

Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program 2022



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Alaska Groundfish Data Bank



Rockfish Program History

- **Pre-2007**: Rockfish fishery operated as a fast-paced 3-week race in July and directly conflicted with Kodiak's pink salmon fishery.
- **2007 – 2011**: The Rockfish Pilot Program (RPP) was a 5-year test program authorized by Congress from 2007-2011. It was successful and supported by industry.
- **2012 – 2021**: The RPP became the Rockfish Program (RP) when the Council reauthorized it for 10 years.
- **2021**: The Council reauthorized the RP again before the 2021 sunset date. There was no sunset date included in the 2021 reauthorized program.

Goals of the Rockfish Program

Economic benefits to Kodiak

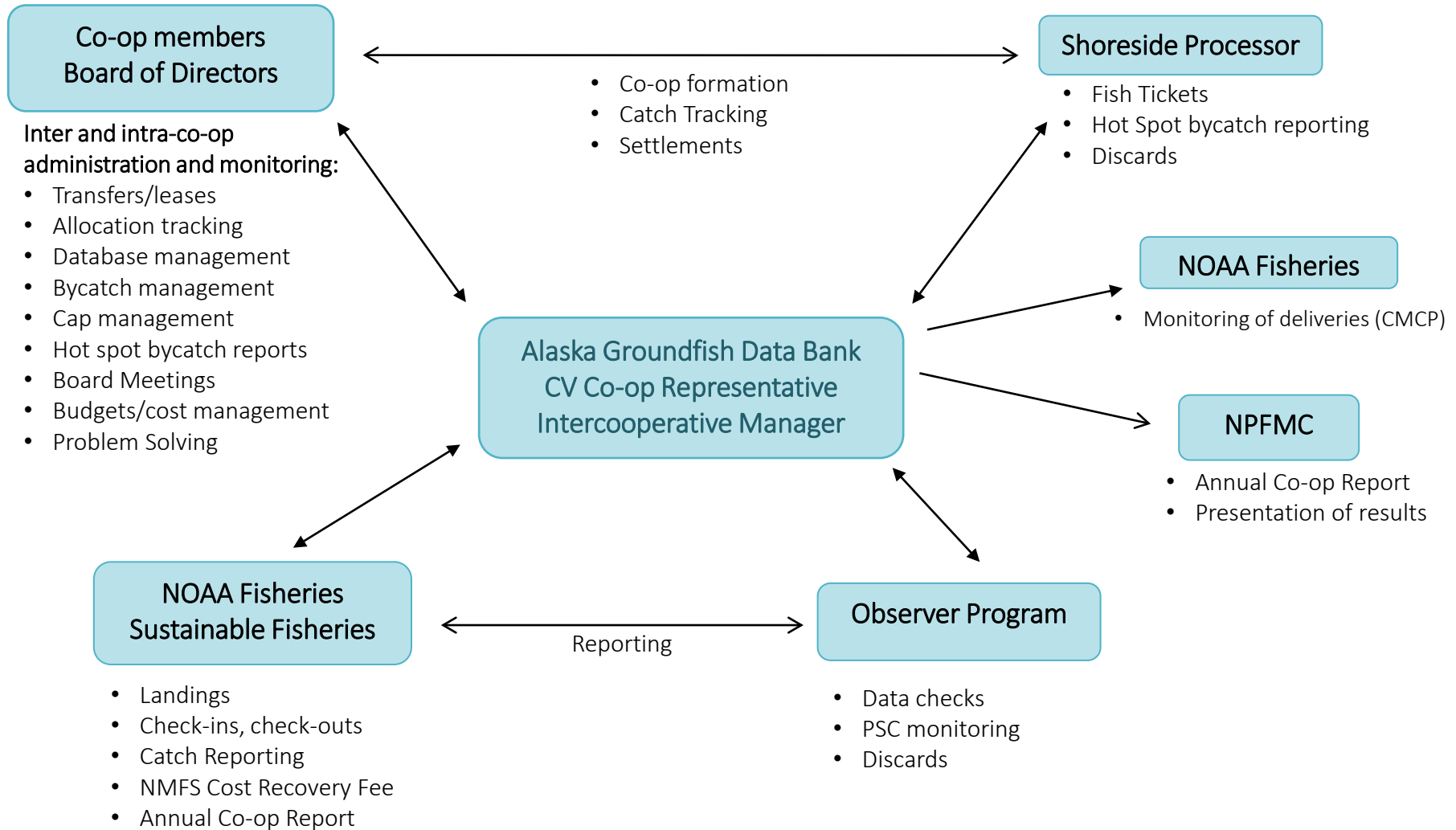
- ✓ Stabilize the residential processing work force by filling times of year with low processing volumes – particularly May and June (hoping to add April)
- ✓ Remove the processing timing conflict with salmon
- ✓ Slow the fishery so more valuable products can be produced



Co-operative Management

- Council sets the Rockfish Program objectives.
- Industry develops the internal rules and agreements to meet those objectives. Industry is responsible for co-op management and staying within allocations.
- NMFS oversees the harvest and Council objectives.
- Annual voluntary co-op reporting to the Council.
- Co-op structure builds cooperation amongst harvesters and processors so the entire industry is working together towards common goals.

Operations and Management of the 5 CGOA Shoreside Cooperatives



Cooperative Fishery Allocations



Primary Species:

- Pacific Ocean Perch
- Northern Rockfish
- Dusky Rockfish

Secondary Species:

- Sablefish
- Pacific Cod
- Thornyhead Rockfish

Bycatch Cap for Halibut Mortality

Sector Bycatch Cap for Chinook

Monitoring Requirements

- **100% observer coverage** for catcher vessels
- Catch Monitor and Control Plan (CMCP) required for shoreside processing plants and a CMCP monitor who monitors offloads
- Vessels must check in and out of the fishery
- Vessels must carry laptop for observer for faster data turnaround



Community & Conservation Measures

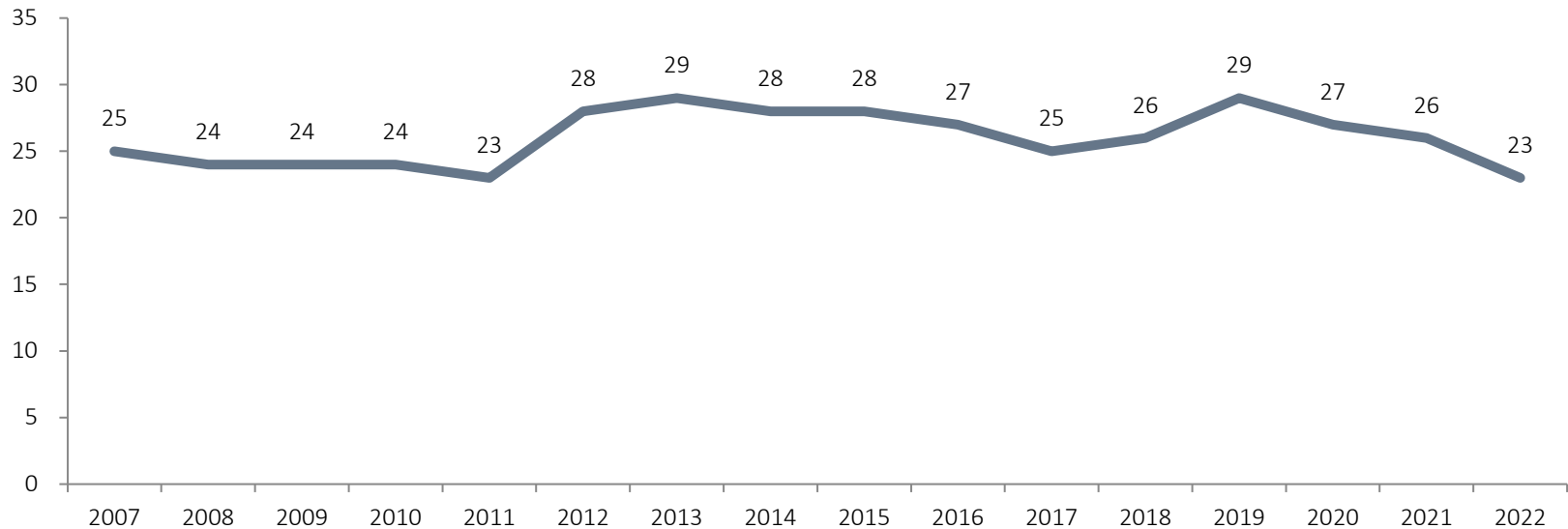
1. Port Landing Requirement: Maintains the historical landing pattern and protects Kodiak.
2. Transfers: No transfers from the CV sector to CP sector but transfers allowed from CP sector to CV sector.
3. Caps: Ownership cap, Co-op cap, Processor cap, & Vessel Use cap
4. Cost Recovery Fee: Maximum 3% of the ex-vessel value. The fee was 2.53% in 2022, down again from 2.77% in 2021.
5. 100% Retention Requirement:
 - No at-sea discards allowed for coop species
 - Halibut must still be discarded at sea
 - All salmon must be retained

Status Update on Rockfish Program Modifications

- Council took Final Action in June 2022 on 4 requested Rockfish Program amendments:
 - Change season start date from May 1st to April 1st
 - Increase the processing cap from 30% to 40%
 - Modify the harvesting cap to 8% of POP, rather than 8% of primary rockfish (excluding northerns and duskies)
 - Remove the cooperative holding cap
- NMFS March 31 Status of FMP Amendments suggests no progress
- The 30% processing cap continues to constrain the fishery:
 - In late October 2022, only two RP processors were active and both were almost at the 30% processor cap for P cod resulting in stranded RP cod quota.

Vessel Participation

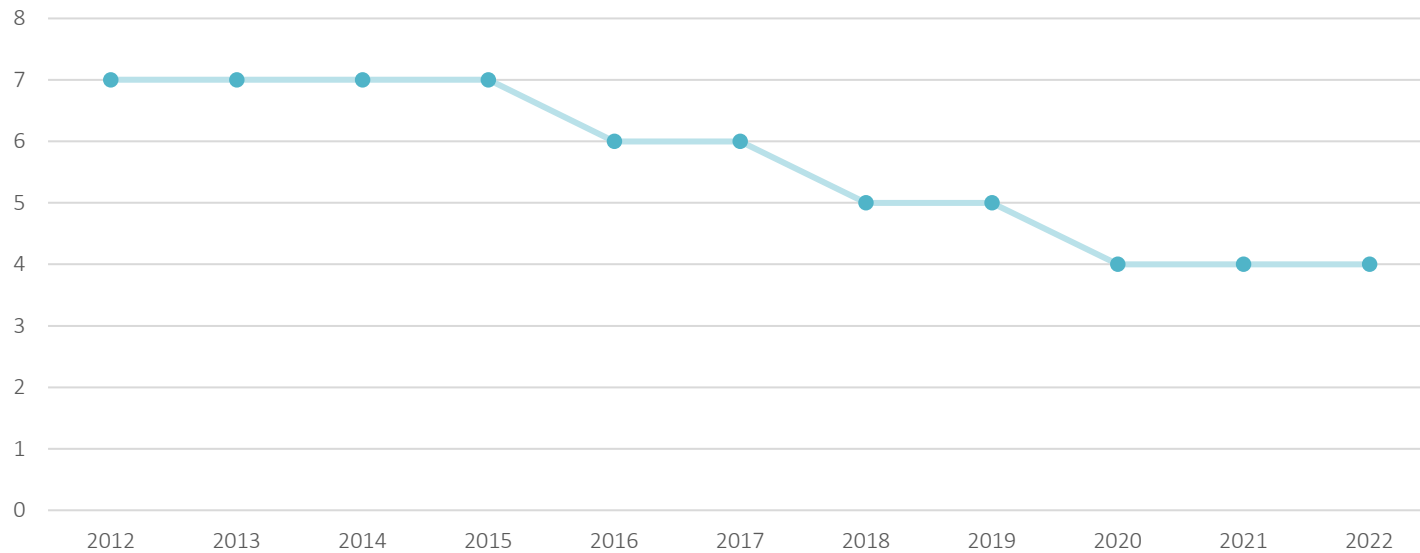
Number of Vessels that completed at least one RP trip, 2007-2022



- There are 46 CV LLP's in the program – typically 23 – 29 vessels participate. LLPs associated with vessels that don't exist or have a small amount of quota lease theirs to other participants.
- Minimal Consolidation since start of Rockfish Pilot Program in 2007.
- 2022 was the lowest participation since 2011 with only 23 vessels completing at least one trip.
- A lot of vessels left their quota until the Fall, but the pollock fishery, a voluntary cod catch share, and bad weather prevented late season harvest.

Processor Consolidation

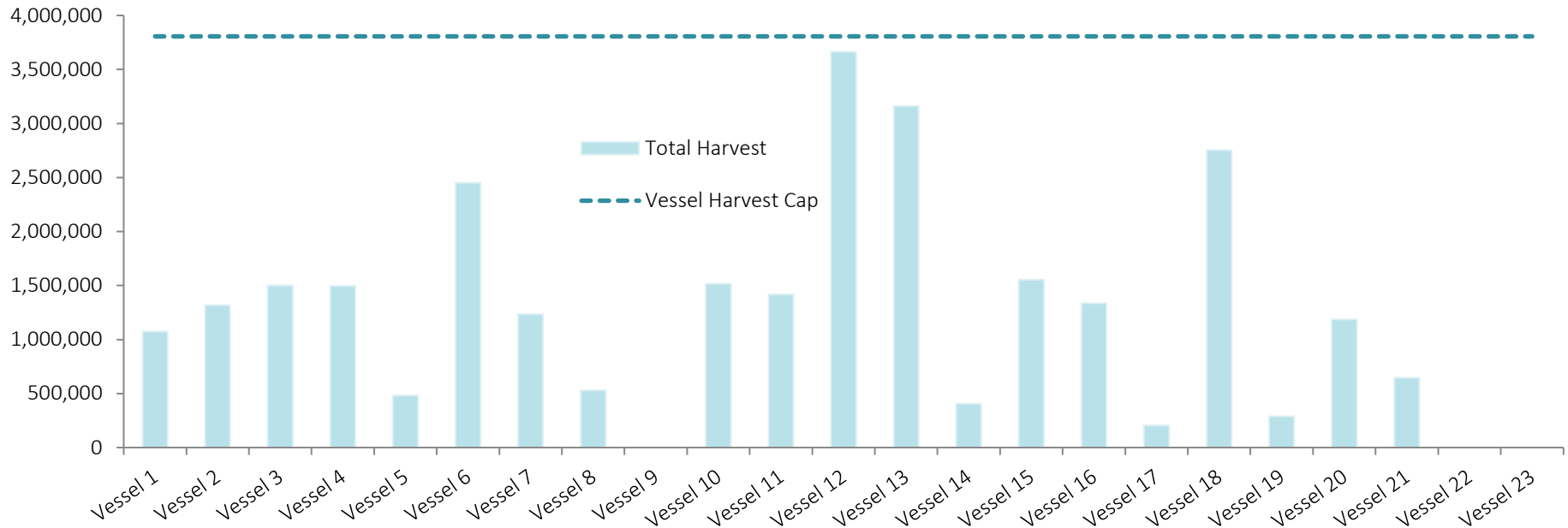
Number of active, qualified rockfish processors 2012-2022



- Four Processors have been active and participated since 2020.
- However, it's important to note that plant maintenance and upgrade schedules resulted in the RP operating with just 2 active processors for most of October through the Nov 15th closure.

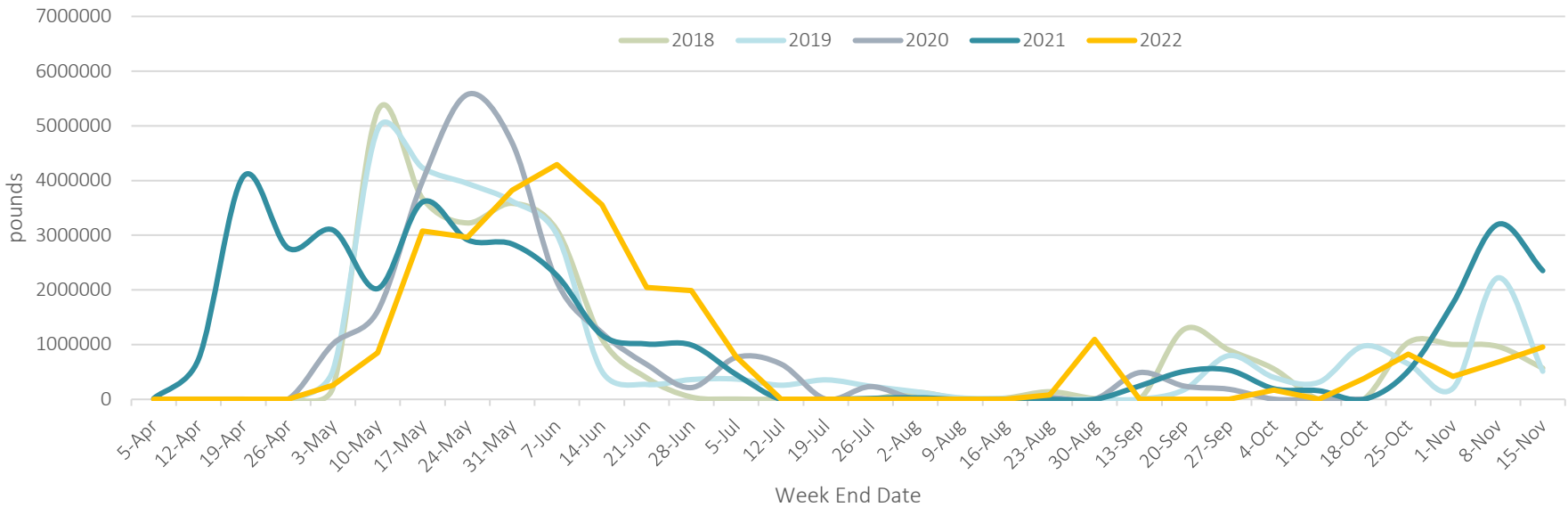
8% Primary Rockfish Vessel Harvest Cap

Vessel Primary Rockfish Harvests vs the 3,806,140 lbs Vessel Harvest Cap in 2022



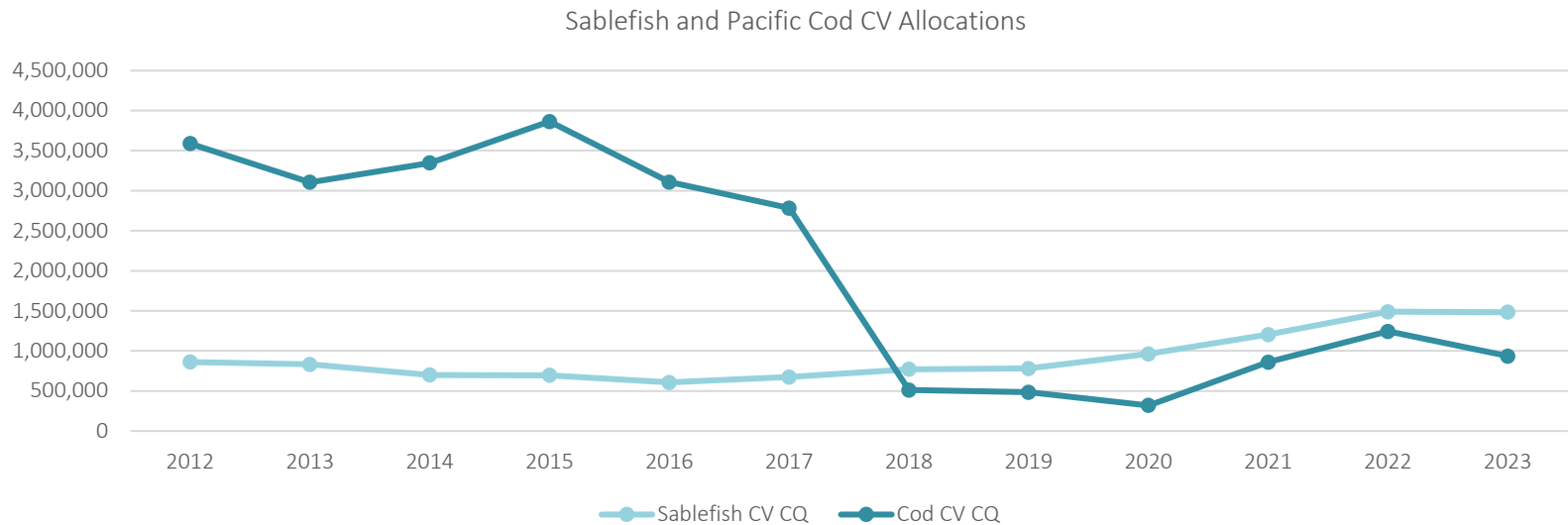
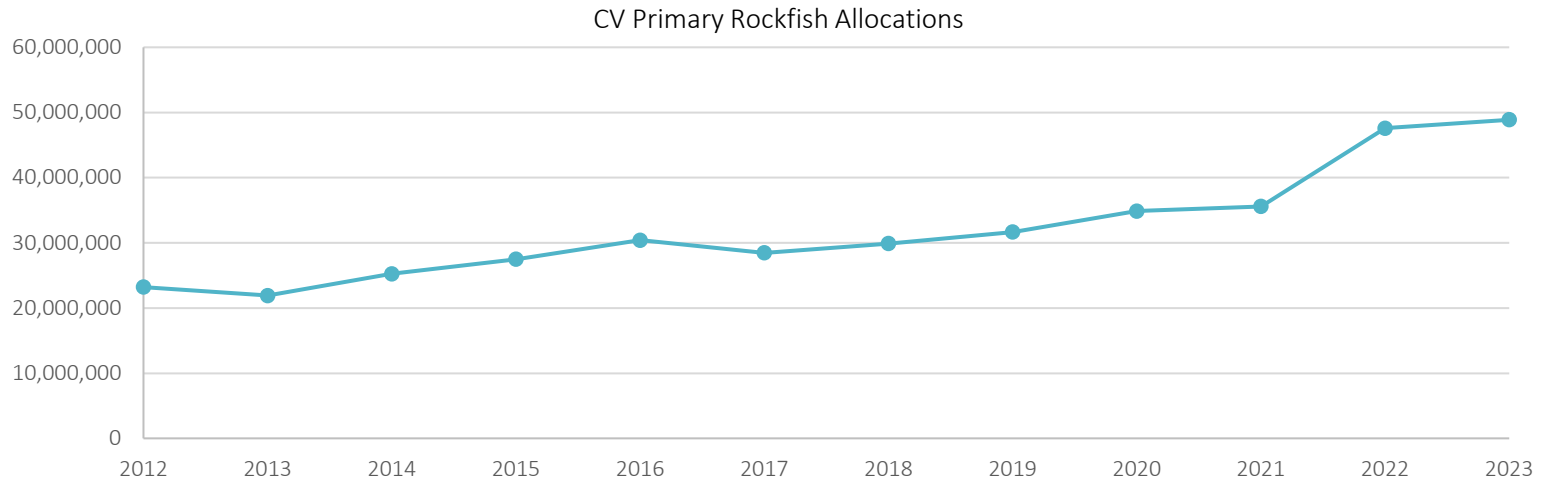
- Only one vessel was constrained by the vessel harvest cap in 2022.
- Although 23 vessels participated in 2022, three vessels targeted only their secondary species.

Primary Rockfish Landings by week, 2018-2022



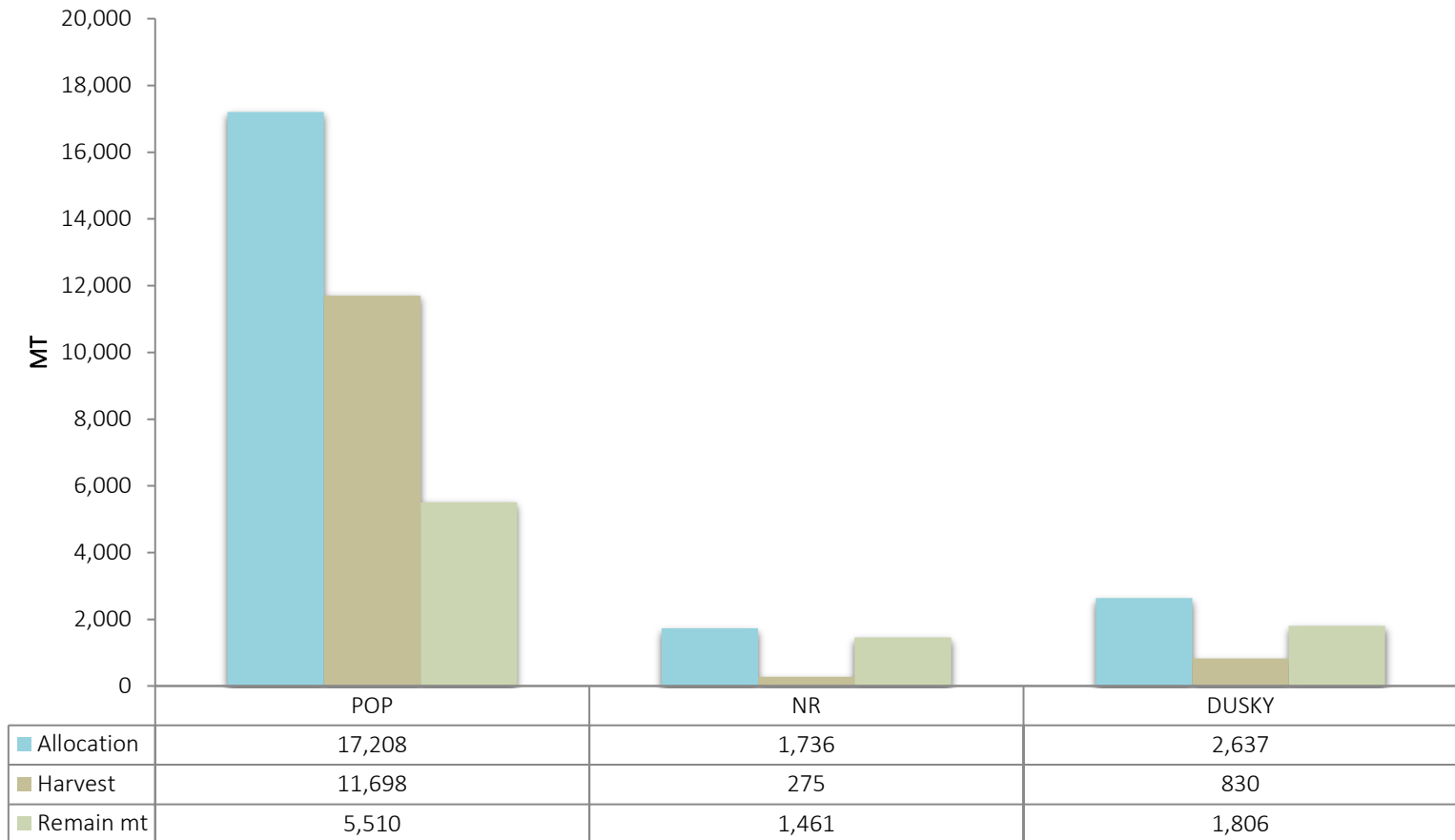
- Despite increased quotas in 2022, harvest began later, went further into the summer, and was less than normal at typical peak harvest times.
- Note: Season started on April 1 in 2021 due to Emergency Rule.

Changing Rockfish Program CV Allocations 2012-2023

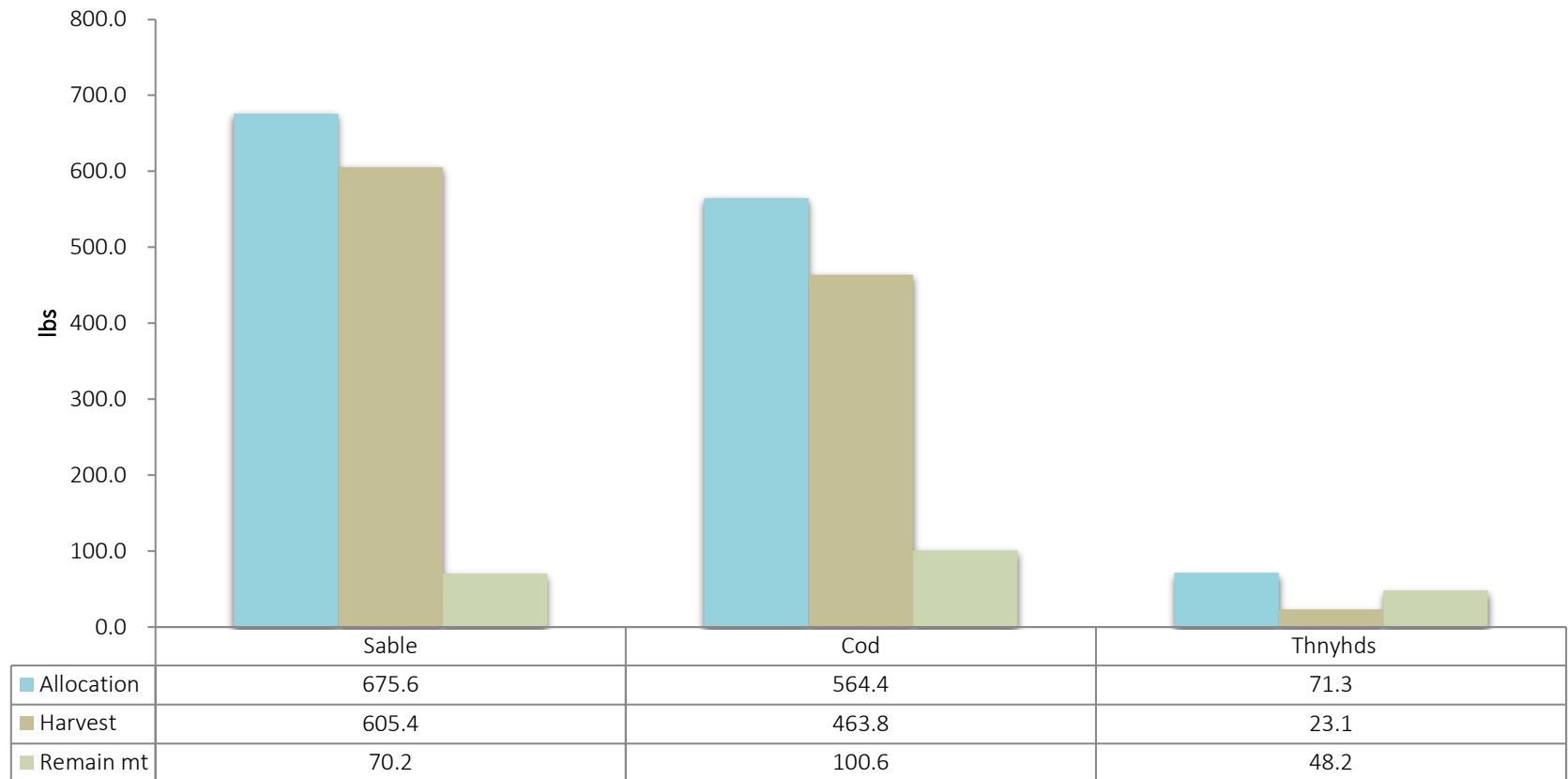


2022 CV Co-Op Primary Rockfish Harvest

(POP is easier to harvest compared to Northern and Dusky RF)



2022 CV Co-Op Secondary Species Harvest



Conservation Goals of Intercooperative Agreements: Halibut Bycatch

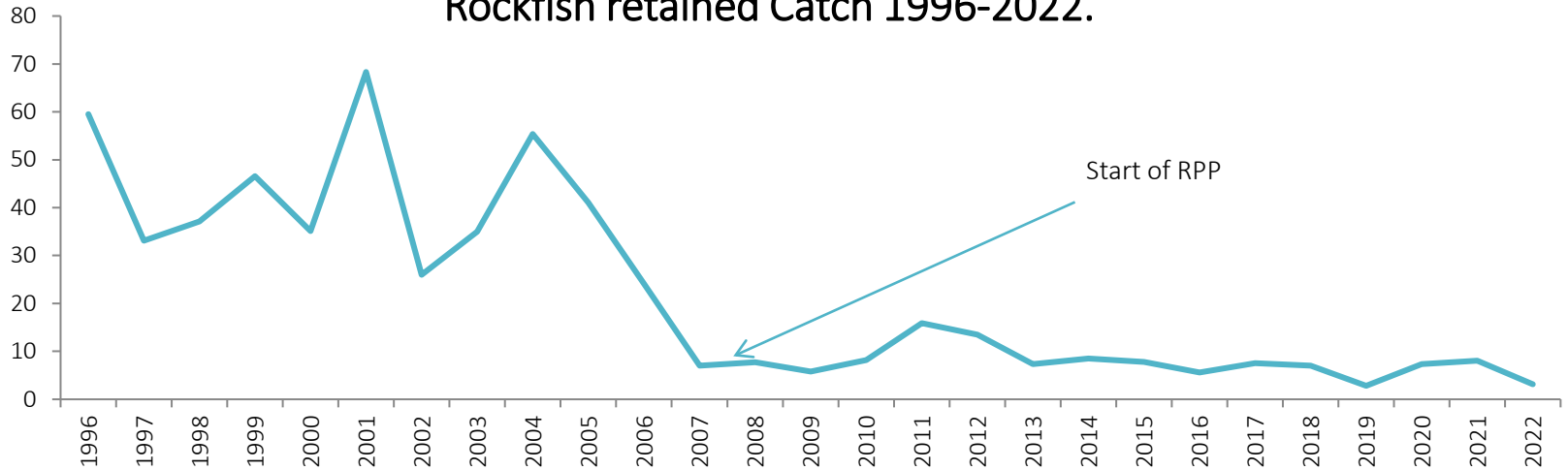
- Sets acceptable Halibut bycatch rates by target fishery:
 - Rates strike balance between ensuring RP allocations can be fully harvested while also reducing halibut bycatch.
- Individual accountability:
 - if a vessel exceeds halibut standards, they **must stop fishing** until the vessel's fishing practices can be assessed.
- RP reward system allows halibut savings to be rolled over to the limited access trawl fisheries:
 - This allows for additional groundfish harvest in November and December.

Rockfish Program Halibut Savings

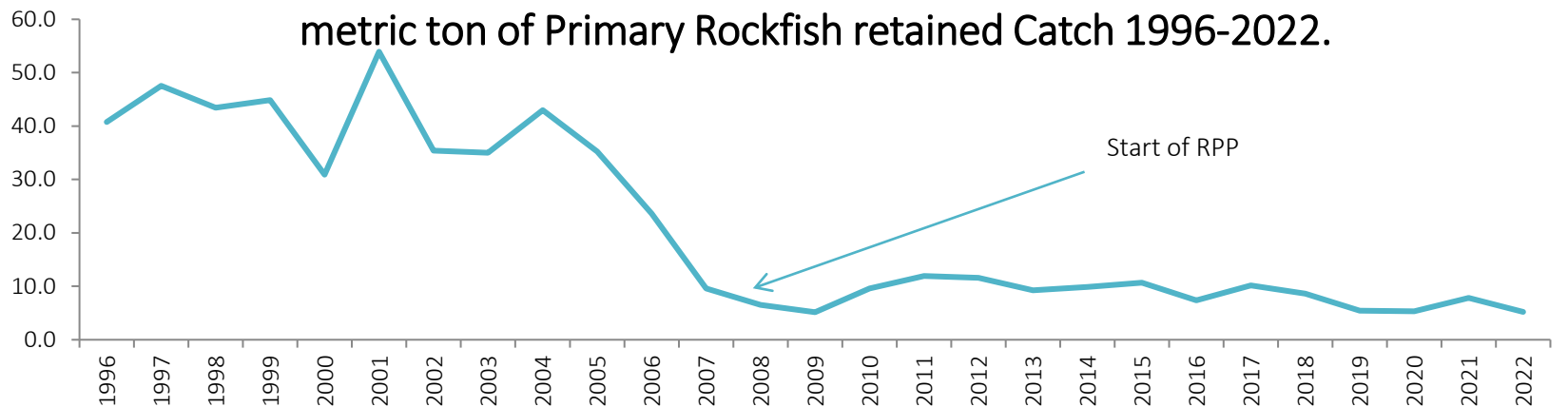
- **Initial Allocation:**
 - The halibut allocation to the RP was reduced to 87.5% of the historical usage, which resulted in a savings of 12.5% or 27 mt, not to be used in any fishery.
- **2022 Halibut PSC Use:**
 - RP Halibut PSC cap is 191 mt. Actual usage was 62 mt with 129 mt remaining.
- **Rollover Savings:**
 - 55% of the halibut savings can be rolled over each year to the fall flatfish fisheries.
 - 45% not to be used in any fishery (58 mt in 2022).
- **Total Savings:**
 - In 2022 the Rockfish Program saved a total of 85 mt of halibut, not for use in any fishery.

Halibut Bycatch

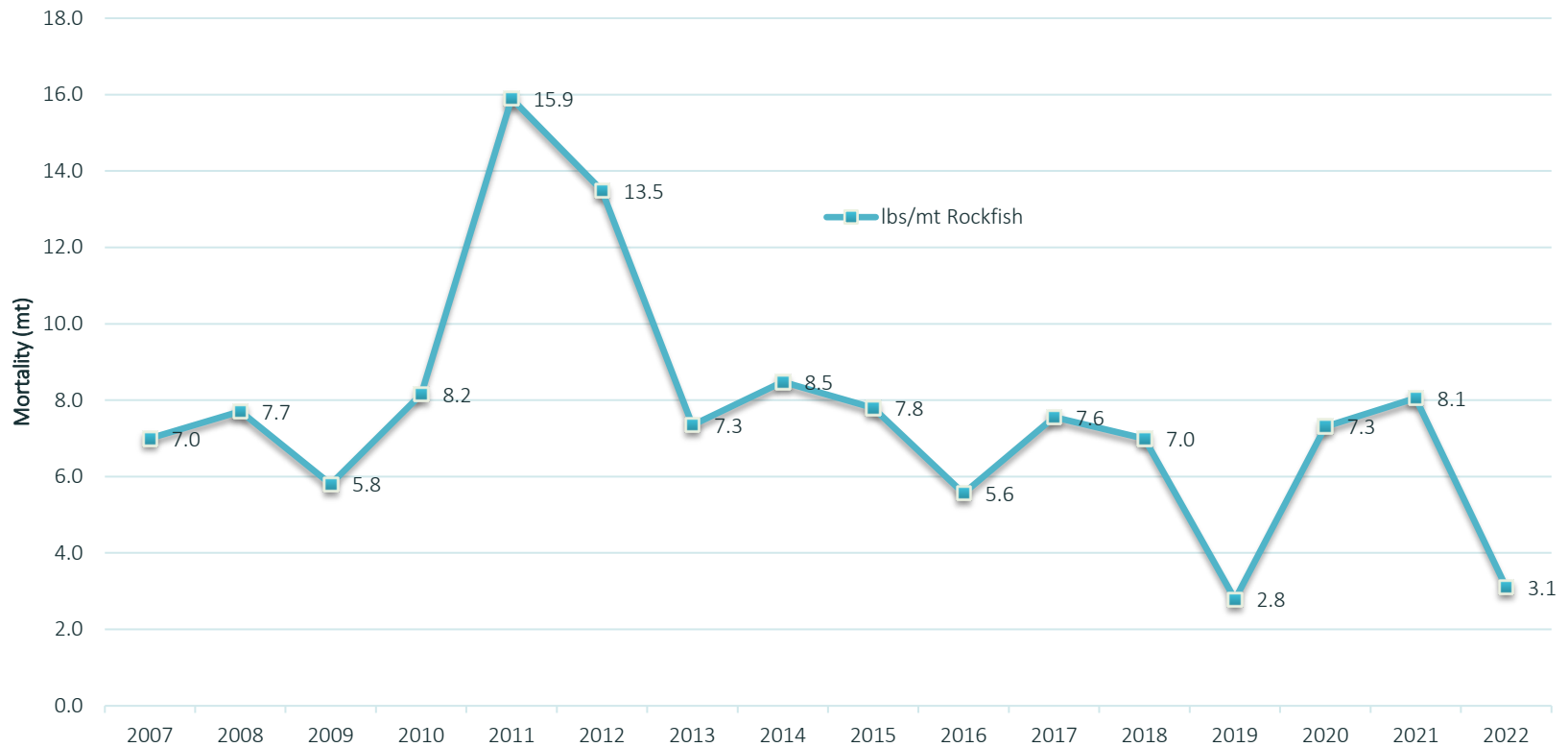
CV Co-Op Pounds of Halibut Mortality per metric ton of Primary Rockfish retained Catch 1996-2022.



CV & CP Co-Op Combined Pounds of Halibut Mortality per metric ton of Primary Rockfish retained Catch 1996-2022.



CV Coop Halibut Bycatch in the RPP and RP (2007- Present)

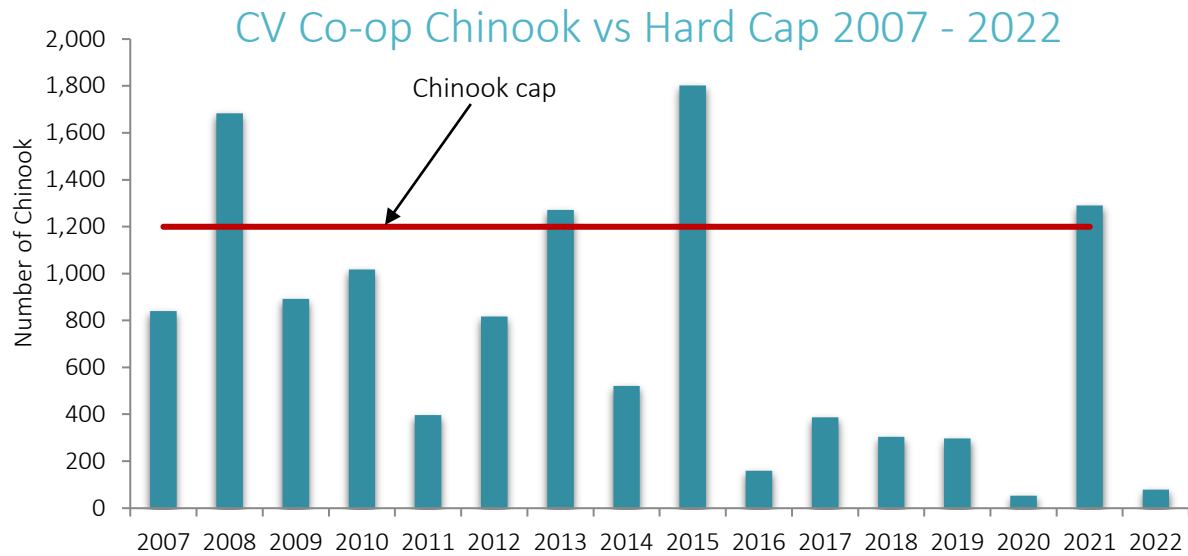


Rockfish Program Chinook Salmon Bycatch

- Amendment 97 became effective January 1, 2015 and placed a hard cap of 1,200 fish on the CV rockfish program sector
 - Estimates are based on at-sea samples instead of observer census counts at the plant (like the pollock fishery).
- Chinook Bycatch avoidance and Hot Spot Reporting
 - “Slow start” to test fishing grounds – each co-op allowed only 1 or 2 vessels fishing at one time at the start of the fishery.
 - Individual vessel Chinook salmon bycatch standards enforced by fish ticket counts
 - Vessels are not allowed to leave the dock until they have received their Chinook count. Vessels are then “green”, “yellow-lighted”, or “red-lighted” based on their Chinook bycatch rate.
 - Red-lighted Vessels must stand down.
 - Salmon Hotspot Alerts are distributed to the fleet using haul data for deliveries over 20 Chinook.
- The Intercooperative Salmon Bycatch Avoidance plan controls individual vessel behavior to keep the co-ops under the sector’s Chinook Cap.

CV Co-op Chinook PSC Catch

Year	Chinook (no.)	Rockfish Harvest (mt)	Rate (Chinook/mt)
2007	840	7,748	0.108
2008	1,683	7,440	0.226
2009	892	6,843	0.130
2010	1,017	7,992	0.127
2011	396	7,071	0.056
2012	817	10,067	0.081
2013	1,271	8,820	0.144
2014	520	10,100	0.051
2015	1,802	10,768	0.167
2016	159	13,026	0.012
2017	387	9,444	0.041
2018	304	11,936	0.025
2019	297	12,644	0.023
2020	52	13,566	0.004
2021	1,290	16,138	0.080
2022	78	12,804	0.006
Average	738	10,400	0.071



Monitoring Improvements

Testing Electronic Monitoring in the CGOA Rockfish Program (RP)

- Received NFWF Grant for 2023
- Collaborative project with Archipelago
- Three Main Activities for 2023:

- **#1: Review EM Data** – Evaluate current fish handling practices across a variety of vessels, both gear types, and all targets (data voluntarily collected in 2022).

- **#2: Literature Review/Stakeholder Consults** – Understand discard handling and retention protocols for EM in other non-pelagic trawl fisheries.

- **#3: Develop and test pilot fish handling protocols** – Three catcher vessels will participate in pilot in 2023 fishery.

Next Steps:

- Minor camera optimization and season start up service
- Formalize catch handling protocols and create a project VMP
- Prepare for Phase 2 and 3:
 - Future EFP
 - Work towards a regulated Rockfish EM program for all targets and gear types

Questions?