

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC, and AP Members

FROM: Chris Oliver 
Executive Director

ESTIMATED TIME 12 HOURS (All C-5 items)

DATE: September 20, 2013

SUBJECT: Chinook salmon PSC limit rollover for GOA non-pollock trawl catcher vessels

ACTION REQUIRED:

Initial Review: Measures to roll over unused Chinook salmon PSC from the Central GOA Rockfish Program catcher vessel sector to other non-pollock catcher vessel fisheries

BACKGROUND:

In June 2013, the Council took final action on management measures to limit prohibited species catch (PSC) of Chinook salmon in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) non-pollock trawl fisheries, and set an annual PSC limit of 7,500 Chinook salmon in the Western and Central GOA. Attainment of this hard cap will close the fishery. The hard cap is apportioned annually for the three identified trawl sectors as follows:

- Central GOA Rockfish Program Catcher vessels: 1,200 Chinook salmon
- Non-Rockfish Program Catcher vessels: 2,700 Chinook salmon
- Catcher/Processors: 3,600 Chinook salmon

At the time of final action, the Council initiated a related action that will consider allowing unused Chinook salmon PSC to be rolled over from the Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program's catcher vessel (CV) sector to support other CV fisheries that occur later in the year.

A draft of the analysis was mailed to the Council in mid-September 2013. The Executive Summary is attached as Item C-5(c)(1). New information in this document is primarily located in the RIR. The EA summarizes what was presented in June 2013, since none of the alternatives under consideration would allow an annual amount of Chinook salmon PSC that is greater than the levels previously analyzed. An IRFA will be completed after the Council identifies a preliminary preferred alternative for this action.

The 'no action' alternative would result in a final recommendation that is identical to the Council's preferred alternative for the related action, as voted on at the June 2013 meeting. If an action alternative is selected, it would be added to the Council's final recommendation for management measures to address Chinook salmon PSC in the Central and Western GOA non-pollock trawl fisheries.

Selecting the 'no action' alternative would apportion 1,200 Chinook salmon PSC to the CV sector of the Central GOA Rockfish Program fishery, resulting in a 2,700 Chinook PSC annual hard cap for all other non-pollock CV activity. Both CV sectors would retain the ability to earn a "buffer" of additional PSC for the year following one in which that sector performed to a defined standard of Chinook avoidance.

Alternatives 2 and 3 would make some amount of the Rockfish Program CV sector's unused Chinook PSC available to the non-Rockfish Program CV sector on October 1. That amount would depend on how much of the Rockfish Program CV sector's 1,200 Chinook apportionment has been used by that date; these alternatives and their suboptions differ in how much of the unused PSC may be rolled over. Under either alternative, all sectors would again remain eligible to earn a PSC buffer in the following year if their Chinook avoidance meets a certain standard.

Alternative 4 would not limit the amount of unused Chinook PSC that could be rolled over from the Rockfish Program CV sector to other CV fisheries, nor would it set a specific date on which the rollover would occur. If the rollover is to occur before the end of the Rockfish Program fishery (November 15), *all* Rockfish Program cooperatives must have "checked out" of the Program fishery. In addition, selecting Alternative 4 would make the Rockfish Program CV sector ineligible to earn a PSC buffer by achieving a certain Chinook avoidance standard in the preceding year.

This "trailing" analysis primarily considers whether or not incorporating a Chinook PSC rollover might reduce the efficacy of the "uncertainty pool" mechanism that the Council has already selected for its final recommendation. The document also examines the extent to which the Council's current preferred alternative might relatively disadvantage some CV fisheries relative to others.