

# C1 CGOA Rockfish Program Adjustments Final Action



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# Introduction

- ▶ February 2022 – Council initiated an analysis to modify the CGOA Rockfish Program
- ▶ April 2022 – After initial review, Council released analysis for final action at this meeting. Council also selected a PPA
  - ▶ **Change season start date from May 1 to April 1**
  - ▶ **Eliminate the CV cooperative holding cap of 30%**
  - ▶ **Increase the processor cap to 35% - 40% of the CV quota for sablefish, Pacific cod, and/or primary rockfish**
  - ▶ **Revise the CV aggregate primary rockfish harvesting cap by capping only POP at 8%**
- ▶ Purpose and need is to increase flexibility and efficiency, improve functionality, and better ensure the rockfish quota are fully harvested and landed in Kodiak as intended (Section 2.2; page 9)



# Major Changes from April Initial Review

- ▶ Corrected language describing cooperative formation around processors (Section 2.6)
- ▶ Enhanced the usability of Figures 2-4 and 2-5 to show monthly data and included a pre-COVID year (Section 2.6.3)
- ▶ Included tables showing monthly PSC data (Section 2.6.4)
- ▶ Provided additional information about regulations relevant to prohibitions on discarding (page 15)
- ▶ Ensured there is a description of the original rationale for season and use caps
- ▶ Characterized the administrative costs that are likely to be saved associated with removing the cooperative holding cap of 30% (Section 2.7.2.2)
- ▶ Clarified the specifics of what has driven processor consolidation (Section 2.6.7)
- ▶ Characterized the potential impacts of changes to the use caps on vessel crew and processors workers (Section 2.7.2.4)
- ▶ Included an EA (Chapter 3)



# Background

- ▶ Section 2.5 notes the analysis draws largely on AM111, CGOA RP review, final RIR for a temporary rule to modify the RP season start date for 2021 (pages 10-11)
- ▶ Section 2.6 builds on the background sections from AM111 and final RIR for the emergency rule to include overviews of the following elements:
  - ▶ Overall harvest to include vessels, LLP licenses, processing plants, reported catch, exvessel value and wholesale value for CV and CP sectors (Section 2.6.1)
  - ▶ TAC and catch of the RP primary and secondary species (Section 2.6.2)
  - ▶ **Updated** Seasonal fishing activity for CV and CP RP vessels (Section 2.6.3)
  - ▶ **Updated** PSC species (Section 2.6.4)
  - ▶ Cooperatives (Section 2.6.5)
  - ▶ Excessive share limits (Section 2.6.6)
  - ▶ Shore-based processors (Section 2.6.7)
  - ▶ Fishing communities (Section 2.6.8)
  - ▶ Rockfish products (Section 2.6.9)
  - ▶ Safety considerations (Section 2.6.10)
  - ▶ Cost recovery (Section 2.6.11)



# Option 1: April 1 Start Date

- ▶ In February 2021, the Council recommended, and the Agency approved an emergency rule to modify the RP start date for 2021 to April 1
  - ▶ Intended to address negative economic and social impacts on harvesters and processors participating in the RP due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- ▶ Given the ongoing potential of another COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and the loss of the April arrowtooth market due to the trade tariffs Council proposed changing the RP start date to April 1



# Option 1: April 1 Start Date

- ▶ Alternative 1 would maintain the May 1 start date:
  - ▶ Continued reduced operations in April since there are limited fisheries during this period
  - ▶ Limit flexibility to adapt to COVID-19 restrictions which could lead to overlapping operational conflicts between the RP and the salmon fisheries
- ▶ Alternative 2, Option 1 would change the start date to April 1:
  - ▶ Provide enhanced flexibility to mitigate some of operational impacts from the loss of the April flatfish market
  - ▶ Adjust operations if future COVID-19 outbreaks occur to prevent overlapping RP and salmon operations
  - ▶ Included monthly halibut and Chinook salmon PSC data for CVs (Figures 2-3 and 2-4 on page 24 and 25) which shows April 2021 data relative to other months. PSC rates for both halibut and Chinook lower than other months
  - ▶ CPs monthly data is confidential but normally have not fished in the RP earlier than June. Starting in 2020, 1 CP has fished in the RP in May. Sector will likely focus on BSAI trawl fisheries until June with one CP maybe entering the May fishery



# Option 2: Elimination of CV Cooperative Holding Cap

- ▶ The cooperative holding cap was intended to provide greater opportunity for multiple shorebased processors to receive RP quota
- ▶ Alternative 1 would maintain 30% CV cooperative holding cap:
  - ▶ Would limit cooperative would could continue provide opportunity for multiple shorebased processors to receive RP quota
    - ▶ No regulation that prevents multiple cooperatives being associated with the same processor
- ▶ Alternative 2, Option 2 would remove the 30% CV cooperative holding cap:
  - ▶ Would likely reduce the minimal management and administrative costs for those cooperatives associated with the same processor that would like to consolidate into one cooperative
  - ▶ Only two cooperatives are currently associated with same shorebased processor, and if combined, the CQ would exceed the existing 30% cap
    - ▶ Likely these two cooperatives would consolidate into a single cooperative under this option



# Option 3: Increase the CV Quota Share Pool Processor Caps

- ▶ Processor caps were intended to maintain the distribution of processing activity to a minimum of 4 processors, which would benefit employees of those plants
- ▶ Cap was also intended to stabilize the Kodiak processing sector
- ▶ From 2012 – 2014, there were 7 shorebased processors
- ▶ Starting in 2015, the number of shorebased processors declined to low of 4 in 2020 and 2021
  - ▶ In 2014, Trident purchased Western Alaska Fisheries, so in 2015 Western Alaska Fisheries Rockfish Cooperative associated with Star of Kodiak as its processor
  - ▶ Global Seafoods ceased processing operations altogether in 2018
  - ▶ Pacific Seafoods no longer takes rockfish deliveries
- ▶ As a result of the declining number of shorebased processors, the 30% processing cap has become constraining for some shorebased processors





# Option 3: Increase the CV Quota Share Pool Processor Caps

- ▶ Alternative 1 would maintain the 30% CV shorebased processing caps for sablefish, Pacific cod, and primary rockfish:
  - ▶ Given the current 30% caps are constraining for Pacific cod, sablefish, and the primary rockfish, these three fisheries will continue to be constraining under Alt 1
    - ▶ Would likely result in some portion of the CV quota remaining unharvested
  - ▶ Primary species could be even more constraining under Alt 1 if the Council revises the vessel use cap (Option 4) to only limit POP to 8%



# Option 3: Increase the CV Quota Share Pool Processor Caps

- ▶ Alternative 2, Option 3 would increase the CV shorebased processing caps to 35% - 40%:
  - ▶ Would likely provide additional flexibility to ensure all the CV quota is harvested and processed
    - ▶ PPA of 40% would provide slightly more flexibility relative to 35%
  - ▶ The 30% CV shorebased processing cap is constraining for Pacific cod, sablefish, and the primary rockfish species for some processors
  - ▶ In addition, revising the vessel use cap (Option 4) could increase the risk of a 30% processor cap for primary rockfish species being even more constraining



# Option 3: Increase the CV Quota Share Pool Processor Caps

- ▶ Increase the CV shorebased processing caps to 35% - 40% (Alt 2):
  - ▶ Increasing processors cap could improve economic efficiencies for those processors constrained by the current caps
    - ▶ Processors can operate at a more efficient capacity, which may reduce costs per unit of production
  - ▶ Overall, the proposed processor caps will ensure that a minimum of three Kodiak processors will be required to process all the CV rockfish quota while providing some additional flexibility for current Kodiak processors



# Option 4: Revise CV Aggregated Rockfish Vessel Use Cap

- ▶ Vessel use cap was intended to ensure that harvest activity does not exceed the specified threshold and at a minimum 13 harvesting vessels would be needed to harvest all the CV quota
- ▶ As noted in Table 2-1 (page 13), in 2021 there were 26 CVs active in the RP
- ▶ CAS data indicates no CVs have exceeded the 8% harvesting cap limit
  - ▶ Three or fewer CVs have reported primary species catch data approaching the 8% limit
- ▶ Catch amongst the three primary species is very different
  - ▶ Figure 2-1 (page 14) shows that POP is a fully harvest species
  - ▶ Figures 2-2 & 2-3 (page 15) shows that northern rockfish and dusky rockfish are far from a fully harvested species
  - ▶ The reason northern and dusky rockfish species are not fully utilized is because they are much harder to catch relative to POP and CVs have a limited window to harvest the RP quota



# Option 4: Revise CV Aggregated Rockfish Harvesting Cap

- ▶ Alternative 1 would leave in place the existing 8% CV aggregate rockfish use cap:
  - ▶ Would likely continue a pattern of low quota harvests of northern rockfish and dusky rockfish due to the difficulty catching these two rockfish species relative to POP
- ▶ Alternative 2 would revise the CV aggregated rockfish use cap to only cap POP at 8%:
- ▶ Could provide an incentive to harvest a greater portion of the northern rockfish and dusky rockfish CV quota since these species would not have a vessel use cap
  - ▶ One to three CVs have harvested rockfish quota near the aggregate cap, but have never exceeded the cap
  - ▶ The CVs that harvested rockfish quota near the 8% cap primarily harvest POP, so maintain the 8% cap for POP will continue to restrict these vessels from exceeding the cap for POP



# Environmental Assessment

- ▶ EA was conducted to assess the impact on the alternatives to the following biological resource components
  - ▶ Target species
  - ▶ Unallocated species, including PSC
  - ▶ Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)



# Alternatives

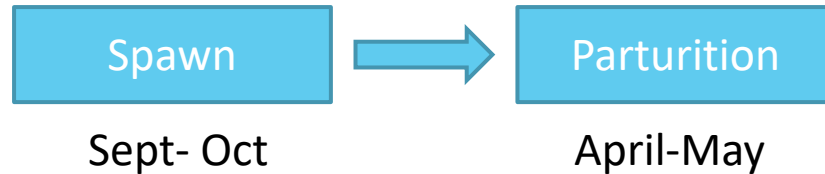
- ▶ Alternative 1: Status Quo
- ▶ Alternative 2: Amend the current Rockfish Program with the following options:
  1. Change season start date from May 1 to April 1
  2. Eliminate the CV cooperative holding cap of 30%
  3. Increase the processor cap to 35% - 40% of the CV quota for sablefish, Pacific cod, and/or primary rockfish
  4. Revise the CV aggregate primary rockfish harvesting cap by capping only POP at 8%
- ▶ **Throughout the EA, it was found that Alternative 2, options 2,3,4 would have no adverse environmental effect.**



# Target Species Life History

- ▶ Primary Species Life History is largely unknown

- ▶ Northern, Dusky and Pacific Ocean Perch (POP)



- ▶ POP thought that larvae remain in offshore surface water
    - ▶ 3 years they migrate to deeper/offshore habitats
  - ▶ **Alternative 2, Option 1, adjusting the start date of April 1 for the RP, is unlikely to have impacts to the process of spawning/parturition and or larval dispersal for RP species**
    - ▶ **During their larval pelagic state, it is unlikely fishing or fishing gear will negatively impact development**





# Target Species and Vessel Participation

- ▶ CPs did not utilize the April start date
  - ▶ Earliest enter date for CP participating in the RP was May
- ▶ Despite vessel participation in April, analyst estimate it would be unlikely that the early start date would negatively impact target species life history and parturition.
- ▶ CVs utilized the flexible April 1 start date in 2021 (seen in Fig 3-4)
- ▶ **Alternative 2, Option 1, adjusting the start date of April 1 for the RP, is unlikely to have impacts to the process of spawning/parturition and or larval dispersal for RP species**
  - ▶ CV and low CP vessel participation is unlikely to have negligible impact on April parturition phase for primary RP species



Month	2015			2016			2017			2018		
	OA	RP	Total	OA	RP	Total	OA	RP	Total	OA	RP	Total
January	1		1	3		3	2		2	0		0
February	12		12	2		2	61		61	44		44
March	20		20	5		5	558		558	119		119
April	145		145	225		225	725		725	395		395
May	155	4,012	4,167	132	6,165	6,297	262	3,554	3,815	61	5,759	5,820
June	*	2,315	*		2,980	2,980	240	2,408	2,648	257	2,730	2,987
July	3,792	2,144	5,936	5,398	4,982	10,380	4,578	3,739	8,318	4,969	3,173	8,142
August	366	3,007	3,372	205	665	871	1,311	721	2,032	1,309	1,609	2,918
September	272	494	765	891	566	1,456	891	788	1,679	987	1,094	2,081
October	78	405	482	550	*	*	1,020	950	1,970	718	859	1,577
November	29	1,402	1,431	*	*	*	*	1,817	*	*	604	*
December	*		*	*		*	*		*	*		*
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,954</b>	<b>13,778</b>	<b>18,732</b>	<b>7,541</b>	<b>15,484</b>	<b>23,025</b>	<b>9,882</b>	<b>13,976</b>	<b>23,858</b>	<b>8,909</b>	<b>15,828</b>	<b>24,737</b>
Month	2019			2020			2021			2022 thru May 26		
	OA	RP	Total	OA	RP	Total	OA	RP	Total	OA	RP	Total
January	4		4	10		10	0		0	55		55
February	342		342	34		34	31		31	71		71
March	119		119	24		24	13		13	109		109
April	377		377	274		274	12	4,301	4,313	*		*
May	193	6,671	6,864	246	7,709	7,954	*	4,767	*	*	2,423	*
June	206	2,985	3,191	263	5,590	5,854	*	5,356	*			
July	4,318	1,916	6,234	2,046	3,532	5,577	2,335	5,817	8,152			
August	1,769	1,100	2,869	842	*	*	808	375	1,184			
September	708	1,407	2,115	523	*	*	663	660	1,323			
October	654	1,252	1,906	587	1,844	2,431	463	1,033	1,496			
November	*	1,196	*		1,184	1,184	*	2,031	*			
December	*		*	0	0	0	0	0	0			
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,941</b>	<b>16,528</b>	<b>25,469</b>	<b>4,848</b>	<b>20,343</b>	<b>25,191</b>	<b>4,559</b>	<b>24,341</b>	<b>28,900</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>2,423</b>	<b>2,917</b>

# Stock Author Consultation

- ▶ Stock author agrees that the early start date will likely have minimal impacts on the primary RP species
  - ▶ Model projections of biomass and apply catch account for some catch prior to spawning
  - ▶ Encounters with spawning fish may provide an opportunity for increased collection of information about RP species reproductive biology
  - ▶ Stock authors suggest continued monitoring of vessel participation during April months in conjunction with monitoring of the primary stock status



# Unallocated Species and PSC Species

- ▶ Since the RP was implemented in 2012, PSC rates have declined for both Chinook and Halibut.
- ▶ Chinook Salmon
  - ▶ Timing of Chinook salmon bycatch follows a predictable pattern in most years, corresponding primarily with seasonal openings of the pollock fishery
  - ▶ 2021 season Stats:
    - ▶ April: 66 salmon; November: 993 (highest)
- ▶ Halibut
  - ▶ The rockfish fishery generally accounts for between 2-16 % percent of the halibut bycatch of these vessels in the GOA
  - ▶ 2021 Season:
    - ▶ April PSC Rate: 0.37; November PSC Rate: 14.00 (highest)
- ▶ **It is not likely that Alternative 2 would result in significant changes to the current levels of bycatch of salmon or halibut as PSC limits are not proposed to change in Alternative 2.**



Table 3. Rockfish Genetics results, 2013-2020.

Area	2013 Rockfish	2014 Rockfish	2015 Rockfish	2016 Rockfish	2017 Rockfish	2018 Rockfish	2019 Rockfish	2020 Rockfish
<b>No. Samples</b>	<b>2,070</b>	<b>398</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>493</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>686</b>	<b>1,106</b>
Russia	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Coast W AK	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	0.5%	0.1%	0.3%	0.3%	0.1%
Mid Yukon	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Up Yukon	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
N AK Pen	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%
NW GOA	2.2%	3.2%	2.7%	3.7%	2.7%	5.0%	4.2%	2.0%
Copper	0.3%	0.1%	0.8%	0.3%	2.4%	3.3%	2.0%	3.0%
NE GOA	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Coast SE AK	6.4%	7.1%	4.8%	6.9%	10.9%	10.7%	2.2%	4.1%
BC	31.3%	17.4%	18.9%	26.8%	28.1%	28.0%	22.1%	18.3%
West Coast US	59.9%	71.7%	72.8%	61.5%	55.6%	52.5%	69.2%	72.4%
SE, BC,WC comb.	97.6%	96.2%	96.5%	95.1%	94.7%	91.1%	93.4%	94.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.1%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



# Essential Fish Habitat

- ▶ As seen in the most recent 2017 EFH 5-year review, The FE model assumed no bottom contact for GOA slope rockfish pelagic trawl.
  - ▶ the total number of fishing events for both CV and CP has remained relatively constant.
- ▶ Likely a continued trend in decreased habitat for RP species as seen in 2017 EFH 5 year Review
- ▶ Concentrations of bottom trawl effort in the CGOA rockfish fisheries would likely be reduced as trawl vessels continue to move towards pelagic and semi-pelagic trawls to reduce halibut bycatch.
- ▶ **The rockfish fisheries are likely to continue to have minimal and temporary effects on the essential fish habitat. No long-term negative impacts to essential fish habitat are likely under the program alternatives.**



# Conclusions

- ▶ Alternative 2, options 2,3,4 would likely have no adverse environmental effect on target species, unallocated species and PSC, and EFH
- ▶ Alternative 2, option 1 would likely have minimal effect on target species, specifically in life-history alterations including the timing/ success of parturition.
- ▶ Alternative 2, option 1 would have negligible impacts on unallocated species and PSC species as rates of PSC is highest during the standing RP season, under alternative 1.
- ▶ Alternative 2, option 1 would likely have no impact to EFH.



# Thank You

## Questions?





# Historical Monthly PSC Rates by Rockfish Program

## Halibut

Month	Average monthly halibut PSC rate <sup>1</sup> (CVs and CPs combined) across years		
	Pre-RPP (2003-2006)*	RPP (2007-2011)**	RP (2012-2021)**
April	0	n/a	0.37
May	6.88	3.98	1.73
June	0	3.04	1.68
July	10.74	3.88	2.94
August	6.01	4.55	3.46
September	0	5.04	5.12
October	40.48	3.25	6.17
November	0	7.94	8.85
<b>Average across months and years</b>	<b>10.73</b>	<b>3.88</b>	<b>3.01</b>

Source: AKFIN; Source file is PP\_MNTH\_PSC(5-10-22)

\*Based on rockfish targets in the CGOA

\*\*While checked into the RPP or RP

<sup>1</sup>Kilograms of PSC per ton of groundfish



# Historical Monthly PSC Rates by Rockfish Program

## Chinook

Month	Average monthly Chinook PSC rate <sup>1</sup> (CVs and CPs combined) across years		
	Pre-RPP (2003-2006)*	RPP (2007-2011)**	RP (2012-2021)**
April	0	n/a	0.02
May	0.01	0.19	0.04
June	0.03	0.09	0.02
July	0	0.04	0.02
August	0	0.01	0.02
September	0	0.06	0.06
October	0	0	0.03
November	0	0.01	0.16
<b>Average across months and years</b>	<b>0.03</b>	<b>0.08</b>	<b>0.04</b>

Source: AKFIN; Source file is PP\_MNTH\_PSC(5-10-22)

\*Based on rockfish targets in the CGOA

\*\*While checked into the RPP or RP

<sup>1</sup>Chinook/total groundfish

