

C3 BSAI Groundfish Specifications
Council Motion
December 9, 2023

The Council moves to approve to 2023 BSAI Groundfish SAFE report.

The Council moves to adopt the 2024/2025 OFLs, ABCs and TACs for groundfish in the BSAI as shown in Table 1.

The Council also moves to set flatfish flexibility reserves as shown in Table 13 to maximize the ABC reserves for 2024/2025.

The Council moves to approve the PSC amounts and distributions as shown in Tables 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18.

The Council moves to approve Pacific halibut DMRs for 2024/2025 as shown in Table 19.

Table 1—Council recommended 2024-2025 Overfishing Level (OFL), Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC), with Council recommended Total Allowable Catch (TAC)
 [Amounts are in metric tons]

Species	Area	2023				2024			2025		
		OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch as of 11/25/23	OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	TAC
Pollock ⁴	BS	3,381,000	1,910,000	1,300,000	1,310,189	3,162,000	2,313,000	1,300,000	3,449,000	2,401,000	1,325,000
	AI	52,383	43,413	19,000	3,706	51,516	42,654	19,000	53,030	43,863	19,000
	Bogoslof	115,146	86,360	300	118	115,146	86,360	250	115,146	86,360	250
Pacific cod ⁵	BS	172,495	144,834	127,409	124,413	200,995	167,952	147,753	180,798	150,876	132,726
	AI	18,416	13,812	8,425	3,299	18,416	12,431	8,080	18,416	12,431	8,080
Sablefish ⁶	Alaska-wide	47,390	40,502	n/a	n/a	55,084	47,146	n/a	55,317	47,350	n/a
	BS	n/a	8,417	7,996	5,392	n/a	11,450	7,996	n/a	11,499	9,500
	AI	n/a	8,884	8,440	2,384	n/a	13,100	8,440	n/a	13,156	8,440
Yellowfin sole	BSAI	404,882	378,499	230,000	111,638	305,298	265,913	195,000	317,932	276,917	195,000
Greenland turbot	BSAI	4,645	3,960	3,960	1,274	3,705	3,188	3,188	3,185	2,740	2,740
	BS	n/a	3,338	3,338	795	n/a	2,687	2,687	n/a	2,310	2,310
	AI	n/a	622	622	479	n/a	501	501	n/a	430	430
Arrowtooth flounder	BSAI	98,787	83,852	15,000	7,217	103,280	87,690	14,000	104,270	88,548	14,000
Kamchatka flounder	BSAI	8,946	7,579	7,579	6,946	8,850	7,498	7,498	8,687	7,360	7,360
Rock sole ⁷	BSAI	166,034	121,719	66,000	27,129	197,828	122,091	66,000	264,789	122,535	66,000
Flathead sole ⁸	BSAI	79,256	65,344	35,500	8,946	81,605	67,289	35,500	82,699	68,203	35,500
Alaska plaice	BSAI	40,823	33,946	17,500	15,228	42,695	35,494	21,752	45,182	37,560	20,000
Other flatfish ⁹	BSAI	22,919	17,189	4,500	3,019	22,919	17,189	4,500	22,919	17,189	4,500
Pacific ocean perch	BSAI	50,133	42,038	37,703	35,007	49,010	41,096	37,626	48,139	40,366	37,181
	BS	n/a	11,903	11,903	10,196	n/a	11,636	11,636	n/a	11,430	11,430
	EAI	n/a	8,152	8,152	7,544	n/a	7,969	7,969	n/a	7,828	7,828
	CAI	n/a	5,648	5,648	5,460	n/a	5,521	5,521	n/a	5,423	5,423
Northern rockfish	BSAI	22,776	18,687	11,000	10,322	23,556	19,274	16,752	22,838	18,685	15,000
	WAI	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Blackspotted/Rougheye rockfish ¹⁰	BSAI	703	525	525	529	761	569	569	813	607	607
	BS/EAI	n/a	359	359	213	n/a	388	388	n/a	412	412
	CAI/WAI	n/a	166	166	316	n/a	181	181	n/a	195	195
Shortraker rockfish	BSAI	706	530	530	243	706	530	530	706	530	530
Other rockfish ¹¹	BSAI	1,680	1,260	1,260	1,188	1,680	1,260	1,260	1,680	1,260	1,260
	BS	n/a	880	880	624	n/a	880	880	n/a	880	880
	AI	n/a	380	380	564	n/a	380	380	n/a	380	380
Atka mackerel	BSAI	118,787	98,588	69,282	65,961	111,684	95,358	72,987	99,723	84,676	66,165
	EAI/BS	n/a	43,281	27,260	24,210	n/a	41,723	32,260	n/a	37,049	30,000
	CAI	n/a	17,351	17,351	17,210	n/a	16,754	16,754	n/a	14,877	14,877
	WAI	n/a	37,956	24,671	24,541	n/a	36,882	23,973	n/a	32,750	21,288
Skates	BSAI	46,220	38,605	27,441	25,183	45,574	37,808	30,519	44,203	36,625	30,361
Sharks	BSAI	689	450	250	321	689	450	400	689	450	400
Octopuses	BSAI	4,769	3,576	400	151	6,080	4,560	400	6,080	4,560	400
TOTAL		4,859,585	3,155,268	2,000,000	1,769,803	4,609,077	3,454,204	2,000,000	4,946,241	3,527,996	2,000,000

Note: Regulatory areas and districts are defined at § 679.2 (BSAI=Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands)

- ¹ These amounts apply to the entire BSAI management area unless otherwise specified. With
- ² Except for pollock, the portion of the sablefish TAC allocated to hook-and-line and pot gear,
- ³ For the Amendment 80 species (Atka mackerel, flathead sole, rock sole, yellowfin sole, Pacific
- ⁴ Under § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A), the annual BS pollock TAC, after subtracting first for the CDQ
- ⁵ The BS Pacific cod TAC is set to account for the 12 percent, plus 45 mt, of the BS ABC for
- ⁶ The sablefish OFL and ABC are Alaska-wide and include the Gulf of Alaska. The Alaska-
- ⁷ "Rock sole" includes *Lepidopsetta polyxystra* (Northern rock sole) and *Lepidopsetta*
- ⁸ "Flathead sole" includes *Hippoglossoides elassodon* (flathead sole) and *Hippoglossoides*
- ⁹ "Other flatfish" includes all flatfish species, except for halibut (a prohibited species), Alaska
- ¹⁰ "Blackspotted/Rougheye rockfish" includes *Sebastes melanostictus* (blackspotted) and
- ¹¹ "Other rockfish" includes all Sebastes and Sebastolobus species except for dark rockfish,

Table 13—Final 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	2024 Flathead sole	2024 Rock sole	2024 Yellowfin sole	2025 ¹ Flathead sole	2025 ¹ Rock sole	2025 ¹ Yellowfin sole
ABC	67,289	122,091	265,913	68,203	122,535	276,917
TAC	35,500	66,000	195,000	35,500	66,000	195,000
ABC surplus	31,789	56,091	70,913	32,703	56,535	81,917
ABC reserve	31,789	56,091	70,913	32,703	56,535	81,917
CDQ ABC reserve	3,401	6,002	7,588	3,499	6,049	8,765
Amendment 80 ABC reserve	28,388	50,089	63,325	29,204	50,486	73,152

¹ The 2025 allocations for Amendment 80 species between Amendment 80 cooperatives and the Amendment 80 limited access sector will not be known until eligible participants apply for participation in the program by November 1, 2024.

TABLE 14—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 and zone ¹	Total PSC	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 to Amendment 80 ³
Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	3,166	710	315	n/a	1,396	745	n/a
Herring (mt) BSAI	2,535	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

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 Pacific Cod Trawl Cooperative Program (PCTC) reduced the Pacific cod PCTC PSC limit for halibut by 12.5 percent in 2024 and 25 percent in 2025. 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).

TABLE 15-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	146	n/a
Rock sole/flathead sole/Alaska plaice/other flatfish ¹	74	n/a
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder	8	n/a
Rockfish	8	n/a
Pacific cod	13	n/a
Midwater trawl pollock	2,256	n/a
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ^{2,3}	30	n/a
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

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 December 2024, 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.

TABLE 16-PROPOSED 2024 PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTOR

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	250	23,337	1,192,179	346,228	1,185,500
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish ²	-	-	-	-	-
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish	-	-	-	-	-
Rockfish April 15-December 31	5	-	1,006	-	1,000
Total Pacific cod ³	315	2,955	50,281	60,000	50,000
AFA CP Pacific Cod	6	278	4,726	5,640	4,700
PCTC Program Pacific Cod, A and B season	257	1,653	28,130	33,567	27,973
Trawl CV Program, C season	15	134	2,278	2,718	2,265
PCTC Program unallocated reduction	37	890	15,147	18,075	15,062
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ⁴	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

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, arrowtooth flounder, flathead sole, Greenland turbot, Kamchatka flounder, rock sole, and yellowfin sole.

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 Program A and B-season, and trawl CV open access C-season. The PCTC crab PSC limit will be reduced by 35 percent beginning in 2024. In the first year of the PCTC Program, NMFS will apply a 12.5 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. In the second year of the PCTC Program and every year thereafter, NMFS will apply a 25 percent reduction to the A and B season trawl CV sector halibut PSC apportionment. Any amount of the PCTC Program PSC limit remaining after the B season may be reapportioned to the trawl CV 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 17—PROPOSED 2025 PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR THE BSAI TRAWL LIMITED ACCESS SECTOR

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	250	23,337	1,192,179	346,228	1,185,500
Rock sole/flathead sole/other flatfish ²	-	-	-	-	-
Greenland turbot/arrowtooth flounder/Kamchatka flounder/sablefish	-	-	-	-	-
Rockfish April 15-December 31	5	-	1,006	-	1,000
Total Pacific cod ³	315	2,955	50,281	60,000	50,000
AFA CP Pacific Cod	6	278	4,726	5,640	4,700
PCTC Program Pacific Cod, A and B season	220	1,653	28,130	33,567	27,973
Trawl CV Program, C season	16	134	2,278	2,718	2,265
PCTC Program unallocated reduction	73	890	15,147	18,075	15,062
Pollock/Atka mackerel/other species ⁴	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

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, arrowtooth flounder, flathead sole, Greenland turbot, Kamchatka flounder, rock sole, and yellowfin sole.

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 Program A and B-season, and trawl CV open access C-season. The PCTC crab PSC limit will be reduced by 35 percent beginning in 2024. In the first year of the PCTC Program, NMFS will apply a 12.5 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. In the second year of the PCTC Program and every year thereafter, NMFS will apply a 25 percent reduction to the A and B season trawl CV sector halibut PSC apportionment. Any amount of the PCTC Program PSC limit remaining after the B season may be reapportioned to the trawl CV 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 18—Final 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	Total 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

Note: Seasonal or sector allowances may not total precisely due to rounding.

Table 19—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/processor	7
Hook-and-line	Catcher vessel	7
Pot	All	26