

ADVISORY PANEL
Motions and Rationale
October 1-3, 2024 - Anchorage, AK

C3 BSAI Groundfish Specs

The AP recommends the Council adopt the proposed 2025 and 2026 BSAI groundfish specifications for OFLs and ABCs as recommended by the SSC and set TACs, with all proposed specifications consisting of rollovers of 2025 final specifications from 2024/2025 harvest specifications. The TACs for both BS and AI Pacific cod have been adjusted to account for the State water GHL fisheries. The TACs for sablefish have also been reduced in the BSAI by 5% to accommodate the GHL fishery.

The AP recommends that the Council adopt the proposed flatfish ABC reserves, 2025 and 2026 annual and seasonal PSC limits and apportionments in the BSAI as provided in Tables 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. The Proposed 2025 and 2026 Prohibited Species Bycatch Allowances in Table 10 account for the Pacific Cod Trawl Cooperative Program. Additionally, the AP recommends that the Council adopt the proposed 2025 and 2026 halibut discard mortality rates (DMRs) for the BSAI as shown in Table 12. Tables 1 and 7 - 12 can also be found in the meeting agenda under C3.

Motion passed unanimously: 20/0

Rationale in support of Main Motion

- *This is a regular action in October of each year and this action helps to inform the public of what is likely to be adopted in December after the final numbers are available from the groundfish plan teams.*

Table 1. SSC recommended proposed OFL, ABC and AP recommended TACs for Groundfish in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (metric tons) for 2025-2026

| Species | Area | 2023 | | | Catch as of 12/31/2023 | 2024 | | | Catch as of 9/16/2024 | SSC Proposed 2025/2026 | | |
|--------------------------------|----------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| | | OFL | ABC | TAC | | OFL | ABC | TAC | | OFL | ABC | TAC |
| Pollock | EBS | 3,381,000 | 1,910,000 | 1,314,500 | 1,310,591 | 3,162,000 | 2,313,000 | 1,313,580 | 1,229,404 | 3,449,000 | 2,401,000 | 1,325,000 |
| | AI | 52,383 | 43,413 | 4,500 | 3,744 | 51,516 | 42,654 | 5,420 | 4,431 | 53,030 | 43,863 | 19,000 |
| | Bogoslof | 115,146 | 86,360 | 300 | 125 | 115,146 | 86,360 | 250 | 23 | 115,146 | 86,360 | 250 |
| Pacific cod | BS | 172,495 | 144,834 | 127,409 | 126,458 | 200,995 | 167,952 | 147,753 | 104,170 | 180,798 | 150,876 | 131,217 |
| | AI | 18,416 | 13,812 | 8,425 | 3,398 | 18,416 | 12,431 | 8,080 | 3,570 | 18,416 | 12,431 | 8,080 |
| Sablefish | BSAI/GOA | 47,390 | 40,502 | n/a | | 55,084 | 47,146 | n/a | | 55,317 | 47,350 | n/a |
| | BS | n/a | 8,417 | 7,996 | 5,418 | n/a | 11,450 | 7,996 | 3,579 | n/a | 11,499 | 9,500 |
| | AI | n/a | 8,884 | 8,440 | 2,463 | n/a | 13,100 | 8,440 | 1,262 | n/a | 13,156 | 8,440 |
| Yellowfin sole | BSAI | 404,882 | 378,499 | 230,000 | 112,889 | 305,298 | 265,913 | 195,000 | 56,775 | 317,932 | 276,917 | 195,000 |
| Greenland turbot | BSAI | 4,645 | 3,960 | 3,960 | 1,276 | 3,705 | 3,188 | 3,188 | 736 | 3,185 | 2,740 | 2,740 |
| | BS | n/a | 3,338 | 3,338 | 795 | n/a | 2,687 | 2,687 | 436 | n/a | 2,310 | 2,310 |
| | AI | n/a | 622 | 622 | 481 | n/a | 501 | 501 | 300 | n/a | 430 | 195 |
| Arrowtooth flounder | BSAI | 98,787 | 83,852 | 15,000 | 7,276 | 103,280 | 87,690 | 14,000 | 8,030 | 104,270 | 88,548 | 14,000 |
| Kamchatka flounder | BSAI | 8,946 | 7,579 | 7,579 | 6,949 | 8,850 | 7,498 | 7,498 | 4,748 | 8,687 | 7,360 | 7,360 |
| Northern rock sole | BSAI | 166,034 | 121,719 | 66,000 | 27,212 | 197,828 | 122,091 | 66,000 | 25,411 | 264,789 | 122,535 | 66,000 |
| Flathead sole | BSAI | 79,256 | 65,344 | 35,500 | 8,991 | 81,605 | 67,289 | 35,500 | 10,764 | 82,699 | 68,203 | 35,500 |
| Alaska plaice | BSAI | 40,823 | 33,946 | 17,500 | 15,252 | 42,695 | 35,494 | 21,752 | 8,293 | 45,182 | 37,560 | 20,000 |
| Other flatfish | BSAI | 22,919 | 17,189 | 4,500 | 3,020 | 22,919 | 17,189 | 4,500 | 2,855 | 22,919 | 17,189 | 4,500 |
| Pacific Ocean perch | BSAI | 50,133 | 42,038 | 37,703 | 35,951 | 49,010 | 41,096 | 37,626 | 23,647 | 48,139 | 40,366 | 37,181 |
| | BS | n/a | 11,903 | 11,903 | 10,892 | n/a | 11,636 | 11,636 | 6,678 | n/a | 11,430 | 11,430 |
| | EAI | n/a | 8,152 | 8,152 | 7,791 | n/a | 7,969 | 7,969 | 6,723 | n/a | 7,828 | 7,828 |
| | CAI | n/a | 5,648 | 5,648 | 5,461 | n/a | 5,521 | 5,521 | 3,497 | n/a | 5,423 | 5,423 |
| | WAI | n/a | 16,335 | 12,000 | 11,807 | n/a | 15,970 | 12,500 | 6,749 | n/a | 15,685 | 12,500 |
| Northern rockfish | BSAI | 22,776 | 18,687 | 11,000 | 10,433 | 23,556 | 19,274 | 16,752 | 7,647 | 22,838 | 18,685 | 15,000 |
| Blackspotted/Rougheye Rockfish | BSAI | 703 | 525 | 525 | 607 | 761 | 569 | 569 | 414 | 813 | 607 | 607 |
| | EBS/EAI | n/a | 359 | 359 | 291 | n/a | 388 | 388 | 167 | n/a | 412 | 412 |
| | CAI/WAI | n/a | 166 | 166 | 316 | n/a | 181 | 181 | 248 | n/a | 195 | 195 |
| Shortraker rockfish | BSAI | 706 | 530 | 530 | 243 | 706 | 530 | 530 | 102 | 706 | 530 | 530 |
| Other rockfish | BSAI | 1,680 | 1,260 | 1,260 | 1,220 | 1,680 | 1,260 | 1,260 | 1,101 | 1,680 | 1,260 | 1,260 |
| | BS | n/a | 880 | 880 | 652 | n/a | 880 | 880 | 693 | n/a | 880 | 880 |
| | AI | n/a | 380 | 380 | 568 | n/a | 380 | 380 | 408 | n/a | 380 | 380 |
| Atka mackerel | BSAI | 118,787 | 98,588 | 69,282 | 66,613 | 111,684 | 95,358 | 72,987 | 59,475 | 99,723 | 84,676 | 66,165 |
| | EAI/BS | n/a | 43,281 | 27,260 | 24,862 | n/a | 41,723 | 32,260 | 27,247 | n/a | 37,049 | 30,000 |
| | CAI | n/a | 17,351 | 17,351 | 17,210 | n/a | 16,754 | 16,754 | 13,901 | n/a | 14,877 | 14,877 |
| | WAI | n/a | 37,956 | 24,671 | 24,541 | n/a | 36,882 | 23,973 | 18,326 | n/a | 32,750 | 21,288 |
| Skates | BSAI | 46,220 | 38,605 | 27,441 | 25,866 | 45,574 | 37,808 | 30,519 | 21,451 | 44,203 | 36,625 | 30,361 |
| Sharks | BSAI | 689 | 450 | 333 | 325 | 689 | 450 | 400 | 159 | 689 | 450 | 400 |
| Octopuses | BSAI | 4,769 | 3,576 | 400 | 148 | 6,080 | 4,560 | 400 | 163 | 6,080 | 4,560 | 400 |
| Total | BSAI | 4,859,585 | 3,132,067 | 2,000,083 | 1,776,469 | 4,609,077 | 3,476,801 | 2,000,000 | 1,578,210 | 4,946,241 | 3,550,691 | 1,998,491 |

Sources: 2023 OFLs, ABCs, and TACs and 2024 OFLs and ABCs are from harvest specifications adopted by the Council in December 2022 and December 2023 respectively; 2023 catches through December 31, and 2023 catches through September 16, 2024 from AKR Catch Accounting.

Table 7—Proposed 2025 and 2026 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 | 68,203 | 122,535 | 276,917 |
| TAC | 35,500 | 66,000 | 195,000 |
| ABC surplus | 32,703 | 56,535 | 81,917 |
| ABC reserve | 32,703 | 56,535 | 81,917 |
| CDQ ABC reserve | 3,499 | 6,049 | 8,765 |
| Amendment 80 ABC reserve | 29,204 | 50,486 | 73,152 |

Table 8–Proposed 2025 and 2026 Apportionment of Prohibited Species Catch Allowances to Non-Trawl Gear, the CDQ Program, Amendment 80, and the BSAI Trawl Limited Access Sectors

| PSC species, areas, and zones ¹ | Total PSC ⁴ | Non-trawl PSC | CDQ PSQ reserve ² | Trawl PSC remaining after CDQ PSQ | Amendment 80 sector ^{3, 4} | BSAI trawl limited access sector | BSAI PSC limits not allocated ² |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI | 2,535 | 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 | 12,850,000 | n/a | 1,374,950 | 11,475,050 | 5,639,987 | 3,688,081 | 2,146,982 |
| <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 |

¹ Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of areas and zones.

² The PSQ reserve for crab species is 10.7 percent of each crab PSC limit.

³ 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.

⁴ [Under Amendment 123 and its implementing regulations, the BSAI halibut PSC limit for the Amendment 80 sector would be determined annually based on the most recent halibut abundance estimates from the IPHC setline survey index and the NMFS AFSC Eastern Bering Sea shelf trawl survey index \(87 FR 75570, December 9, 2022\). NMFS will update the halibut PSC limit for the Amendment 80 sector in the final harvest specifications.](#)

Table 9-Proposed 2025 and 2026 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 | 147 | n/a |
| Rock sole/flathead sole/Alaska plaice/other flatfish ¹ | 73 | n/a |
| Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish | 7 | n/a |
| Rockfish | 7 | n/a |
| Pacific cod | 13 | n/a |
| Midwater trawl pollock | 2,257 | n/a |
| Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ^{2,3} | 30 | n/a |
| 2024 Red king crab savings subarea non-pelagic trawl gear ⁴ | n/a | 24,250 |
| Total trawl PSC | 2,535 | 97,000 |

¹“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.

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

³“Other species” for PSC monitoring includes skates, sharks, and octopuses.

⁴In October 2023, the Council recommended and NMFS proposes that the red king crab bycatch limit 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.

Table 10–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 ¹ | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------|-----------|
| | 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 | 3,521,726 | 346,228 | 1,185,500 |
| Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish ² | - | - | 0 | - | - |
| Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish | - | - | 0 | - | - |
| Rockfish, April 15-December 31 | 5 | - | 2,971 | - | 1,000 |
| Total Pacific cod ³ | 300 | 2,955 | 148,531 | 60,000 | 50,000 |
| AFA CP Pacific cod | 6 | 278 | 13,962 | 5,640 | 4,700 |
| PCTC Program Pacific cod, A and B season | 209 | 1,653 | 83,097 | 33,567 | 27,973 |
| Trawl CV Pacific cod, C season | 15 | 134 | 6,728 | 2,718 | 2,265 |
| PCTC Program unallocated reduction | 70 | 890 | 44,744 | 18,075 | 15,062 |
| Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ⁴ | 175 | 197 | 14,854 | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| Total BSAI trawl limited access sector PSC | 745 | 26,489 | 3,688,082 | 411,228 | 1,241,500 |

¹ Refer to § 679.2 for definitions of areas and zones.

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

³ With the implementation of the PCTC Program, the BSAI trawl limited access sector Pacific cod PSC limits will be split between AFA CPs, PCTC A and B-season, and open access C-season. NMFS will apply a 25 percent reduction to the A and B season trawl CV sector halibut PSC apportionment in the annual harvest specifications after the Council recommends and NMFS approves the BSAI trawl limited access sector's PSC limit apportionments to fishery categories. Any amount of the PCTC Program PSC limit remaining after the B season may be reapportioned to the trawl CV limited access fishery in the C season. Because the annual halibut PSC limit for the PCTC Program is not a fixed amount established in regulation and, instead, is determined annually through the harvest specification process, NMFS must apply the reduction to the A and B season apportionment of the trawl CV sector apportionment to implement the overall PSC reductions under the PCTC Program.

⁴ “Other species” for PSC monitoring includes skates, sharks, and octopuses.

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

Table 11--Proposed 2025 and 2026 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 12–Proposed 2025 and 2026 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 | 86 |
| Non-pelagic trawl | Catcher vessel | 67 |
| Hook-and-line | Catcher vessel | 9 |
| Hook-and-line | Catcher/processor | 9 |
| Pot | All | 21 |