Draft SSC Report
February 2024

C2 BBRKC Closure Areas - Initial Review

C2 Bristol Bay Red King Crab Closures – Initial Review

- 2nd Initial analyses of effects of three alternatives: 1) no action, 2) closing the RKCSA to all groundfish gear, or 3) closing NMFS area 512 to Pacific cod pot fishing
- Potential benefits to BBRKC stock are challenging to quantify given available data
- Potential effects on groundfish fisheries are variable, depending on what alternatives and options are selected

C2 Bristol Bay Red King Crab Closures – Initial Review

- The SSC ***finds*** the document **sufficient** to allow the Council to understand the fishery and policy impacts of the alternatives and ***recommends*** the document be advanced to final action with the following revisions:
  - Replacing the CPUE model with a “proportional” model for PSC predictions to redistribute effort outside of closure areas that is more reflective of actual fleet behavior
  - Alternatively, if the CPUE model is retained, modify the existing model to adjust for CPUE in the area the vessel is displaced and thereby holding target catch constant

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- The SSC ***recommends*** (cont.):
  - Inclusion of a table that is similar to the table in the presentation showing the qualitative effects across fishery and PSC species in a stoplight diagram (Figure 1)
  - Improve discussion of RKC predation by cod and provide consumption estimates if possible
  - clarify of the rationale behind the selection of the 50,000-ton threshold
  - explicitly consider the scenario under Alternative 3 that closes area 512 to pot gear and the RKCSA remains open, especially in terms of catch redirection from area 512 to the RKCSA.

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- The SSC ***recommends*** (cont.):
  - Identify the communities and stakeholders engaged in or dependent on the BBRKC fishery that would be the beneficiaries of potential conservation aspects of the proposed action, were those benefits to occur
  - Include a brief qualitative characterization of the nature and degree of overlap between the relevant varying sets of potentially affected groundfish fishing communities and the set of potentially affected BBRKC fishing communities under different alternative combinations
  - Improve the characterization of shore-based and inshore floating processors including tendering activities