



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
P.O. Box 21668  
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February 6, 2018

## Agenda B-2: NMFS Management Report

### Status of Actions Report online

Updated daily at: <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/reports/amendments.pdf>

### Progress on Rulemaking

Highlights on progress since the December 2017 meeting include:

- Proposed rule to modify nontrawl Lead Level 2 observer requirements.  
**Published: December 27, 2017, End of Comment Period: January 26, 2018.**
- Proposed rule for Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands 2018 and 2019 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish.  
**Published: December 8, 2017, End of Comment Period: January 8, 2018.**
- Proposed rule for Gulf of Alaska 2018 and 2019 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish.  
**Published: December 8, 2017, End of Comment Period: January 8, 2018.**
- See Attachment 1 for additional detail.

### Exempted Fishing Permits Update

NMFS issued three exempted fishing permits (EFPs) for applications presented to the Council in October and December 2017.

#### *Halibut Deck Sorting*

On December 20, 2017 NMFS issued an EFP to John Gauvin (Alaska Seafood Cooperative) and co-applicants to allow halibut prohibited species catch (PSC) to be removed from the codend on the deck of non-pelagic trawl catcher/processor vessels. The objective of the EFP is to increase survivability of halibut PSC by allowing halibut to be removed on deck and returned to sea following biological sampling by an observer. This EFP is effective through December 31, 2019 and includes non-pelagic trawl operations in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska management areas. NMFS is developing an analysis with the aim of allowing halibut deck sorting as a regulatory option in these non-pelagic trawl fisheries beginning in January 2020.



### *Halibut Genetic Sampling*

On January 12, 2018 NMFS issued an EFP to Dr. Timothy Loher (International Pacific Halibut Commission) to allow crew aboard a hook-and-line vessel participating in the 2018 Aleutian Islands Federal Pacific cod fishery to collect tissue samples from halibut PSC for the purposes of genetic analysis. This EFP is effective through March, 31 2018.

### *Salmon Excluder Testing*

On January 25, 2018 NMFS issued an EFP to John Gauvin (Gauvin and Associates, LLC) to allow three vessels of varying horsepower and size to test varying salmon excluder configurations in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. The objective of the experimental fishing is to learn how improve salmon excluder performance for vessels of varying size and horsepower. Fieldwork under this EFP will occur in the 2018 through 2020 Bering Sea pollock A seasons. The EFP is effective through June 10, 2020.

## **Interim Final Rule for Halibut Catch Limits and Charter Management Measures off Alaska**

Given the outcome of the 94<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), NMFS is currently in the process of preparing an interim final rule that would implement catch limits and additional charter management measures for waters off Alaska that are consistent with the proposed limits and measures proposed by the U.S. Commissioners at the meeting. We will update the Council as this rule making process proceeds. IPHC staff will provide additional detail on the IPHC's Annual Meeting.

### **Staff Changes**

Dr. Anne Marie Eich is currently on detail serving as our catch share branch chief (Rachel Baker's previous position). Anne Marie has been working in our ecosystem and bycatch branch. Anne Marie brings a wealth of experience in our regulatory and management process that she has gained with us over the past four years, and during her time with the Southeast Regional Office. We anticipate that this will be a six-month detail, or until we are able to select a permanent replacement for the position.

## Attachment 1 -- Status of Regulatory Actions

Changes since October 2017 are noted in **Bold Red** EOC = End of Comment Period

Action Status	Lead Council, SF, and GCAK Staff	Date of Council Final Action	Start Regional Review	Received by GCAK	Transmittal Date of Action to NMFS HQ for Review	Notice of Availability (FMP) Published in Federal Register	Proposed Rule Published in Federal Register	Final Rule or Notice of Approval Published in Federal Register
<b>FMP Amendments</b>								
<b>Amendments 115 (BSAI), 105 (GOA), 49 (KTC), 13 (Salmon), 2 (Arctic) EFH Omnibus</b>	MacLean Mackey Meyer	April 2017	PR: 12/1/17	<b>PR: 12/5/17</b>				
<b>Amendment 116 (BSAI) LLP endorsement for BSAI trawl limited access yellowfin sole fishery</b>	McCracken Mansfield Smoker	June 2017	PR: 9/29/17	PR: 10/4/17				
<b>Amendment 117 (BSAI) 106 (GOA) Reclassifying squid to ecosystem component</b>	Stram Mackey Sullivan	June 2017	PR: 11/21/17	PR: 11/21/17				
<b>Regulatory Amendments</b>								
<b>Authorizing a Recreational Quota Entity (RQE) to hold halibut QS</b>	Marrinan Iverson Lepore	October 2016	PR: 5/16/17 <b>FR: 2/2/18</b>	PR: 5/23/17 <b>FR: 2/6/18</b>	PR: 9/6/17	N/A	Oct. 3 2017 82 FR 46016 EOC: 11/17/17	
<b>Authorizing Area 4 IFQ transfer (leasing) to CDQ groups</b>	Marrinan Warpinski Smoker	June 2017	PR: 10/2/17	PR: 10/19/17	<b>PR: 1/30/17</b>	N/A		
<b>Modify Nontrawl Lead Level 2 observer requirements</b>	Evans Miller Meyer	June 2017	PR: 9/11/17	PR: 9/13/17	PR: 11/29/17	N/A	<b>Dec. 27, 2017 82 FR 61243 EOC: 1/26/18</b>	
<b>Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands 2018 and 2019 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish</b>	Stram Whitney M. Watson	- NMFS -	PR: 10/17/17 <b>FR: 12/15/17</b>	PR: 10/20/17 <b>FR: 1/3/18</b>	PR: 11/20/17 <b>FR: 2/5/18</b>	N/A	<b>Dec. 8, 2017 82 FR 57906 EOC: 1/8/18</b>	
<b>Gulf of Alaska 2018 and 2019 Harvest Specifications for Groundfish</b>	Armstrong Davis M. Watson	- NMFS -	PR: 10/13/17 <b>FR: 12/19/17</b>	PR: 10/15/17 <b>FR: 12/20/17</b>	PR: 11/20/17 <b>FR: 2/5/18</b>	N/A	<b>Dec. 8, 2017 82 FR 57924 EOC: 1/8/18</b>	

## Inseason Management Report

Catch during 2018 is through January 27, 2018 and is compared to catch during 2017 through January 28, 2017. All catch amounts are in metric tons. Additional information from daily catch reports and information bulletins are available at: <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries-catch-landings>

### Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands

#### Bering Sea Pollock

The 2018 Bering Sea pollock TAC is 1,364,341 mt compared to 1,345,000 mt in 2017. NMFS is working to reallocate 1,900 mt of CDQ and 12,200 mt of Aleut Corporation pollock TAC from the Aleutian Islands to the CDQ and non-CDQ Bering Sea TACs. The reallocation is not included in this table.

Bering Sea	2018 A season allocation	2018 A season catch	Percent taken
Inshore	265,504	16,006	6%
C/P	212,403	23,384	11%
Mothership	53,101	1,628	3%
CDQ	61,380	8,047	13%
Total	592,388	49,065	8%

#### Salmon in the Bering Sea Pollock Fisheries

For the preliminary counts (7 days of fishing) of salmon, both PSC and rates are lower in 2018 relative to 2017.

Species	Chinook				Non-Chinook			
	2018		2017		2018		2017	
Year	#	Rate <sup>1</sup>	#	Rate <sup>1</sup>	#	Rate <sup>1</sup>	#	Rate <sup>1</sup>
CDQ	114	1.4%	96	1.5%	4	0.04%	13	0.2%
Non-CDQ	834	2.0%	3,494	7.2%	15	0.05%	516	1.1%
Total	948	1.9%	3,590	6.5%	19	0.04%	529	1.0%

<sup>1</sup>Rate is number of salmon per metric tons of groundfish.

#### Aleutian Islands Pacific cod

In 2018, fishing effort in the Aleutian Islands is low, and no closures are projected at this time. In 2017, directed fishing in the AI remained open all year for sectors open for directed fishing. For the Western Aleutian Islands limit, directed fishing closed July 29, 2017. The 5,000 mt Aleutian Islands shoreplant set-aside is in place for 2018. Currently, catch is not projected to reach 1,000 mt by February 28, 2018. NMFS will provide an update through an information bulletin closer to February 28, 2018.

## BSAI Pacific cod by Sector

BSAI Sector	2018				2017			
	A Season Allocation	Catch Jan 27	A season closed	# of vessels Jan 27	A Season allocation	Catch Jan 28	A season closed	# of vessels Jan 28
CDQ	13,086	2,023	n/a	14	15,369	1,382	n/a	11
Hook-and-line C/P	45,045	12,330	n/a	20	52,893	12,742	n/a	27
Pot C/P	1,387	1,363	Jan 20	4	1,629	1,626	Jan 25	4
Pot CV >= 60 ft	7,770	7,773	Jan 19	31	9,123	9,378	Jan 25	30
Hook-and-line/Pot CVs < 60 ft	5,027	4,858	Jan 23	23	5,959	5,443	Jan 29	19
Jig	129	0	n/a	0	96	0	n/a	0
Trawl CV	29,768	5,507	n/a	77	34,962	3,026	Feb 23	71
AFA C/P	3,140	190	n/a	16	3,688	193	n/a	15
Amendment 80 C/P	18,293	740	n/a	13	21,485	447	n/a	9
Total	123,645	34,784		198	145,204	24,174		126

<sup>1</sup>In 2018 NMFS reallocated 1,400 mt and in 2017 NMFS reallocated 1,700 mt of the A season jig allocation to the hook-and-line or pot gear less than 60 ft length annual allocation.

### Pacific cod target - trawl catcher vessels

In 2018, 44 trawl CVs targeting Pacific cod reported 5,454 mt relative to 31 trawl CVs targeting Pacific cod reporting 2,861 mt in 2017. The AI shoreplant set aside is in place; therefore, the Bering Sea trawl A season limit also is in place and set at 24,768 mt.

### BSAI Flatfish (includes CDQ)

The 2018 flatfish total catch is for 7 days of fishing.

Species	2018			2017		
	Catch	TAC	% Taken	Catch	TAC	% Taken
Alaska plaice	362	16,100	2%	112	13,000	1%
Arrowtooth flounder	76	13,621	1%	86	14,000	1%
Flathead sole	296	14,500	2%	150	14,500	1%
Greenland turbot	6	4,356	0%	4	3,719	0%
Kamchatka flounder	8	5,000	0%	5	5,000	0%
Other flatfish	53	4,000	1%	71	2,500	3%
Rock sole	982	47,100	2%	1,820	47,100	4%
Yellowfin sole	2,929	154,000	2%	4,986	154,000	3%
Total	4,712	258,677	2%	7,234	253,819	3%

## Gulf of Alaska

### Pacific cod - Western GOA

Sector	2018				2017			
	A season allocation	Catch Jan 27	A season closed	# of vessels Jan 27	A season allocation	Catch Jan 28	A season closed	# of vessels Jan 28
Hook-and-line C/P	601	0	n/a	0	2,700	0	n/a	0
Hook-and-line CV	39	0	Jan 1	0	173	0	n/a	0
Jig	85	0	n/a	0	381	C	n/a	C
Pot CV/CP	1,092	758	Feb 1	13	4,904	1,606	Feb 16	27
Trawl CV	1,528	107	n/a	11	6,861	178	Mar 8	10
Trawl C/P	50	0	Jan 20	0	223	0	n/a	0
Total	3,395	864		24	15,242	1,784		37

### Pacific cod - Central GOA

Sector	2018				2017			
	A season allocation	Catch Jan 27	A season closed	# of vessels Jan 27	A season allocation	Catch Jan 28	A season closed	# of vessels Jan 28
Hook-and-line C/P	248	0	n/a	0	1,347	0	n/a	0
Hook-and-line CV <50 ft	562	0	n/a	0	3,056	947	n/a	31
Hook-and-line CV >=50 ft	338	24	n/a	<3	1,840	83	n/a	3
Jig	37	0	Jan 1	0	199	0	n/a	0
Pot CV/CP	1,075	664	n/a	11	5,849	2,868	Feb 23	48
Trawl CV	1,274	0	Jan 20	0	6,933	8	n/a	25
Trawl C/P	121	0	Jan 20	0	657	0	Jan 20	0
Total	3,653	688		11	19,881	3,905		107

In 2017, NMFS reallocated of 1,500 mt from trawl CVs to pot CV/CP.

### Pollock

Catch in areas 610 and 620 are low. The area 630 fishery is projected to close the week of the Council meeting based on the catch rates for week ending February 3, 2018.

2018 Seasons	610	620	630	640
A season allocation	1,317	27,314	9,025	6,833 (annual)
A season catch	199	217	130	0
A season closure	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
B season allocation	1,317	39,420	6,143	n/a

## Salmon PSC Limits in the GOA

In 2018, Chinook salmon PSC is 1,799 salmon lower relative to 2017 for fisheries with PSC limits. These estimates are also preliminary.

Chinook Salmon	2018 Limit	2018 PSC (Rate <sup>2</sup> )	2017 PSC (Rate <sup>2</sup> )
Total	n/a	386 (242%)	2,185 (19%)
Western GOA pollock	6,684	18 (9%)	0 (0%)
Central GOA pollock	18,316	114 (33%)	2,135 (19%)
Western/Central trawl CV <sup>1</sup>	3,060	254 (59%)	50 (27%)
Western/Central trawl CP <sup>1</sup>	4,080	0	0

<sup>1</sup>Includes incentive buffers for 2017 and 2018 Western/Central trawl CV limit (360 Chinook), and Western/Central trawl CP limit (480 Chinook).

Non-Chinook Salmon	2018 PSC (Rate <sup>2</sup> )	2017 PSC (Rate <sup>2</sup> )
Total	0 (0%)	24 (0.14%)

<sup>2</sup>Rate is number of salmon per metric tons of groundfish.

## Halibut Mortality Data

In 2018 relative to 2017, the total halibut mortality in the BSAI is 24 mt higher and in the GOA is 41 mt lower.

Area, Gear, and Sector	2018			2017		
	Halibut mortality	Groundfish	Rate	Halibut mortality	Groundfish	Rate
BSAI Total	133	79,430	1.0%	99	84,574	0.1%
Amendment 80	36	4,247	0.8%	14	4,671	0.3%
BSAI trawl limited access	79	48,947	0.2%	58	55,402	0.1%
Non-trawl Pacific cod	14	15,411	0.1%	23	15,879	0.1%
Non-trawl Other	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
CDQ	4	10,824	0%	4	0	0.1%
GOA Total	1	690	0.1%	42	13,281	0.32 %
Trawl, Non-pelagic	1	105	1.0%	2	251	0.8 %
Trawl, Pelagic	0	548	0%	0	11,766	0%
Hook-and-line CP	0	0	0%	0	0	0%
Hook-and-line CV	0	37	0%	40	1,264	3.2 %