



## **D2 BSAI Pacific Cod LAPP Scoping Paper**

October 2019 Council Meeting

### **Action Memo**

Council Staff: Jon McCracken  
Other Presenters: Stephanie Warpinski (NMFS)  
Action Required: 1. Review the Scoping Paper  
2. Decide whether to initiate further action for either the BSAI Pacific cod trawl CV sector and/or the BSAI Pacific cod pot CV  $\geq$  60 ft sector

### **BACKGROUND**

The Council has tasked staff with several papers related to Pacific cod management in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI).<sup>1</sup> This scoping paper is intended to address two of those information requests: the development of separate Limited Access Privilege Programs (LAPPs) for the BSAI Pacific cod trawl catcher vessel (CV) sector, and for BSAI Pacific cod pot CV sector vessels greater than or equal to 60 feet in length. While these management programs may develop separately if the Council considers analyzing LAPPs for both sectors, this paper discusses both sectors because much of the general information on LAPPs and cooperative formation would apply to either case. Information specific to participation in each fishery is provided in separate chapters.

This scoping paper, in conjunction with stakeholder input at the meeting, is intended to provide a basis that would allow the Council to develop alternatives and options to address its purpose and need statement. The scoping document begins with an explanation of the Council's request related to each sector and a brief description of Federal BSAI Pacific cod management. The paper includes a discussion of LAPP elements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA)'s Section 303A, which identifies what must be included/considered in a LAPP for it to be approved by the Council and Secretary of Commerce (SOC). In addition, the paper provides a summary for reference of elements and characteristics of other cooperative programs in the North Pacific, and questions and context related to the BSAI Pacific cod trawl CV and pot CV sectors specifically, that will be necessary for the Council to consider in developing the elements of a LAPP.

### **BSAI Trawl CV Sector**

The Council tasked staff at its February 2019 meeting with developing a scoping paper that considers methods to rationalize the BSAI Pacific cod trawl CV fishery. The Council requested a scoping document instead of a discussion paper because it felt a scoping document indicates that the issue is further along than the discussion paper stage. The Council also stated that a scoping paper signals a greater intent by the Council to move forward on the issue. In conjunction with approving development of the scoping document, the Council encouraged stakeholders to begin a parallel process of developing approaches to rationalize the BSAI Pacific cod trawl CV fishery.

<sup>1</sup> See a [Staff Tasking Action Memo](#) from the June 2019 Council meeting for a list of these current BSAI Pacific cod actions.

Specifically, the Council requested that staff address the following issues so they could be incorporated into a comprehensive BSAI cod trawl CV management program:

- allocation of BSAI Pacific cod quota share to BSAI LLP licenses;
- establishing trawl CV cooperative(s) for Pacific cod;
- recognition of historical American Fisheries Act (AFA) cooperative-based cod harvest arrangements since the implementation of pollock cooperatives under the AFA;
- recognition of historical harvest of AFA cod exempt boats;
- recognition of historical harvest of non-AFA boats;
- protections for harvesters, processors, and communities;
- use caps, transfer requirements, and other administrative requirements that apply to quota programs;
- establishing sideboard limits to protect limited access Gulf of Alaska (GOA) and BSAI fisheries;
- consideration of management changes on CV crew; and
- implications for bycatch management, including halibut savings to benefit the health of halibut resource.

The Council adopted the following purpose and need statement for the action in February 2019:

*Over the last several years, total allowable catch for Pacific cod in the Bering Sea-Aleutian Island has steadily decreased. At the same time, the number of LLP licenses used by trawl CVs to participate in the BSAI non-CDQ trawl Pacific cod fishery has increased. The pace of the fishery has contributed to an increasingly compressed season, resulting in decreased ability to maximize the value of the fishery and negatively impacting all fishery participants (CVs, motherships, shoreside processors, and communities). This race for fish also discourages fishing practices that can minimize bycatch. The potential for continued re-entry of additional entrants could exacerbate these unfavorable conditions and threaten the sustained viability of the fishery. The Council is considering the development of management tools to improve the prosecution of the fishery, including the development of a cooperative-based program, with the intent of promoting safety and increasing the value of the fishery.*

The Council also established a control date of February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019, which may be used as reference for any future management action to address trawl catcher vessel participation in the BSAI Pacific cod fishery.

### **BSAI Pot CV $\geq$ 60 Feet Sector**

As a separate motion during its February 2019 meeting, the Council also requested a discussion paper specific to the sector of BSAI Pacific cod Pot CVs greater than or equal to 60 feet. The request was more general, and requested that staff initiate a discussion paper to consider some form of rationalization or cooperative management structure for this sector. Data presented for this fishery is provided in Section 5 of the scoping paper. The information included provides context for how this proposed action could change the management of the Pacific cod trawl CV and pot CV  $\geq$  60 ft sectors, and any downstream effects this may have on other sectors.