	3,822	2,867	2,867
Longnose Skate	W	n/a	151	151	77	n/a	151	151	58	n/a	151	151
	C	n/a	2,044	2,044	505	n/a	2,044	2,044	405	n/a	2,044	2,044
	E	n/a	517	517	409	n/a	517	517	605	n/a	517	517
	Total	3,616	2,712	2,712	991	3,616	2,712	2,712	1,068	3,616	2,712	2,712
Other Skates	GOA-wide	1,311	984	984	1,041	1,311	984	984	318	1,311	984	984
Sharks	GOA-wide	5,006	3,755	3,755	2,160	6,521	4,891	4,891	1,344	6,521	4,891	4,891
Octopuses	GOA-wide	1,307	980	980	155	1,307	980	980	139	1,307	980	980
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>626,738</b>	<b>520,038</b>	<b>448,118</b>	<b>225,165</b>	<b>646,826</b>	<b>539,072</b>	<b>468,796</b>	<b>157,510</b>	<b>658,311</b>	<b>550,224</b>	<b>476,537</b>

Sources: 2022 OFLs, ABCs, and TACs are from harvest specifications adopted by the Council in December 2021, 2022 catches through December 31, 2022, and 2023 catches through September 14, 2023 from AKR Catch Accounting.

Table 2. Proposed 2024 and 2025 Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod ABCs, TACs, and State Guideline Harvest Levels (GHLs)

[Values are rounded to the nearest metric ton]

Specifications	Western	Central	Eastern	Total
ABC	6,873	13,655	2,155	22,683
State GHL	2,062	3,414	539	6,014
(%)	30%	25%	25%	
Federal TAC	4,811	10,241	1,616	16,668

Table 9. Proposed 2024 and 2025 Pacific Halibut PSC Limits, Allowances, and Apportionments  
[Values are in metric tons]

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

<sup>1</sup>The Pacific halibut PSC limit for hook-and-line gear is allocated to the demersal shelf rockfish (DSR) fishery and fisheries other than DSR. The hook-and-line IFQ sablefish fishery is exempt from halibut PSC limits, as are pot and jig gear for all groundfish fisheries.

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

Table 10. Proposed 2024 and 2025 Apportionment of the Pacific Halibut PSC Limits Between the Trawl Gear Shallow-Water and Deep-Water Species Fishery Categories

[Values are in metric tons]

Season	Shallow-water	Deep-water <sup>1</sup>	Total <sup>3</sup>
January 20 - April 1	384	135	520
April 1 - July 1	85	256	341
July 1 - August 1	121	341	460
August 1 - October 1	53	75	128
Subtotal January 20 - October 1	643	807	1,449
October 1 - December 31 <sup>23</sup>	n/a	n/a	256
Total	n/a	n/a	1,705

<sup>1</sup> The third season deep-water apportionment of 341 mt is reduced by 191.4 mt for the Rockfish Program Halibut PSC allocation.

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

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

Table 11. Proposed 2024 and 2025 Apportionments of the “Other Hook and Line Fisheries” Halibut PSC Allowance Between the Hook-and-Line Gear Catcher Vessel and Catcher/Processor Sectors [Values

are in metric tons]

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



Table 12. Proposed 2024 and 2025 Discard Mortality Rates for Vessels Fishing in the Gulf of Alaska [Values are percent of halibut assumed to be dead]

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

**VOTE ON MOTION 2:** The motion passed unanimously with Mr. Down absent.

**MOTION 3 – Halibut DMRs:**

Ms. Vanderhoeven, seconded by Mr. Williams, made the following motion:

The Council requests the Interagency Halibut DMR workgroup review methods used to estimate halibut mortality with a particular focus on marine mammal feeding on discards per their recommendation, for all fisheries with marine mammal interactions in the BSAI and GOA.

**VOTE ON MOTION 3:** The motions passed unanimously.

## C4 Bering Sea Chum Salmon Bycatch

- Council Staff:** Dr. Kate Haapala & Dr. Diana Stram
- Other Presenters:** Dr. Katie Howard (ADF&G) & Bridget Mansfield (NMFS)
- Action Required:**
  1. Review Preliminary Review analysis
  2. Finalize alternatives for analysis of potential impacts

**Summary:** *The Council discussed alternative ways to reduce bycatch of chum salmon, particularly those originating from Western Alaska, in the Bering Sea pollock fishery, in order to task staff with assessing the potential impacts in a future analysis. In April 2023, the Council established a Purpose and Need statement and preliminary alternative measures. In October, they decided whether to modify or refine these alternatives, maintain the current Purpose and Need statement and alternatives, or provide guidance on the next steps for this issue.*

Staff presentations and the AP report were given, and the SSC gave their report previously. After public testimony, Ms. Baker made the following motion which was seconded by Mr. Mezirow:

**MOTION:**

The Council revises the alternatives for an initial review analysis as follows. Alternatives and options are not mutually exclusive unless otherwise indicated below.

#### **Alternative 1: Status Quo**

All action alternatives apply to the entire Bering Sea pollock B season, the season in which chum salmon are taken as bycatch (prohibited species catch or PSC).

#### **Alternative 2: Overall bycatch (PSC) limit for chum salmon**

Option 1: Chum salmon PSC limit based on historical total bycatch numbers: range of 200,000 (~35,400 Western Alaska chum salmon) to 550,000 (~97,350 Western Alaska chum salmon).

Option 2: Chum salmon PSC limit triggered by Western Alaska chum salmon abundance indices based on the prior years' chum salmon abundance. Suboptions below are mutually exclusive.

Suboption 1: Three-area chum salmon index based on Yukon River summer + Yukon River fall run abundance (950,000 + 575,000); Kuskokwim River composed of the Bethel test fishery CPUE (2,800); Norton Sound composed of summed escapement for the Snake, Nome, Eldorado, Kwiniuk, and North Rivers and total Norton Sound harvest (57,000)

If 3/3 areas are above index threshold, no chum salmon PSC limit the following year.

If 2/3 areas are above index threshold, chum salmon PSC limit the following year is X.

If 1 or no areas are above index threshold, chum salmon PSC limit the following year is X.

Suboption 2: Chum salmon index based on Yukon River summer + Yukon River fall run abundance

Suboption 2a: Yukon River summer chum salmon (950,000)

If index is above threshold, chum salmon PSC limit the following year is X.

If index is below threshold, chum salmon PSC limit the following year is x.

Suboption 2b: Yukon River summer chum salmon (950,000) and fall chum salmon (575,000)

If 2/2 areas are above index threshold, no chum salmon PSC limit the following year.

If 1 or no areas are above index threshold, chum salmon PSC limit the following year is X.

Option 3 (must be selected with Option 1 or 2): PSC limits are apportioned among CDQ, catcher processor, mothership and inshore sectors based on:

Suboption 1: historical total bycatch by sector using the 3-year average (2020 – 2022)

Suboption 2: historical total bycatch by sector using the 5-year average (2018 – 2022)

Suboption 3: pro rata 25% AFA pollock allocation and 75% historical total bycatch (2020 – 2022)

The sector limits are further apportioned at the cooperative level in proportion to each cooperative's pollock allocation. Chum salmon PSC can be transferred between sectors and among vessels within a cooperative. Reaching a limit closes the pollock fishery sector to which the limit applies.

#### **Alternative 3: Chum salmon PSC limit with an associated Western Alaska chum salmon bycatch annual limit**

Establish an annual limit of 40,000 to 53,000 Western Alaska chum salmon PSC based on the 3-year average 2020-2022 range of historical bycatch numbers and an overall chum salmon PSC limit from Alternative 2. Both the overall PSC limit and the Western Alaska chum salmon annual limit will be apportioned according to the options considered under Alternative 2.

Each sector's portion of an overall chum salmon PSC limit of (option 1: 450,000 and option 2: 550,000) is in effect. If a sector exceeds its western AK chum salmon PSC annual limit in any three of seven consecutive years, an overall chum salmon PSC limit of (option 1: 200,000 and option 2: 300,000) is in effect until Western Alaska chum salmon PSC does not exceed the sector annual limit for three years.

**Alternative 4: Additional regulatory requirements for Incentive Plan Agreements (IPAs) to be managed within the IPAs**

Option 1: Require a chum salmon reduction plan agreement to prioritize avoidance in genetic cluster areas 1 and 2 for a specified amount of time based on two triggers being met: 1) an established chum salmon incidental catch rate and 2) historical genetic composition (proportion) of Western Alaska chum salmon to non-Western Alaska chum salmon.

Option 2: Additional regulatory provisions requiring Incentive Plan Agreements to utilize the most refined genetics information available to further prioritize avoidance of areas and times of highest proportion of Western Alaska and Upper/Middle Yukon chum salmon stocks.

Industry should submit a detailed proposal of IPA changes under Alternative 4 for inclusion into the Initial Review analysis prior to the February Council meeting. The proposals should consider a process to include local and traditional knowledge from Western and Interior Alaska salmon users in the development of IPA measures. The following is a list of potential measures that could be developed for incorporation into the IPAs and/or through regulation.

- Option 1 trigger 1 and trigger 2 values
- Adjusted base rates to implement a closure
- Adjusted closure area size
- Adjusted closure duration
- Application of the closures to all vessels not just those above the base rate
- Genetic data
- Genetic cluster thresholds
- Additional vessel level incentives/penalties for chum salmon avoidance

**AMENDMENT 1:** Ms. Vanderhoeven, seconded by Mr. Tweit, moved to add a new suboption 4 under alternative 2 option 3: "Suboption 4: pro rata based on AFA apportionment".

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT 1:** The amendment passed unanimously.

**AMENDMENT 2:** Ms. Vanderhoeven, seconded by Mr. Tweit, moved to add the language "(using a blended adjusted CDQ bycatch rate as with Amendment 91)" to alternative 2 option 3, to be inserted after the words "inshore sectors".

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT 2:** The amendment passed without objection.

**AMENDMENT 3:** Ms. Kimball, seconded by Mr. Jensen, moved to add "the sector's portion of" in alternative 3, paragraph 2, sentence 2, after "seven consecutive years,".

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT 3:** The amendment passed without objection.

**VOTE ON MOTION AS AMENDED:** The motion passed without objection.

## C5 Crab Facility Use Caps

- Council Staff:** Sarah Marrinan  
**Action Required:** 1. Consider Initial Review Draft  
 2. Identify preliminary preferred alternative if warranted

**Summary:** *The Council reviewed an analysis that examined two proposed changes to the Crab Rationalization Program for crab processing in the BSAI: to eliminate a 60 percent facility use cap for certain crab types, responding to market opportunities and constraints' and exemptions to processing quota share (PQS) and individual processing quota (IPQ) use caps, aiming to simplify regulations and enhance processing flexibility while addressing enforcement challenges.*

After staff presentations, the AP report, and public testimony, Ms. Baker, seconded by Mr. Jensen, made the following motion.

**MOTION:** The Council recommends releasing the analysis for final action and identifies the following preliminary preferred alternatives in **bold**. Deletions are shown in ~~strikethrough~~.

Alternative 1. No action.

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

**Alternative 3. Exempt custom processing of EBS snow crab IPQ with a South region designation, BBRKC IPQ, and WAG IPQ processed east of 174° W longitude from the PQS/IPQ and processing facility use caps under the program** ~~(add to list of exempted fisheries at 50 CFR 680.42(b)(7)(ii)(A)).~~  
**Regionalization would still apply.**

**VOTE ON MOTION :** The motion passed unanimously.

## D1 Bering Sea LKTKS Protocol and Onramps

- Council Staff:** Dr. Kate Haapala  
**Other Presenters:** Dr. Sarah Wise (AFSC)  
**Action Required:** 1. Review final LKTKS Protocol and onramp recommendations - take action as necessary  
 2. Receive the June 2023 Taskforce meeting report

**Summary:** *The Council reviewed the final Local Knowledge (LK), Traditional Knowledge (TK), and Subsistence (collectively LKTKS) Protocol and related onramp recommendations from the LKTKS Taskforce, under the Bering Sea Fishery Ecosystem Plan. The LKTKS Protocol provides guidance and best practices for identifying, analyzing, and incorporating LK, TK, and subsistence information into the Council's decision-making process. The onramps are recommendations for the Council to consider changes to its existing decision-making process to better incorporate these knowledge systems.*

After staff presentations, the AP report, and public testimony, Ms. Kimball, seconded by Mr. Mezirow, made the following motion.

**MOTION:**

The Council supports and commends the work of the Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and Subsistence (LKTKS) Taskforce. The Council approves the LKTKS Protocol in full as a living document

Council Summary October 2023

to provide guidance for identifying, analyzing, and incorporating Local Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, and subsistence information into the Council's decision-making process when there is a clear Federal fisheries nexus. The Council also approves the following 'LKTKS Policy' statement to summarize the approach in the guidance:

*The Council adopted the Local Knowledge (LK), Traditional Knowledge (TK), and Subsistence Protocol (LKTKS Protocol) in October 2023. The LKTKS Protocol provides foundational information and context for identifying, analyzing, and incorporating LK, TK, and subsistence information into the Council's decision-making process. At the core of this work is the recognition of diversity among the people that engage in, depend on, and are impacted by the federal fisheries managed by the Council. Effective fisheries management that supports sustainable fisheries and ecosystems requires robust science and an inclusive decision-making process that fosters relationships and trust.*

*The Council recognizes the importance of the LKTKS Protocol for informing its decision-making process and envisions it will foster a more inclusive decision-making process, expand its information base, and improve the robustness of the best scientific information available to inform its decision-making. The approach to working with these knowledge systems includes:*

- 1. The Council, staff, and advisory bodies intend to demonstrate respect for LK and TK systems, LK and TK holders, the social science of LK and TK, and subsistence gatherers and their information.*
- 2. The Council, staff, and Council advisory bodies recognize the importance of understanding and using the appropriate terms for LK, TK, and subsistence information while carrying out their work.*
- 3. The Council, staff, and advisory bodies are committed to taking the appropriate steps to accurately identify LK and TK holders, the social science of LK and TK, and subsistence information and to identify when such knowledge and information has a clear federal fisheries nexus to integrate into the Council process.*
- 4. The Council recognizes the importance of, and will work to prioritize, early and ongoing communication with relevant entities holding or representing LK and TK systems. This includes but is not limited to Tribes, Alaska Native Organizations, fishermen, fishing or processing associations, as well as cooperatives, and others.*
- 5. The Council will endeavor to understand and acknowledge capacity differences among the entities (i.e., Tribes, Alaska Native Organizations, fishermen, fishing associations or cooperatives, and others).*
- 6. The Council will endeavor to adhere to local and cultural protocols that entities have established for sharing and communicating LK, TK, or subsistence information when they are shared with the Council, staff, or its advisory bodies.*
- 7. The Council acknowledges the challenge and importance of having the appropriate capacity for identifying and working with LK and TK systems and subsistence information. The Council will work to identify opportunities to increase this capacity and engage in opportunities for increasing LK, TK, and subsistence capacity as able.*
- 8. The Council, staff, and advisory bodies intend to equitably work across and account for multiple knowledge systems.*

#### On-ramps

The Council supports the existing on-ramps previously recommended by the Community Engagement Committee and identified through a Council motion in February 2021. The Council also

approves the following on-ramps for incorporating LKTKS, understanding additional capacity and resources may be necessary for full implementation of specific on-ramps in the future.

1. The Council adopts the LKTKS Protocol.
2. The Council supports the use of the LKTKS search engine and dedicating Council staff time to maintaining it as needed.
3. The Council supports Council participation (non-quorum) in engagement trips and meetings that provide opportunities for two-way dialogue, knowledge sharing, and direct engagement with Council members.
4. The Council continues to support NMFS' consultations with Tribes and development of the resulting reports early in the Council's decision-making process. The Council supports staff participating when requested and available. This process will be reviewed annually by the Council Executive Director and Chair to determine whether information is shared adequately to inform Council decision-making.
5. The Council supports Federal agencies providing management reports (B reports) to do so with formal Tribal co-management partners if desired.
6. The Council will modify the Council Statement of Organization, Practices, and Procedures (SOPPs) and/or terms of reference (TOR) for the Advisory Panel to include a designated Alaska Native Tribal seat to be held by a Tribal representative.
7. The Council will consider expanded LK and TK social science expertise on the Scientific and Statistical Committee during the annual nomination process, in balance with other necessary expertise and availability of expertise.
8. The Council recommends improving the process to solicit broad public input, including LK and TK, and subsistence contributions, to select core research questions and research priorities to assist the Council in managing the nation's resources.
9. The Council supports implementation of the LKTKS template for working with LK, TK, and subsistence information when there is a clear nexus to federal fisheries under the Council's jurisdiction, to formalize a process for incorporating LK, TK, the social science of LK and TK, and subsistence information into the Council's decision-making process. Implementation of the template will be an iterative process and is intended to prompt Council analytical staff as they consider the information that should be included to inform Council decision-making. The template is not intended to prescribe a narrow approach for staff, but instead provides a starting point as staff work to include these knowledge systems in products used to inform Council decision-making. This template is meant to be used in conjunction with other staff analytical templates and the LKTKS Protocol, as needed and appropriate, and staff will continue to use discretion in balancing timeliness of analyses with incorporating information. It is envisioned that the questions will be modified and evolve over time as they are put into practice.
10. The Council will modify its public comment procedures to allow testifiers to provide introductions without it counting against their allowed time limit for oral public comments at Council, Scientific and Statistical Committee, and Advisory Panel meetings.

**VOTE ON MOTION:** The motion passed unanimously.

## D2 BSAI Crab Program Review

**Council Staff:** Sarah Marrinan

**Other Presenters:** Darrell Brannan (Brannan & Associates)

**Action Required:** 1. Review workplan  
2. Provide any feedback to the proposed scope or content

**Summary:** *The Council reviewed a workplan to outline the scope, content and process for the Crab Rationalization Program Review, including opportunities for input from stakeholders.*

After staff presentations, the AP report, considering the SSC report given Friday, and public comment, Ms. Baker made the motion below, which Mr. Mezirow seconded.

**MOTION:** The Council approves the BSAI Crab Rationalization Program Review workplan and requests staff incorporate the SSC recommendations to the extent possible.

The Council also requests staff include the following in the program review:

- Cite and incorporate information from previous Social Impact Assessments as appropriate
- Information on costs associated with the crab program (e.g., costs incurred from EDR data compliance, annual IPQ/IFQ application and matching, custom processing due to unaffiliated PQS holdings, arbitration)

**VOTE ON MOTION:** The motion passed without objection.

### D3 IFQ Review Workplan

**Council Staff:** Sam Cunningham

**Other Presenters:** Darrell Brannan (Brannan & Associates)

**Action Required:** 1. Review workplan  
2. Review IFQ Committee minutes 3. Provide any feedback to the proposed scope or content of the workplan

**Summary:** *The Council reviewed a workplan to outline the scope, content and process for the IFQ Program Review, including opportunities for input from stakeholders. The Council's IFQ Committee also provided advice on the planned program review.*

After staff presentations, the AP report, considering the SSC report given Friday, and public comment, Ms. Bush made the motion below, which Mr. Mezirow seconded.

**MOTION:** The Council approves the IFQ Program Review workplan and requests staff incorporate SSC and IFQ committee recommendations to the extent possible, in particular those specific to community level impacts.

The Council also requests staff include the following in the program review:

- Review the Council's consideration of actions to promote new entry and active participation after the previous program review (e.g., IFQ access opportunities, owner onboard provisions, and IFQ eligibility criteria)

**VOTE ON MOTION:** The motion passed without objection.

## E1 Staff Tasking

**Council Staff:** Diana Evans

- Action Required:**
1. Review Committees and Plan Teams
  2. Review Ecosystem Committee report and Trawl Performance Standard Workshop report
  3. Provide input to staff regarding IRA funding priorities
  4. Provide input to staff regarding Programmatic EIS next steps
  5. Provide direction on other tasking priorities and scheduling

**Summary:** *The Council listened to public testimony about existing and new management measures that the public may be interested in and provided feedback to staff and the Council Chair about how to prioritize staff work on existing and new projects.*

The Council listened to staff presentations, the AP Report, and public comment.

### **MOTION 1 – MRA:**

Ms. Vanderhoeven , seconded by Mr. Down made the following motion:

Motion on Maximum Retainable Amount (MRA) Management

The Council appreciates that NMFS is preparing a discussion paper concerning MRA management. The Council recommends that the discussion paper include: a description of the complexities resulting from current regulations for vessels participating in multiple fisheries and/or in multiple management areas; potential regulatory changes that could be made to modify trip triggers for the purpose of calculating and determining MRA calculations; potential changes to applying MRAs at offload instead of instantaneously; how those changes could reduce regulatory discards; and compliance considerations for vessels that are subject to unforeseen medical or mechanical issues during a trip.

**VOTE ON MOTION 1:** The motion passed unanimously.

### **MOTION 2 – Scales for Sablefish:**

Mr. Down made the following motion that was seconded by Mr. Jensen.

Use of scales in sablefish A share fishery

The Council directs staff to initiate a discussion paper addressing an option for sablefish A share IFQ holders to use flow or hopper scales when participating in the sablefish fishery. The paper will explore the potential operational and management impacts of utilizing NMFS approved scales as an option for accounting for sablefish harvest, outline potential challenges to facilitating their use in the fishery, and consider non-regulatory options to allow for their use.

**VOTE ON MOTION 2:** The motion passed 9-1, with Ms. Vanderhoeven absent.

### **MOTION 3 – IRA Funding/Programmatic EIS:**

Mr. Tweit made the following motion that was seconded by Ms. Kimball.

The Council supports further development of the staff [conceptual approach](#) provided for the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funding, which focuses Council action around the Programmatic EIS and the



development of subsequent analyses to implement climate resilient tools and pathways, building on Council priorities and current initiatives.

The Council requests staff bring back in December a workplan for the IRA funding proposal, highlighting the scope and timeline for what might be accomplished with the IRA funds. The workplan should include a timeline and milestones for developing the Programmatic EIS, including a proposed timeframe for an agenda item for the Council to refine alternatives and discussion of how the NEPA process will be integrated with the PEIS development. The Council's objectives for the PEIS continue to be providing considerable opportunity for tribal entities and stakeholders to contribute to the development and maximize the value of the PEIS for the Council process.

**VOTE ON MOTION 3:** The motion passed without objection, with Ms. Vanderhoeven absent.

**The Council adjourned Tuesday, October 10, 2023, at 2:14 P.M.**