



# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

Simon Kinneen, Chair | David Witherell, Executive Director  
1007 W. 3rd Avenue, Suite 400, Anchorage, AK 99501  
Phone 907-271-2809 | www.npfmc.org

## B10 Cooperative Reports

April 2021 Council Meeting

### Action Memo

Staff: Jon McCracken and Sarah Marrinan  
Action Required: Annual review of Cooperative Reports

### BACKGROUND

The Council has developed several cooperative programs as components of larger catch share programs. Under these programs, cooperatives have been required or requested to provide an annual report. These reports are intended as a resource for the Council to track the effectiveness of the cooperatives and their ability to meet the Council's goals for the programs. Additionally, the reports are a tool for the cooperatives to provide feedback on the programs to the Council.

An infographic summarizing the cooperative reports is provided below and will be posted on the cooperative reports webpage. In addition, a table that provides a more expanded overview of mandatory and voluntary elements of the different cooperative reports is included in this action memo, as well as a list of active cooperatives and the status of their 2020 fishing year annual report (2020/21 for the crab fisheries).

As a reminder, for any requests, deletions, and/or clarifications of information provided in the cooperative reports (voluntary or otherwise), the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) requires Federal agencies (1) to seek public comment on proposed collections and (2) to submit proposed collections for review and approval by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). OMB reviews agency information collection requests for approval and disapproval. The PRA should not discourage the Council from making requests for voluntary cooperative information to be included in future cooperative reports. Rather, this guidance advises the Council to pursue voluntary information requests in a deliberative manner, providing clear explanation of the objective of the new information. Council and NMFS staff will track these Council information requests and submit the necessary PRA paperwork to OMB, so a clear explanation for requests is helpful.

#### (a) AFA Co-op reports

In 1998, Congress established the American Fisheries Act specifically for the pollock fishery in the BSAI management area. Among other things, the AFA encouraged domestic enterprise in Alaskan fisheries and established provisions for the creation of fishery cooperatives in three sectors: at sea catcher processors, motherships, and inshore vessels. Cooperatives are given exclusive allocation of pollock based on their members' historical catch. See below for a list of AFA cooperative reports.

#### (b) Amendment 80 Co-op reports

Implemented in 2008, the Amendment 80 Program is a limited access privilege program (LAPP) that allocates a portion of total allowable catch (TAC) for Atka mackerel, Pacific ocean perch, and 3 flatfish

species (yellowfin sole, rock sole, and flathead sole), along with an allocation of prohibited species catch (PSC) quota for halibut and crab, in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BSAI), to the Amendment 80 sector. See below for a list of Amendment 80 cooperative reports.

The Amendment 80 cooperatives also provide halibut bycatch management plans to the Council at the December meeting. That request originated from the Council during the June 2015 meeting. In addition, as part of the BSAI flatfish flexibility action (Amendment 105), the Council asked for information on flatfish exchanges, cooperative transfers, and actual harvest. NMFS provides this information as part of their December inseason management report.

(c) CGOA Rockfish Co-op reports

In 2007, the Central GOA Pilot Rockfish Program was implemented. The program was intended to enhance resource conservation and improve economic efficiency for harvesters and processors who participated in the program. Allocations of the primary rockfish species (Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish, and pelagic rockfish) and important incidental catch species (i.e., sablefish, Pacific cod, shorttraker and rougheye rockfish, and thornyhead rockfish) are divided between the catcher vessel sector and the catcher processor sector. In addition, each sector is allocated halibut PSC limits based on historic catch of halibut in the target rockfish fisheries. As part of reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act in 2007, the Pilot Program was extended until December 31, 2011. During that time, the Council completed action on Amendment 88 to the GOA Fishery Management Plan that revised the Rockfish Program and the amendment was implemented in 2012. Effective March 31, 2021, Amendment 111 reauthorized the Rockfish Program. As part of this amendment, the requirement that the RP cooperatives submit a cooperative annual report to NMFS was removed. When taking final action of Amendment 111, the Council requested that the RP cooperatives continue to voluntarily provide annual reports to the Council. See below for a list of CGOA Rockfish Program cooperative reports.

(d) BSAI Crab Co-op reports

The BSAI Crab Rationalization program is a limited access privilege management program, which was implemented in 2005. The program issued harvest quota shares to vessel owners (License Limitation Program license holders) and captains, as well as issuing processor quota shares to processors based on their associated history. The crab rationalization program allows for the voluntary formation of harvesting cooperatives to coordinate crab harvest. If a quota share holder is associated with a cooperative, the annual pounds of IFQ that are derived from the quota share holder's quota is issued to their cooperative and able to be internally managed and harvested among its members. More than 99 percent of the crab rationalization harvesting quota share is harvested through cooperatives.

The BSAI Crab rationalization program as implemented in 2005 did not include a pre-established reporting requirement for cooperatives. In 2013, the Council reviewed an analysis evaluating the Council's management options for promoting active participation among lease holders, as well as lease rates, crew compensation, and active participation through flexible cooperative management. While the Council opted against a regulatory solution at that time, it requested that the industry use non-regulatory methods to address the Council's concerns. The Council requested an annual cooperative report for industry to report on the effectiveness of non-regulatory measures, noting that these reports would help the Council determine whether to take regulatory action in the future. The Council letter sent to each of the cooperatives requested that they voluntarily report on:

- QS transfers to active participant and crew members
- Lease rates
- Crew compensation rates

The letter also requests any additional information or data the cooperatives wish to provide demonstrating the effectiveness of existing measures and the level of participation in cooperative-established measures. The Council also recommended using the seven question/response format, as has been employed by many of the groups in the past, as their preferred reporting structure. See below for a list of BSAI Crab cooperative reports.

### (e) Paperwork Reduction Act

The Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) was implemented in 1980 to reduce the total amount of paperwork burden the Federal Government imposes on private businesses and citizens and to establish a process through which Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) before collecting information from the public. Under the PRA, NMFS is required to obtain approval for new information collection requirements implemented through Federal regulations and for voluntary requests for information, or any subsequent revisions to these information collection requirements or requests. In addition, OMB's approval for each information collection expires every three years, even if the regulations requiring collection of the information or the Council's requests for voluntarily information do not change. Prior to the expiration date of each collection, NMFS must submit a request to OMB for approval to continue to collect the information.

The annual cooperative reports are approved by OMB under information collection number 0648-0678 (Alaska Council Cooperative Annual Reports). The most recent request for renewal of approval from OMB to continue to collect this information was submitted to OMB in November 2019. A notice was published in the *Federal Register* on July 22, 2019 (84 FR 35099), to solicit public comments on the annual cooperative reports information collection.<sup>1</sup> In addition, a questionnaire was emailed to fishery cooperative and intercooperative managers. Two letters of comment received in response to the Federal Register notice. These letters are posted on OMB's [website](http://www.reginfo.gov) (reginfo.gov). NMFS Alaska Region staff also received input via email from several of the cooperative managers. The comments and NMFS's responses are described in more detail in the supporting statement posted on OMB's [website](http://www.reginfo.gov). Following is a brief summary of the issues raised in these comments for the Council's information.

- All of the cooperative managers provided input and, in some cases, suggested revisions to NMFS's estimates of the time burden and costs of preparing, submitting, and presenting the cooperative annual reports. The most significant increase in time and cost estimates was as a result of comments submitted by the crab Inter-Cooperative Exchange (ICE) on its crab annual cooperative report. ICE estimates it takes 324 hours and costs \$42,200 annually to prepare, submit, and present this report to the Council. ICE's estimates include the work done to maintain the computer systems and programs it established to respond to the Council's concerns about the transfer of crab QS to active participants in the fisheries, including crew members and vessel owners and high lease rates; and the work that is done each year to prepare and present the annual report to the Council describing these efforts and the results. NMFS generally accepts industry estimates of time burden and costs for information collections, and these estimates did not seem unreasonable for the tasks and activities included in the comment. Therefore, NMFS updated the PRA supporting statement accordingly.
- Time estimates for the other cooperative reports range from 5 hours to 40 hours and cost estimates range from about \$440 to \$4,000 annually.
- ICE expressed its concern about collecting and reporting lease rate information and explains how it responds to the Council's request that the crab cooperatives describe measures to address high QS lease rates in their cooperative annual reports. ICE also identified some information it is requested to provide in the cooperative annual reports that is or could be submitted through the CR economic data reports (EDRs). This comment has been forwarded to the NMFS staff involved in the EDR program review. ICE also suggested that the information about crab QS/IFQ transfers that the Council requests in the annual cooperative report could also be collected through the addition of some data fields in the crab QS/IFQ transfer request form submitted to NMFS.

---

<sup>1</sup> Notices in the *Federal Register* requesting comments on NMFS information collection requirements specifically request comments on "(a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology."

- The Amendment 80 cooperative representative noted that the information NMFS requires in the annual cooperative report for “[a]ctual retained and discarded catch of CQ and GOA sideboard limited fisheries (if applicable) by statistical area and vessel” is already collected by NMFS and available to NMFS. It takes some time to compile this information from NMFS’s website. In addition, in a letter submitted on December 7, 2018, on a different Amendment 80 information collection, the Amendment 80 cooperative representative noted that Amendment 80 annual cooperative report is “exclusively comprised of detailed data information that the agency already receives and reviews through other information collections by the agency. As such, this report is redundant, limited in its utility and creates unnecessary burden” on the Alaska Seafood Cooperative.
- The information about catch by vessel referenced in the Amendment 80 comment is collected by NMFS and available to the Amendment 80 vessel owners and cooperative managers for preparation of the annual cooperative report that is required to be submitted to NMFS. However, NMFS considers this information confidential and, as such, does not release this vessel level information to the public or the Council. NMFS regulations for the Amendment 80 annual cooperative report (50 CFR §679.5(s)(6)) require that the specified information be submitted to the NMFS Regional Administrator, but it does not require that information NMFS considers confidential be provided to the Council or released to the public.

# Cooperative Reports

The Council has developed catch share programs including four that allow or require the formation of cooperatives. As part of these programs, cooperatives submit annual reports detailing the use of the cooperative quota or other aspects of the program. Current as of April 2019

## AFA



- Implemented in 1998
- Key species – pollock
- Cooperatives - 9
- Active vessels – 100
- Program first wholesale value - \$1.2 billion
- Pounds landed – 26 billion

## BSAI Crab



- Implemented in 2005
- Key species – King and tanner crab
- Cooperatives - 9
- Active vessels – 72
- Program first wholesale value - \$220.8 million
- Pounds landed – 31.6 million

## Amendment 80



- Implemented in 2008
- Key species – Flatfish, other groundfish
- Cooperatives - 1
- Active vessels – 19
- Program first wholesale value - \$352 million
- Pounds landed – 648.2 million

## GOA Rockfish



- Implemented in 2012
- Key species – rockfish, cod, and sablefish
- Cooperatives - 7
- Active vessels – 29
- Program first wholesale value - \$34 million
- Pounds landed – 48.1 million

### Cooperative Report Includes:

- Allocation and sub-allocation of pollock and sideboards
- Retained and discarded catch
- Cooperative monitoring methods
- Salmon bycatch numbers

### Incentive Plan Agreement Report Includes:

- Incentive in effect to reduce salmon bycatch
- Salmon bycatch numbers
- Transfers of Chinook salmon and pollock
- Suballocations of Chinook salmon

### Cooperative Report Includes:

- Measures to increase availability of QS for transfer to active participants and crew members
- Measures to address high QS lease rates
- Measures to address low crew

### Cooperative Report Includes:

- Retained and discarded catch
- Directed and bycatch species transfers
- Cooperative monitoring methods
- Percent of groundfish retained

### Cooperative Report Includes:

- Cooperative's quota and sideboard limit
- Retained and discarded catch
- Cooperative monitoring methods

**Summary of the cooperative reporting requirements and voluntary requests for information**

Cooperative program	Required information	Voluntary information	Deadline	Recipient
<p><b>AFA Cooperative Report</b></p>	<p><i>Established in 50 CFR §679.61(f) as well as Section 210(a)(1)(B) of the AFA:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Allocation of pollock and sideboard species to cooperative</li> <li>▪ Sub-allocations of pollock and sideboard species on a vessel-by-vessel basis</li> <li>▪ Retained and discarded catch on an area-by-area and vessel-by-vessel basis</li> <li>▪ Method used to monitor fisheries</li> <li>▪ Actions taken by cooperative against members that exceed catch or bycatch</li> <li>▪ The total weight of pollock landed outside the State of Alaska on a vessel-by-vessel basis</li> <li>▪ Number of salmon taken, by species and season</li> <li>▪ Each vessel's number of appearances on the weekly "dirty 20" lists for non-Chinook salmon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ AFA exempt vessel activity in the GOA</li> <li>▪ Inter-temporal harvest information</li> <li>▪ Measures taken to reduce bycatch in the BSAI trawl limited access yellowfin sole fishery (Council motion E1, June 12,2017)</li> <li>▪ Voluntary presentation at April Council meeting</li> </ul>	<p>April 1<sup>st</sup></p>	<p>NPFMC</p>
<p><b>Chinook Salmon Incentive Plan Agreement (IPA) Annual Report</b></p>	<p><i>Established in 50 CFR 679.21(f)(13)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentive measures in effect in the previous year</li> <li>• How incentive measures affected individual vessels</li> <li>• How incentive measures affected salmon savings beyond current levels</li> <li>• IPA amendments approved by NMFS since the last annual report and the reasons for amendments</li> <li>• Sub-allocation to each participating vessel</li> <li>• Number of Chinook PSC and amount of pollock (mt) at the start of each fishing season</li> <li>• Number of Chinook PSC and amount of pollock (mt) caught at the end of each season</li> <li>• Inseason transfers among entities of Chinook salmon PSC or pollock among AFA cooperatives</li> <li>• Transfers among IPA vessels</li> <li>• Amount of pollock (mt) transferred</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Voluntary presentation at April Council meeting</li> </ul>	<p>April 1<sup>st</sup></p>	<p>NPFMC</p>
<p><b>Central GOA Rockfish Cooperative Report</b></p>	<p>As part of Amendment 111 for the GOA FMP, all required cooperative information was removed from regulations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cooperative report</li> <li>▪ Inter-temporal harvest information</li> <li>▪ Use consistent terminology</li> <li>▪ Voluntary presentation at April Council meeting</li> </ul>	<p>April Council meeting</p>	<p>NPFMC</p>

Cooperative program	Required information	Voluntary information	Deadline	Recipient
<p><b>Amendment 80 Cooperative Report</b></p>	<p><i>Established in 50 CFR 679.5(s)(6)(i):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Actual retained and discarded catch of CQ and GOA sideboard limit by area and by vessel</li> <li>▪ Information on the directed and bycatch species transfers by species, amount, and date</li> <li>▪ Method used to monitor fisheries</li> <li>▪ Actions taken by co-ops against members that exceed assigned CQ</li> <li>▪ The percent of groundfish retained by the cooperative relative to aggregate groundfish retained by all Amendment 80 co-ops</li> <li>▪ Results from a third-party audit on cooperatives annual groundfish retention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Catch information from the Northern Bristol Bay Trawl Area</li> <li>▪ A retrospective indication of Amendment 80 catch capacity</li> <li>▪ Inter-temporal harvest information</li> <li>▪ Measures taken to reduce bycatch in the BSAI trawl limited access yellowfin sole fishery (Council motion E1, June 12, 2017)</li> <li>▪ Voluntary presentation at April Council meeting</li> </ul>	<p>March 1<sup>st</sup></p>	<p>NMFS</p>
<p><b>Amendment 80 Halibut Bycatch Avoidance Progress Report and Management Plan</b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Development of effective and verifiable measures for halibut avoidance</li> <li>▪ Performance measurement and assessment at the boat and company level</li> <li>▪ Voluntary presentation at December Council meeting</li> </ul>	<p>December Council meeting</p>	<p>NPFMC</p>
<p><b>Crab Rationalization Cooperative Report<sup>2</sup></b></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increase availability of QS for transfer to active participants and crew members</li> <li>▪ Decrease high QS lease rates</li> <li>▪ Improve low crew compensation</li> <li>▪ Voluntary presentation at April Council meeting</li> </ul>	<p>April Council meeting</p>	<p>NPFMC</p>

<sup>2</sup> The Council’s motion from April 11, 2014, stated that the “Council’s preferred reporting format for crab cooperatives answer the seven questions asked by the Council, as exemplified by the ICE report of 2013. Additionally, the Council encourages all coops’ answers to be as quantitative as possible, as well as encourage 100% compliance with filing the reports by March 1 of each year.

**List of cooperative reports**

<b>AFA Cooperatives</b>	<b>Cooperative Name</b>	<b>Submitted Annual Report</b>
	Catcher Vessel Intercooperative	Yes
	Peter Pan Fleet Cooperative	Yes
	Unisea Fleet Cooperative	Yes
	Westward Fleet Cooperative	Yes
	Unalaska Fleet Cooperative	Yes
	Akutan Catcher Vessel Cooperative	Yes
	Northern Victor Fleet Cooperative	Yes
	Mothership Fleet Cooperative	Yes
	Pollock Conservation Cooperative & High Seas Catchers' Cooperative	Yes

Current as of 3/26/21

<b>Amendment 80 Cooperatives</b>	<b>Cooperative Name</b>	<b>Submitted Annual Report</b>
	Alaska Seafood Cooperative	Yes

Current as of 3/26/21

<b>CGOA Rockfish Cooperatives</b>	<b>Cooperative Name</b>	<b>Submitted Annual Report</b>
	ISA Rockfish Cooperative	Yes
	North Pacific Rockfish Cooperative	Yes
	OBSI Rockfish Cooperative	Yes
	Star of Kodiak Rockfish Cooperative	Yes
	Western Alaska Fisheries Rockfish Cooperative	Yes
	Pacific Rockfish Cooperative	Yes
	Best Use Cooperative	Yes

Current as of 3/26/21

<b>BSAI Crab Cooperatives</b>	<b>Cooperative Name</b>	<b>Submitted Annual Report</b>
	Alaska King Crab Harvesters Cooperative	
	Aleutian Island Cooperative	Yes
	Alternative Crab Exchange (ACE)	
	Coastal Villages Crabbing Cooperative	
	Crab Producers and Harvesters Association	
	Dog Boat Cooperative	
	Inter-cooperative Exchange (ICE)	
	R & B Cooperative	
Trident Affiliated Crab Harvesting Cooperative	Yes	

Current as of 3/26/21, subject to updates