

**NPFMC ADVISORY PANEL  
Motions and Rationale  
April 2025 - Teleconference**

**D3 - CGOA Rockfish Program Review Motions**

**Motion 1**

The AP appreciates the work that went into the Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program Review and recommends that the Council adopt the Review.

*Main Motion #1 passed 19-0*

**Motion 2**

The AP recommends that the Council request NMFS clarify how the Rockfish QS Use cap at 50 CFR 679.82(a)(2)(i) is implemented.

*Main Motion #2 passed 19-0*

**Motion 3**

The AP recommends that the Council initiate a discussion paper on implementing Electronic Monitoring in the CGOA Rockfish Program shoreside sector for all target species and harvests with both pelagic and non-pelagic gear.

Given that a large amount of effort has gone into implementing the pelagic pollock Trawl EM program, which shares participants with the CGOA RP, the discussion paper should compare and contrast the two fisheries to explore which aspects of TEM could be utilized in a Rockfish EM program.

This paper should describe the CGOA RP shoreside fishery, including management structure, with suggestions for a RP Trawl EM program goals and objectives. It should include a description of the following elements within the pelagic pollock Trawl EM program and how each element could be similar or need to be different for an effective CGOA RP shoreside trawl EM program:

- Vessel and processor participation
- EM System equipment requirements and function
- Vessel Monitoring Plans, including catch handling procedures and retention
- Logbooks and other recordkeeping and reporting requirements
- Transitioning at-sea observer data collection to shoreside observer data collection
- EM Video Review
- Integrating EM Data into Catch Accounting and Stock Assessments
- Impacts and Changes to Data Collection, including prohibited species catch data and estimates of at-sea discards.

*Main Motion 3 passed 19-0*

### ***Rationale in Support of Motion 1***

- *The AP motion acknowledged a comprehensive review of the GOA Rockfish Program and noted that the program is functioning as intended and that there were no requests from either the shoreside or catcher processor sectors, or the Agency, to request regulatory amendments to the Program at this time. This motion is reflective of that and the Review is ready for adoption.*
- *The motion maker noted public testimony from a shoreside processor stakeholder requesting a review of the processing cap; since the testimony noted there was not urgency in their request, and Amendment 113 to the GOA Fishery management program recently implemented in August 2024, four adjustments to the RP including increasing the processing cap from to 30% to 40%, there was no need to include the request in the AP motion at this time.*

### ***Rationale in Support of Motion 2***

- *It was noted in the staff presentation, public comment (written and oral), and AP discussion that there is an issue with how NMFS is implementing the Rockfish QS Use cap for catcher vessels at 50 CFR 679.82(a)(2)(i). Even if primary rockfish quota is transferred to another cooperative, whether it is used by the cooperative it was transferred to or not, that primary rockfish quota is counted against the original cooperative's QS use cap.*
- *In small cooperatives, the current implementation limits the amount of quota that can be transferred into a cooperative. This disincentives small cooperatives and also treats cooperative members differently.*
  - *If one cooperative member leases primary rockfish quota from another cooperative, which requires that quota to be transferred into the cooperative of the vessel leasing and catching it, and that vessel leases an amount that puts the cooperative as a whole at or near the QS use cap, it can prevent another member from also leasing other primary rockfish quota.*
  - *Even in instances where primary rockfish quota is transferred out of a cooperative, if plans change, that same unharvested cooperative quota cannot be transferred back into its original quota without being counted twice towards the Rockfish QS use cap.*
- *The AP heard that this presented an issue in 2024 when a small cooperative was unable to receive additional quota, despite none of the vessels in the cooperative being at their 8% Vessel Harvest cap. This is complicated by the fact that all primary rockfish (POP, northern and dusky rockfish) count towards the 4% QS use cap, but only POP counts towards the 8% Harvest cap. Processors don't currently want northern and dusky rockfish so vessels are unable to harvest those species, but their existence in the cooperative limits the amount of POP that can be transferred into the cooperative to harvest.*
- *The small cooperative members left and joined a larger cooperative for 2025; alleviating immediate constraints, but this may still continue to be an issue in the future in smaller cooperatives and because there are increasing levels of quota moving between cooperatives in recent years.*
- *The AP noted that the shoreside cooperatives have been in discussion with the Alaska Region about this issue, who requested the specific motion language.*
- *The AP noted that although the catcher processor cooperative also has a QS use cap but this issue and motion is specific to the catcher vessel cooperatives.*

### ***Rationale in Support of Motion 3***

- *The Rockfish Program shoreside cooperatives have been working on the Rockfish EM project since 2022 when it began as a proof of concept due to a shortage of shoreside observers. The cooperatives have since obtained two National Fish and Wildlife Federation grants, which were also recommended by the Fishery Monitoring Advisory Committee and the Council. This action is also a priority in the NMFS Alaska Region Electronic technologies implementation plan.*
- *AP discussion and public comment noted that it's important that all Rockfish Program targets and both pelagic and non-pelagic gear be included in the development of the RP EM program for trawl catcher vessels.*
- *Pollock Trawl EM was implemented as a fully regulated program in 2025; significant Council, Agency, and staff resources went into the development of that Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) and regulated program. All but one vessel in the RP has an EM system from Trawl EM and all RP processors in Kodiak also participate in pollock trawl EM. There are a lot of similarities that exist to form the basis of a RP EM program; this discussion paper can begin comparing and contrasting the similarities to compile what knowns exist and can be included and which areas are unique to the RP.*
- *The bullet points included are specific groupings of categories from the Final Trawl EM Analysis in October 2022 and reflect items that the AP believes there is enough existing information on to begin a discussion paper.*
- *The stakeholders have been in communication with the Alaska Region monitoring branch, who were supportive of this discussion paper, and who are in support of an EFP for the project in 2026, which if moved forward by the Council would put this discussion paper coming back at a time to inform further development of the EFP and the start of the initial review process.*