ADVISORY PANEL C2 MOTION

FEBRUARY 2025

C2 CHUM SALMON BYCATCH

Motion

The AP recommends that the Council release the document for Final Action with the following revisions to the alternatives as follows. Additions are in **bold/underline** and deletions are in ~~strikeout.~~ Alternatives and options are not mutually exclusive unless otherwise indicated below.

Alternative 1: Status Quo
Alternatives 2 - 4 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
Chum salmon PSC limit based on historical total bycatch numbers: range of 100,000 (~17,100 35,400 Western Alaska chum salmon) to 550,000 (~94,050 97,350 Western Alaska chum salmon). All non-Chinook salmon taken as bycatch during the B season would accrue to the limit, regardless of origin.
PSC limits are apportioned among CDQ, catcher processor, mothership, and inshore sectors (using a blended adjusted CDQ bycatch rate as with Amendment 91, with the exception of Option 4) based on:

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

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

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

Option 4: pro rata based on AFA pollock allocation

The sector limits are further apportioned at the CDQ group and inshore cooperative level in proportion to each CDQ group and inshore cooperative's pollock allocation. Chum salmon PSC can be transferred among sectors, CDQ groups, and inshore cooperatives. Reaching a limit closes the pollock fishery sector to which the limit applies.

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Alternative 3: Overall bycatch (PSC) limit for chum salmon triggered by a Western Alaska chum salmon abundance index

Indices based on the prior year's chum salmon abundance. Options below are mutually exclusive. All non-Chinook salmon taken as bycatch during the B season would accrue to the limit (based on the range specified in Alternative 2), regardless of origin.

Option 1: Three-area chum salmon index based on Yukon River summer + Yukon River fall run abundance (suboptions: 1,713,300 or 2,781,400); Kuskokwim River composed of the **Kuskokwim Sonar, with values of 25th and 50th percentiles from 1992-2022** ~~Bethel test fishery CPUE (suboptions: 2,800 or 5,200)~~; Norton Sound composed of summed escapement for the Snake, Nome, Eldorado, Kwiniuk, and North Rivers and total Norton Sound harvest (suboptions: 57,300 or 91,500).

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 (suboptions: 100,000 to 550,000).

If 1 or no areas are above index threshold, chum salmon PSC limit the following year is 75% of the above limit.

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Option 2: Chum salmon index based on Yukon River summer (suboptions: 1,268,700 or 1,978,400) + Yukon River fall run abundance (suboptions: 444,600 or 803,000).

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 (suboptions: 100,000 to 550,000).

Option 3 (must be selected with Option 1 or 2): PSC limits are apportioned among CDQ, catcher processor, mothership and inshore sectors (using a blended adjusted CDQ bycatch rate as with Amendment 91, with the exception of Option 4) 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)

Suboption 4: pro rata based on AFA apportionment pollock allocation

Further apportionments and transfer provisions are the same as Alternative 2.

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

Establish the following IPA provisions in regulation:

Incorporate industry proposed measures developed to further prioritize avoidance of areas and times of highest proportion of Western Alaska and Upper/Middle Yukon chum salmon stocks and analyze chum salmon avoided and operational tradeoffs.

Include in the IPA regulatory language at 50 CFR 679.21(f)(12)(iii)(E) the following additive changes. These requirements would be added to the existing federal regulations for IPAs at 50 CFR 679.21(f)(12), and the annual reporting requirements at § 679.21(f)(13) would still apply.

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1. Require the pollock sectors to describe in their IPA how historical genetic stock composition data are included in chum salmon avoidance measures.
2. Require the pollock sectors to describe in their IPAs how they monitor for potential chum salmon avoidance closures more than once per week.
3. Require the use of salmon excluders for the duration of A and B season.
4. Require the pollock sectors to develop chum salmon vessel outlier provisions and implement within their IPA.
5. Require IPAs to provide weekly salmon bycatch reports to Western and Interior Alaska salmon users to allow for more transparency in reporting.
6. Require the pollock sector IPAs to prohibit fishing in bycatch avoidance areas for all vessels regardless of performance when ADFG weekly stat area bycatch rates exceed 5 chum per ton of pollock (CP) and 3 times base rate (CV and MS).

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Alternative 5: In-season Corridor Cap

PSC cap on total chum salmon in ~~corridor area 1~~ **combined Clusters 1 and 2**[1] during June 10 to August 31. Cap range of ~~50,000 total chum salmon (~8,550 Western Alaska chum salmon) to 200,000 total chum salmon (~34,200 Western Alaska chum salmon)~~ ***100,000 total chum salmon to 350,000 total chum salmon.*** All non-Chinook salmon bycatch accrues to the **combined clusters 1 and 2** area-specific caps, regardless of origin. ~~If the cap is reached during the time period, the area closes to that sector(s) for the rest of the time period.~~ Caps, ~~and area closures~~ ***combined clusters 1 and 2 accrual area, and time period*** are set in federal regulations. Additional windows for salmon passage and other avoidance measures should be implemented in-season through the contracted Incentive Plan Agreements using in-season fishery data and best available genetic data.

Corridor Area **and Management** (Options 1 – ~~3~~ **2** are mutually exclusive):

~~Option 1: Cluster 1~~

~~Option 2: Unimak area~~

~~Option 3: Cluster 2. If selected, cluster 2 cap is 50,000 or 100,000 total chum salmon. (~8,550 or 17,100 Western Alaska chum salmon)~~

[1] *The combined Clusters 1 and 2 refer to the genetic cluster areas reported by the Alaska Fisheries Science Center Auke Bay Lab in the annual genetic reports.* ***The ADF&G stat areas included in combined Clusters 1 and 2 are 685730, 685700, 685630, 685600, 685530, 685500, 675700, 675630, 675600, 675530, 675500, 675430, 665630, 665600, 665530, 665500, 665430, 665401, 655630, 655600, 655530, 655500, 655430, 655409, 655410, 655412, 645700, 645630, 645600, 645530, 645501, 645434, 635700, 635630, 635600, 635530, 635504, 625630, 625600, and 625531***

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Option 1: if the cap is met during the time period, the corresponding corridor area closes to that sector(s) for the rest of the time period. The corridor area closure is set in federal regulations. Reaching the cap triggers a corridor closure comprised of all ADF&G stat areas in Cluster 1 and 2.

Sub option 1.1: Reaching the cap triggers a corridor closure comprised of 29 ADF&G stat areas (~75%) in Cluster 1 and 2[2]

[2] The 29 ADF&G stat areas that a corridor closure would be comprised of: 685730, 685600, 685530, 685500, 675600, 675530, 675500, 675430, 665630, 665600, 665530, 665500, 655630, 655600, 655530, 655500, 645700, 645630, 645600, 645530, 645501, 635700, 635630, 635600, 635530, 635504, 625630, 625600, and 625531

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Option 2: If the cap is met during the time period, the IPA's pre-approved corridor area closes to that sector(s) for the rest of the time period. The regulatory criteria for a corridor closure area are set in federal regulation. The corridor closure must be described in the IPA and pre-approved by NMFS before B season. Reaching the cap triggers a corridor closure that must be within combined Clusters 1 and 2 and comprised of a range of 19 – 29 ADF&G stat areas (~50% - 75%). [3] The stat areas chosen should be based on chum catch, pollock CPUE, and historic genetic data.

[3] For Analytical purposes the stat areas included in the high range of 29 ADF&G stat areas are 685730, 685600, 685530, 685500, 675600, 675530, 675500, 675430, 665630, 665600, 665530, 665500, 655630, 655600, 655530, 655500, 645700, 645630, 645600, 645530, 645501, 635700, 635630, 635600, 635530, 635504, 625630, 625600, and 625531. Additionally for analytical purposes, the stat areas included in the low range of 19 ADF&G stat areas are 685600, 685530, 675600, 675530, 675500, 665600, 665530, 665500, 655600, 655530, 655500, 645600, 645530, 645501, 635600, 635530, 635504, 625600, and 625531.

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Apportionment

PSC cap is apportioned among CDQ, catcher processor, mothership and inshore sectors based on:

Sub option 1: historical bycatch in the area by sector using the 3-year average (2020 – 2022)

Sub option 2: historical bycatch in the area by sector using the 5-year average (2018 – 2022)

Sub option 3: pro rata 25% AFA pollock allocation and 75% historical bycatch in the area (2020– 2022)

Sub option 4: pro rata based on AFA pollock allocation

Further apportionments and transfer provisions are the same as Alternative 2.

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Additional Decision Points

Option 3: In-season Corridor Cap Adjustment

> ***Request analysts to review whether other data sources such as Bristol Bay chum catch, Yukon River sonar, Anvik sonar, Eagle sonar, etc., could serve as a reliable tool to adjust ~~relieve~~ the corridor cap during periods of higher Western Alaska chum salmon returns.***
> ***Option 4: Adjust the Winter Herring Savings Area start date from September 1 to September 30***

Option 3 and 4 are not mutually exclusive to each other and can be selected in combination with Option 1 or 2.

The AP requests staff to expand the analysis to consider the impacts to CDQ should CDQ pollock be leased in the non-CP sectors, and separately, the broader consideration of crab habitat impacts within the habitat section.

Motion passed 17/1