

Staffing Changes

Seanbob Kelly will be transitioning from Sustainable Fisheries to the Habitat Conservation Division effective April 1, 2015. Seanbob will continue to work out of the Anchorage Field Office. Seanbob will bring his skills and experience to the Habitat Conservation Division by serving as a coordinator for habitat-related fishery management plan and regulatory amendments recommended by the Council and developed by NMFS. Additionally, Seanbob will be taking on new challenges by working on environmental review activities focusing on coastal development and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) issues. While we will miss Seanbob as a member of Sustainable Fisheries staff, we are pleased that he will continue to be part of the Alaska Regional Office team. We look forward to continued coordination with Seanbob in his new role.

We anticipate an announcement for two, possibly three, new fishery management specialist positions in Sustainable Fisheries in early January 2015. These positions could fill a variety of analytical and rule making roles within Sustainable Fisheries depending on the specific expertise of the applicant. These positions could fill gaps we have in our Catch Share Branch, Ecosystem Branch, and in our vacant Observer Program Liaison position. These vacancies will be posted at: www.usajobs.gov.

Inseason Management Report

Mary Furuness will provide the Inseason Management Report (see B-2 Supplemental).

Attachment 1: Status of Actions

FMP Amendment Status	Lead Council and SF Staff	Date of Council Final Action	Start Regional Review	Received by GCAK	Transmittal Date of Action to NMFS HQ for Review	Proposed FMP Amendment Notice of Availability Published in Federal Register	Proposed Rule Published in Federal Register	Final Rule or Notice of Approval Published in Federal Register
Amendment 31 (KTC) – C – Share Active Participation and IFQ/IPQ application deadline modification	Fina Palmigiano	April 2008	PR: 08/22/11	PR: 09/13/11	PR: 12/8/14			
Amendment 43 (KTC) and Amendment 103 (BSAI) Pribilof blue king crab rebuilding Approved: November 14, 2014	Stram Eich	June 2012	PR: 03/25/13 FR: 10/27/14	PR: 04/08/13 FR: 10/29/14	PR: 08/15/14 FR: 11/10/14	August 21, 2014 79 FR 49487 EOC: 10/20/14	August 29, 2014 79 FR 51520 EOC: 09/29/14	December 2, 2014 79 FR 71344 Effective: 1/1/15
Amendment 44 (KTC) BSAI Crab ROFR	Marrinan Palmigiano	October 2014						
Amendment 45 (KTC) GOA Pacific Cod non-AFA crab sideboards FLL	McCracken Kelly	June 2013	PR: 05/23/14	PR: 05/29/14				
Amendment 96 (GOA) – Ability for CQE to buy small blocks of QS Approved: October 21, 2014	Cunningham Murphy	April 2013	PR: 03/05/14 FR: 09/29/14	PR: 03/06/14 FR: 09/30/14	PR: 07/22/14 FR: 10/17/14	July 25, 2014 79 FR 43377 EOC: 09/23/14	August 7, 2014 79 FR 46237 EOC: 09/08/14	November 7, 2014 79 FR 66324 Effective: 12/8/14
Amendment 97 (GOA) Chinook PSC management measures for non-pollock fisheries trawl Approved: September 3, 2014	Cunningham Hartman	December 2013	PR: 03/06/14 FR: 09/17/14	PR: 03/07/14 FR: 09/23/14	PR: 05/30/14 FR: 11/10/14	June 5, 2014 79 FR 32525 EOC: 08/04/14	June 25, 2014 79 FR 35971 EOC: 07/25/14	December 2, 2014 79 FR 71350 Effective: 01/01/15
Amendments 100 (BSAI) and 91 (GOA) Management of Grenadiers Approved: August 04, 2014	DiCosimo Harrington	February 2014	PR: 04/01/14 FR: 11/13/14	PR: 04/01/14 FR: 11/14/14	PR: 04/29/14	May 5, 2014 79 FR 25558 EOC: 07/07/14	May 14, 2014 79 FR 27557 EOC: 06/13/14	
Amendment 104 (BSAI) HAPC skate sites – FMP only Decision Date: January 7, 2014	Witherell Olson/Kelly	February 2013	FMP: 07/28/14	FMP: 07/29/14	FMP: 10/01/14	October 8, 2014 79 FR 60802 EOC: 12/08/14	N/A	

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Amendment 107 (BSAI) Establishing transit areas through walrus protection areas (Round Island) Decision Date: December 24, 2014	MacLean Eich	April 2014	PR: 07/15/14 FR: 12/1/14	PR: 07/21/14 FR: 12/3/14	PR: 09/18/14	September 24, 2014 79 FR 57041 EOC: 11/24/14	October 3, 2014 79 FR 58222 EOC: 11/03/14	

Attachment 1: Status of Actions

Regulatory Amendment Status	Lead Council and SF Staff	Date of Council Final Action	Start Regional Review	Received by GCAK	Transmittal Date of Action to NMFS HQ for Review	Proposed Rule Published in Federal Register	Final Rule Published in Federal Register
At-sea scales regulatory amendments	Watson	NMFS initiated	PR: 03/13/14 FR: 09/16/14	PR: 03/20/14 FR: 09/23/14	PR: 07/08/14 FR: 10/24/14	July 31, 2014 79 FR 44372 EOC: 09/02/14	November 18, 2014 79 FR 44372 Effective: 12/18/14
BSAI 2015-2016 harvest specifications	DiCosimo Whitney	October 2014	PR: 10/23/14	PR: 10/29/14	PR: 11/20/14	December 8, 2014 79 FR 72571 EOC: 01/07/15	
GOA 2015-2016 harvest specifications	Stram Davis	October 2014	PR: 10/22/14	PR: 10/23/14	PR: 11/17/14	December 8, 2014 79 FR 72593 EOC: 01/07/15	
Cost recovery for AFA, AI Pollock, Amendment 80, and CDQ program	Brannan Palmigiano	NMFS initiated -MSA Mandate-	PR: 08/22/14	PR: 08/29/14	PR: 12/8/14		
Federal fisheries permit and Federal processor permit revisions	Bearden	NMFS initiated	PR: 05/30/13 FR: 08/05/14	PR: 06/25/13 FR: 08/19/14	PR: 03/31/14 FR: 10/01/14	April 18, 2014 79 FR 21882 EOC: 05/19/14	October 21, 2014 79 FR 62885 Effective 11/20/14
GOA trawl data collection (EDR)	Brannan Hartman	October 2013	PR: 06/02/14 FR: 09/30/14	PR: 06/09/14 FR: 10/06/14	PR: 07/21/14 FR: 11/16/14	Aug 11, 2014 79 FR 46758 EOC: 09/10/14	December 2, 2014 79 FR 62885 Effective: 01/01/15
Halibut IFQ – Establish new minimum vessel ownership criteria for using hired skipper of 12 months and 20% interest	DiCosimo McKeen	December 2007	PR: 01/20/12 FR: 05/14/13	PR: 02/03/12 FR: 05/16/13	PR: 10/12/12 FR: 01/29/14	October 31, 2012 77 FR 65843 EOC: 11/30/12	February 24, 2014 79 FR 99958 Effective: 03/23/15
Revise definition of sport fishing guide services	DiCosimo Scheurer	February 2014	PR: 08/15/14	PR: 09/02/14	PR: 11/13/14	December 3, 2014 79 FR 71729 EOC: 01/02/15	
Steller sea lion protection measures	MacLean Harrington	October 2013	PR: 05/02/14 FR: 09/30/14	PR: 05/08/14 FR: 10/07/14	PR: 06/05/14 FR: 11/04/14	July 1, 2014 79 FR 37486 EOC: 08/15/14	November 25, 2014 79 FR 70286 Effective: 12/26/14

Attachment 2

Guided Angler Fish (GAF) Program

Final 2014 Report

Prepared by Julie Scheurer and Alexander Kotlarov
NOAA Fisheries, Alaska Region

In 2014, NMFS implemented the guided angler fish (GAF) program to authorize limited annual transfers of commercial halibut IFQ as GAF to qualified charter halibut permit holders for harvest by charter vessel anglers in International Pacific Halibut Commission Regulatory Areas 2C (Southeast Alaska) and 3A (South Central Alaska). Using GAF, qualified charter halibut permit holders may offer charter vessel anglers the opportunity to retain halibut up to the limit for unguided anglers when the charter management measure in place limits charter vessel anglers to a more restrictive harvest limit.

For 2014, charter vessel anglers in Area 2C are limited to one halibut per day that is less than or equal to 44 inches or greater than or equal to 76 inches total length. In Area 3A, charter vessel anglers are allowed to keep two fish per day, one of which must be less than or equal to 29 inches total length. Using GAF, charter vessel anglers may harvest up to two halibut of any size per day.

NMFS processed 111 transfers totaling 41,152 lb of IFQ to 43 different charter halibut permit holders. These transfers allowed the harvest of up to 2,027 additional halibut as GAF by charter vessel anglers (Table 1). Overall, nearly 20% of all GAF transfers were “self-transfers,” i.e., the same person held both the IFQ and the charter halibut permit and transferred the IFQ to himself (Table 1). In Area 3A, 47% of all transfers were self-transfers, while only 14% were self-transfers in Area 2C. No transfers of IFQ to GAF occurred after September 15.

GAF participants are given the option of self-reporting cost information for GAF transfers. Of the transfers for which price information was reported, and excluding self-reported prices for self-transfers, lease prices averaged \$5.62/lb in Area 2C and \$5.01/lb in Area 3A (weighted averages). The overall weighted average price per pound of IFQ leased was \$5.46.

Charter vessel anglers harvested 1,068 GAF (53%) in 2014, mostly in Area 2C (Table 2). The high percentage of self-transfers in Area 3A may partially explain why a lower proportion of GAF were harvested in Area 3A. The GAF/IFQ holder would still have an opportunity to harvest those pounds in the commercial fishery after the automatic return date. Three voluntary returns of GAF to IFQ were processed in September. Another six voluntary return applications were denied because they arrived after the August 31 deadline. Unused GAF were automatically returned to the IFQ account from which they originated on October 23, 2014. Approximately, 8,300 lb of Area 2C IFQ and 6,100 pounds of Area 3A IFQ were returned from the charter sector to the commercial sector under the automatic return provision.

NMFS issues GAF in numbers of halibut based on a conversion factor from IFQ pounds. In this first year of the GAF program, the conversion factors were based on the average weight of charter halibut harvested by area in the most recent year without a size limit in effect. The 2014 conversion factors were 26.4 lb IFQ per GAF in Area 2C and 12.8 lb IFQ per GAF in Area 3A. For future years, the conversion factor will be based on the average net weight of GAF harvested by area. The average length of GAF harvested in 2014 was 55 inches in Area 2C and 45 inches in Area 3A (Table 2 and

Figure 1). Using the IPHC halibut length weight conversion table, these lengths translate into estimated average net weights of 67.3 lb in Area 2C and 38.4 lb in Area 3A. The 2015 conversion factors will increase in 2015 compared to 2014. NMFS will announce the official GAF conversion factors early in 2015.

NMFS' costs associated with management, data collection, and enforcement of the GAF Program are recoverable through IFQ Program Cost Recovery fees. NMFS does not track fees associated with GAF separately from other IFQ Program fees. Even with the additional costs to develop and implement the GAF Program, total NMFS costs associated with the IFQ program were less in 2014 than in 2013. NMFS collected cost information for the development of the database and electronic reporting systems for the GAF Program. These costs totaled \$78,700 across multiple years and were subject to IFQ Program Cost Recovery fees.

Table 1. Summary of 2014 IFQ to GAF transfers

IPHC Regulatory Area	IFQ Pounds Transferred	Number of GAF Transferred	Number of Transfers (Permits Issued)	Avg. price per pound	Percentage of self-transfers
2C (Southeast)	29,498	1,117	92	\$ 5.62	14%
3A (South Central)	11,654	910	19	\$ 5.01	47%
Total	41,152	2,027	111	\$ 5.46	20%

Table 2. 2014 GAF harvest summary

IPHC Regulatory Area	Number of GAF harvested (% of total)	Average Length in inches (range)	Estimated 2015 conversion factor (net lb)	2014 Conversion Factor (net lb)
2C (Southeast)	800 (72%)	55 (18-77)	67.3	26.4
3A (South Central)	269 (30%)	45 (30-75)	38.4	12.8
Total	1068 (53%)			

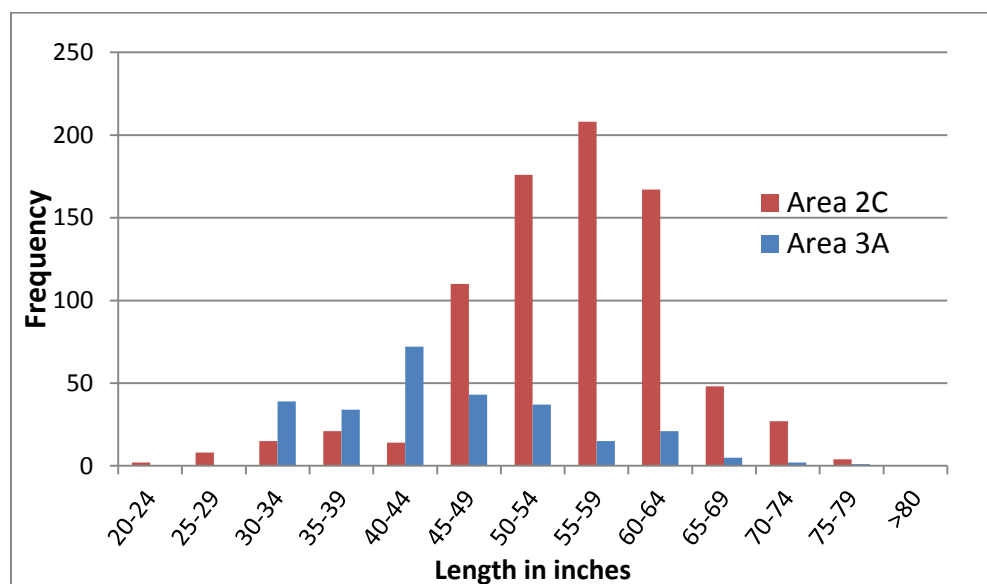


Figure 1. 2014 GAF length distribution by IPHC regulatory area