

December 3, 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 last Council meeting are provided below. **Attachment 1** provides additional detail:

• Final rule implementing regulations governing the Halibut and Sablefish Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program to allow Western Alaska Community Development Quota (CDQ) groups to lease (to receive by transfer) halibut IFQ in IFQ regulatory areas 4B, 4C, and 4D in years of extremely low halibut commercial catch limits. **Effective:** 11/19/2018

#### **Annual Deployment Plan for Observers and Electronic Monitoring**

The final 2018 Annual Deployment Plan (ADP) for Observers and Electronic Monitoring (EM) in the Groundfish and Halibut Fisheries off Alaska is posted under the B-2 Agenda Item. A more detailed description of the annual deployment plan is provided in the final report; key aspects of the deployment are provided in the executive summary of the final ADP. Of particular interest to the Council is the increase of coverage rate across all deployment strata relative to the draft ADP due to lower projected effort in the fisheries than we had anticipated. The deployment rates (rounded to the nearest whole number) for strata in 2019 are—

- No Selection 0%
- EM 30%
- Trawl 24%
- Hook-and-line 18%
- Pot − 15%
- Tender trawl 27%
- Tender pot − 16%

#### Halibut Deck Sorting EFP and Regulatory Amendment

In June 2018, NMFS staff presented a draft of the Regulatory Impact Review for this NMFS-led action. This action would allow halibut prohibited species catch (PSC) to be sorted on deck of



trawl catcher processors (CPs) and motherships when operating in non-pollock groundfish fisheries off Alaska. Sorting on deck would reduce halibut discard mortality, potentially maximizing harvest of allocated groundfish species before reaching the halibut PSC limit. This action would establish regulatory requirements for catch handling and monitoring equipment necessary to ensure accurate accounting for halibut PSC sorted on deck.

NMFS has collaboratively worked with industry partners on the halibut deck sorting EFP and through that cooperation has developed catch handing and monitoring requirements that will be included in the proposed rule for this action. NMFS anticipates publishing a proposed rule in the first quarter of 2019 and a final rule with implementation of the regulations planned for the 2020 fishing year.

NMFS continues to collaborate with industry partners to the develop observer data collection protocols. Observer data collection protocols must be robust and flexible enough to result in a reliable estimate of total catch and bycatch, including halibut PSC in a timely manner.

#### **Cost Recovery Fee Percentages**

On November 20, 2018 NMFS published a notice providing the cost recovery fee percentages for the American Fisheries Act (AFA), Aleutian Islands pollock, Amendment 80, and CDQ Programs (<a href="https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-11-30/pdf/2018-25989.pdf?utm\_campaign=subscription%20mailing%20list&utm\_source=federalregister.gov&utm\_medium=email">https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2018-11-30/pdf/2018-25989.pdf?utm\_campaign=subscription%20mailing%20list&utm\_source=federalregister.gov&utm\_medium=email</a>).

In 2018, ex-vessel values increased for each of the programs due to slightly higher harvests and ex-vessel prices that either increased or remained stable. Direct program costs also increased for each program, compared to 2017. The result was a slight increase in the fee percentages for the AFA, Amendment 80, and CDQ Programs.

For the first time since 2016, harvests were attributed to the Aleutian Islands Pollock program and cost recovery fees were levied. The harvest and fishery value in the AIP program were small, relative to the direct program costs; as a result, under the terms of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, the fee percentage in this program was capped at 3%.

#### **Staff Changes**

I am extremely pleased to announce **Doug Duncan** as a fishery management position in the Sustainable Fisheries Catch Share Branch. Doug is nearing completion of a Masters in Fisheries from the University of Alaska Fairbanks where he studied the impacts of predation on chum salmon. He joins us with extensive knowledge and experience of our crab, groundfish, and salmon fisheries having worked as a commercial fisherman, a technician for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game as well as a legislative intern in the Alaska State Capitol. Doug brings a broad range of skills and knowledge of fisheries science and management, as well as practical knowledge of fishing operations. Doug joined our team on October 29.

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
			FMP	Amendment	s			
Amendment 118 (BSAI) Allow retention of halibut in pots in the BSAI	Warpinksi Cleaver M.Watson	October 2018						
			Regulat	ory Amendm	ents			
Authorizing Area 4 IFQ transfer (leasing) to CDQ groups  Establish directed fishing for AFA	Marrinan Warpinski Smoker Armstrong Davis	June 2017 February 2018	PR: 10/2/17 FR: 3/30/18 PR: 5/2/18	PR: 10/19/17 FR: 4/5/18 PR: 5/7/18	PR: 1/30/18 FR: 8/15/18 PR: 7/26/18	N/A N/A	Feb 23, 2018 83 FR 8028 EOC: 3/26/18 Aug 16, 2018 83 FR 8028	Oct 18, 2018 83 FR 52760 Effective: 11/19/18
and CR Program sideboard limits in the BSAI or GOA (Small Sideboards)	M. Watson	2018	FR: 10/27/18	FR: 11/01/18	PR. 7/20/18		EOC: 9/17/18	
Charter Halibut Annual Permit Registration	Marrinan Iverson Lepore	April 2018				N/A		
Mixing of Guided and Unguided Halibut	McCracken Iverson Lepore	April 2018	PR: 8/28/18	PR: 8/31/18	PR: 11/20/18	N/A		
2019-2020 BSAI Groundfish Harvest Specifications	Stram Whitney M. Watson	December 2018	PR: 10/22/18	PR: 10/24/18	PR: 11/13/18	N/A	Dec 5, 2018	
2019-2020 GOA Groundfish Harvest Specifications	Stram Davis M. Watson	December 2018	PR: 10/22/18	PR: 10/24/18	PR: 11/17/18	N/A	Dec 5, 2018	

# **Sustainable Fisheries Division** and Operations Branch

Alaska Region







## **What We Do**

#### **Sustainable Fisheries Division**

The Sustainable Fisheries Division (SFD) implements the policy objectives of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) and manages fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska. SFD works with the State of Alaska on development of fishery management and data collection programs, and the International Pacific Halibut Commission on development of regulations governing the Pacific halibut fisheries off Alaska. SFD provides guidance to the NPFMC and other management agencies on development, implementation, and monitoring of fishery management measures and analytical documents to support management decisions. The Alaska Region (AKR) SFD consists of the Assistant Regional Administrator for SFD, the AKR NEPA Coordinator, the Administrative Assistant for SFD, and five branches: Catch Accounting and Data Quality, Catch Shares, Ecosystem, Inseason, and Operations.

#### **Operations Branch**

The Operations Branch performs analytical, regulatory, editorial, and administrative tasks for SFD and helps ensure the division complies with applicable Federal laws (e.g., Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, Regulatory Flexibility Act, Paperwork Reduction Act, Privacy Act, Information Quality Act), executive orders, and agency guidance and policy. It includes staff whose work extend beyond the focus of one of SFD's other branches. We're a diverse group that includes staff who prepare and review analytical, policy, and regulatory documents; work with the Observer Program and other catch monitoring programs; work with information collection, recordkeeping, and reporting requirements; and perform technical editing.

## **Who We Are**

#### **Technical Editor**

- Edits rulemaking and other documents prepared by SFD
- Provides guidance on grammar, clarity, and consistency with AKR, agency, and Office of the Federal Register
- Maintains AKR Technical Memorandum and **Processed Report Series**

#### **Observer Program Liaison**

The North Pacific Observer Program deploys observers and electronic monitoring systems on commercial fishing vessels

- Liaison between SFD and North Pacific Observer Program for regulatory issues
- Prepares and contributes to regulatory and analytical documents and rulemaking packages that focus on observer issues

#### **Regional Economist**

- Reviews economic analyses by staff to ensure comply with applicable Federal laws, executive orders, and agency guidance and policy
- Prepares economic analyses of costs, benefits, and other impacts of proposed conservation and management actions on affected individuals and entities
- Advises AKR staff on economic principles, compliance with agency guidance on economic issues, economic research, and economic effects of proposed actions
- Develops economic analysis guidance and trains AKR and NPFMC staff about economic analysis principles and agency guidance
- Represents AKR on working groups developing or revising agency guidance for economic analyses

#### **Information Collection Coordinator**

- Ensures SFD maintains approval from Office of Management and Budget under the Paperwork Reduction Act for approximately 30 information collections supporting conservation and management of fisheries off Alaska
- Provides expertise and guidance to staff on requirements of Paperwork Reduction Act, Privacy Act, Information Quality Act, and other relevant laws, regulations, executive orders, and agency guidance that apply to information collection requirements and responsibilities
- Ensures that regulated public has access to forms instructions, and other documents describing AKR information collection requirements

#### **Assistant Regional Administrator for SFD**

- Directs operations, management, policy, and regulatory direction of SFD
- Primary liaison with other divisions and line offices, external stakeholders, and the NPFMC
- Represents SFD at NPFMC and other national and international policy making bodies
- Supervises the branch chiefs, AKR NEPA Coordinator, and Division Administrative Assistant

#### **Deputy Assistant Regional Administrator for SFD**

- Supervises Operations Branch staff
- Prepares and reviews analytical, policy, and regulatory documents
- Assists with division-level project management and tracking systems
- Prepares reports and planning documents for SFD Prepares hiring packages for SFD vacancies

#### **Administrative Assistant for SFD**

- Provides administrative support for SFD
- Data entry for time and attendance and leave audits
- Creates and updates travel reservations and vouchers
- Edits and formats documents for regulatory and fishery management plan packages and analyses
- Procures any necessary furniture and supplies
- Updates and maintains SFD Intranet website

#### **AKR NEPA Coordinator**

- Ensures all AKR major decisions comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires NMFS to consider the environmental impacts in a NEPA document before making a major decision
- Helps authors prepare NEPA documents and follow appropriate process and guidelines so each decision complies with NEPA
- Implements NEPA process, provides training and guidance for authors and decision-makers, reviews each NEP document, and provides information to NOAA NEPA

#### **Industry Economist**

- Conducts socioeconomic analyses for rulemaking and fishery management plan amendments
- Provides Regional Economist review and approval of socioeconomic analyses
- Serves as economist to NPFMC's Scallop Plan Team
- Provides expert review of Saltonstall-Kennedy, North Pacific Research Board, and Seagrant grant
- Cooperates with Alaska Fishery Science Center economists on analytical product development
- Serves as certified Contracting Officers Representative
- Assists other divisions with economic analysis as needed

ARA for SFD • Glenn Merrill Administrative Assistant • Becky Campbell AKR NEPA Coordinator • vacant

Deputy ARA for SFD (Operations Branch Chief) • Sally Bibb Industry Economist • Scott Miller Information Collection Coordinator • Sabrielle Aberle Observer Program Laison • Alicia Miller Regional Economist • vacant Technical Editor • vacant

## Sustainable Fisheries Division

# Inseason Management Branch

NOAA

The Inseason Management Branch monitors the catch rates of groundfish and prohibited species according to the catch limits and allocations by gear, sector, and seasonal apportionments proscribed in regulation and found in the harvest specifications. The branch opens and closes fisheries based on catch rates and harvest information to achieve the Magnuson-Stevens Act National Standard 1 guideline: Conservation and management measures shall prevent overfishing while achieving on a continuing basis, the optimum yield from each fishery.

#### Things we do:

- Support the day-to-day operations for the groundfish fisheries using current regulations and the harvest specifications.
- Determine the amount of a species' Total Allowable Catch (TAC) limit necessary to support directed fishing, as well as the amount needed for incidental catch in other target fisheries.
- Monitor a variety of data sources to determine catch rates and cumulative catch amounts in different fisheries.
- Work with the fishing industry to obtain information about groundfish catch, fishing plans, incidental catch, delivery dates, and other information necessary to manage a broad variety of fisheries.
- Prepare in-season notices for the Federal Register, determine and announce fisheries openings and closures.



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We collaborate with other branches of NMFS, various law enforcement agencies, and other natural resource agencies

## **Collaboration and Special Projects**

We support a variety of analytical and special projects through the use of fisheries data analysis, GIS, and other tools We coordinate with the fishing industry to effectively manage fisheries, which include catch share, limited access, and open access fisheries

## **Harvest Specifications Process and Inseason Management**

#### **Stock Assessment**

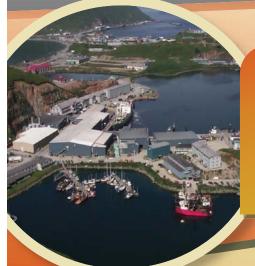
- Alaska Fisheries Science Center scientists prepare BSAI and GOA crab and groundfish stock assessments
- Assessments are used to calculate Overfishing Levels and ABCs/GHLs
- The Council's Plan Teams review the stock assessments
- Inseason staff serve on the Plan Teams, providing management perspective to scientists and explaining new or revised management measures to the teams and other stakeholders

#### **TAC Setting and Specifications**

- Inseason staff continues tracking the annual specifications through the Council process
- Once the Council has recommended the BSAI and GOA final groundfish specifications, Inseason staff prepares the rulemaking necessary to formally establish annual TAC limits, prohibited species catch (PSC) limits, and additional allocations
- Inseason calculates incidental catch allowances independently of the harvest specifications process
- Crab guideline harvest levels are managed by the State of Alaska

#### **Inseason Fishery Management**

- Inseason staff updates accounts in the regional Catch Accounting System that allow the catch of each managed BSAI and GOA species to be monitored throughout the year
- Over 900 accounts are annually established for a variety of gear, sector, seasonal allocations, PSC limits, and incidental catch allowances
- Fisheries and accounts are tracked throughout the year, and fisheries are opened and closed based on data



## **Dutch Harbor Highlights**

- Staff in the Inseason Branch's Dutch Harbor field office provides the fishing industry assistance with regulations, reporting, distribute information and materials, and perform a variety of compliance inspections
- Dutch Harbor is the largest fishing port in the U.S. (by volume)
- The port is home to various high-volume seafood processors, as well as a variety of seafood and maritime support industries



Branch Chief: Mary Furuness
Fishery Management Specialists: Obren Davis, Josh Keaton,
Steve Whitney (Juneau), and Krista Milani (Dutch Harbor)

Collectively, staff in the Inseason Branch have over 100 years of fisheries management and fishing industry experience

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The Catch Share Branch manages and coordinates the SF Division's responsibilities to implement fishery management plan (FMP) amendments and regulatory amendments that support the Alaska Region's catch share programs. These programs include the Halibut and Sablefish Individual Fishing Quota Program, the Western Alaska Community Development Quota Program, the American Fisheries Act and Aleutian Island pollock fisheries, the Crab Rationalization Program, the Amendment 80 fisheries, and the Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program.

- · Develop FMP amendment and regulatory amendment packages to ensure compliance with established guidelines
- Draft memos, letters, briefing documents, and policy analyses related to Alaska's catch share programs.
- Attend North Pacific Fishery Management Council meetings to track and monitor issues relevant to

# **Alaska Region Catch Share Programs**



Source: Data is from Groundfish Economic SAFE 2017, BSAI Crab Economic SAFE 2017, and AKFIN for the year 2016.

#### **Our Process**

#### Phase I: Analysis

- The Alaska Region's catch share programs are constantly improving from stakeholder input through the Council process or input through NMFS.
- · Council staff lead the first phase action planning and develop a team to ensure that right people are involved in the initial analysis of an issue.
- The Catch Share Branch are involved early in the process to ensure successful implementation and coordinate with Council staff, ADFG, AFSC, and NMFS expertise.

#### Phase II: Regulations

- The Catch Share Branch regulation writers are responsible for development of proposed and final rules.
- The regulation writers, the SF ARA, and General Counsel cooperate to ensure the rule is consistent with current regulations.
- The regulation writers must maintain an accurate public record, adhere to the Paperwork Reduction Act and other compliance requirements, and respond to public comments.

#### Phase III: Implementation

- Implementation requires monitoring, enforcement, inseason management, catch accounting, permitting, and other agency functions that depend on accurate, concise regulations written by the Catch Share Branch regulation writers.
- Often the Catch Share Branch provides outreach and communication to stakeholders in catch share programs impacted by the action.



#### **Special Projects**

#### **IPHC Collaboration**

#### **Recreational Fisheries**

#### **Cost Recovery**

#### **Technical Review**

#### **Catch Share Working Group**



## **Paperwork Reduction Act**

#### Catch Share Branch Staff:

Alicia Miller, Branch Chief

Stephanie Warpinski, Fishery Management Specialist (CDQ Program, Halibut and Sablefish IFQ Program, Central GOA Rockfish Program) Kurt Iverson, Fishery Management Specialist

(Halibut Recreational Fishing, Cost Recovery) Doug Duncan, Fishery Management Specialist

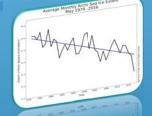
# Sustainable Fisheries Division

# Ecosystem Branch





The SFD Ecosystem Branch focuses on Federal fishery management issues with a conservation, natural environment, or experimental flavor. We collaborate on projects pertaining to fishery impacts on marine mammals, seabirds, and habitat. We work on ecosystem-based fishery management initiatives, bycatch reduction, and climate change. We also issue special permits and conduct federal rulemaking.





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#### **Implement & Collaborate: NMFS Ecosystem-Related Policies & Strategies**

- - o National Workgroup

  - Fishery Ecosystem Plans
- Bycatch Reduction

#### **Contribute to Fishery Bycatch Reduction Efforts**

- National Bycatch Report & Steering Committee
- Annual Seabird Bycatch Report
- Annual Chinook Salmon Bycatch Report
- Groundfish and Halibut Seabird Bycatch Working Group
- Bycatch Reduction Engineering Program
- Prohibited Species Donation Program feeding people in need
- Exempted fishing permits to test gear & handling methods to reduce bycatch and discard mortality

 Develop/contribute to NEPA analyses of potential environmental effects of federal fishery actions on non-target species

**Participate in the North Pacific Fishery Management** 

**Council Fishery Policy Development** 

 Attend Council meetings to provide information on protected species, prohibited species, ESA process & other relevant topics

#### **Collaborate with the Alaska Fishery Science Center**

#### Monitor Fishery Effects on ESA-listed Species: Marine Mammals, Seabirds & Salmon

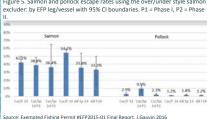
- Develop Biological Assessments for Endangered Species Act consultations
- Implement Conservation & Protection Measures to ensure fisheries are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of listed species or adversely modify designated critical habitat

#### **Conduct Federal Rulemaking on Conservation and Non-Target Species Programs & Issues**

in accordance with Council initiatives

How time out of water affected halibut viability in 2017

Figure 5. Salmon and pollock escape rates using the over/under style salmon excluder: by EFP leg/vessel with 95% CI boundaries. P1 = Phase I, P2 = Phase



# ECOSYSTEM BRANCH STAFF

Megan Mackey – salmon bycatch, special permits, regulations Anne Marie Eich - Branch Chief, seabirds gan Mackey – samon bycaton, special permits, regulations Bridget Mansfield – marine mammals, EBFM, EFPs, regulations Joe Krieger – seabirds, EFPs, EBFM, regulations



# Catch Accounting and **Data Quality Branch**



**NOAA** FISHERIES



#### **What We Do**

A real-time, accurate depiction and representation of the entire fishing effort is crucial for the planning, controlling, and management of our fisheries. In the Alaska Region, we employ several tools that provide dynamic information and methods for continuous and accurate assessment of total catch. The Catch Accounting and Data Quality (CADQ) branch of Sustainable Fisheries is the nexus for the collection, processing, qualitative integration, statistical analysis and stewardship, of the catch data information used to make management decisions.

# eLandings interagency Server

#### **Electronic Reporting**

The Interagency Electronic Reporting Systems, also called eLandings, provides the Alaska fishing industry with a consolidated, electronic means of reporting landings and production of commercial fish and shellfish to multiple management agencies. The eLandings Program Manager in the CADQ branch manages the direction of application development so that it meets federal requirements and also coordinates with state and international partners. Hands-on training is provided for Industry several times a year throughout Alaska and in Seattle. We also provide robust user support and work closely with IT programmers to capture reporting issues and fix them in a timely manner. Almost every pound of seafood landed in Alaska is documented through eLandings!

The "Catch in Areas" (CIA) database integrates VMS transmission of vessel position, direction, and speed into GIS driven software to portray real-time fishing effort. The CIA provides In-Season analysts, Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) officers, and other groups spatially explicit catch data. Integrating GIS capability with VMS and data derived from the Catch Accounting System, the CIA provides a visual and historical representation of vessel locations. specific areas of operation, and the current fishery information as well as numerous additional data and

#### **Catch-In-Areas Database**

# **Catch Estimation and Data Analysis**

The CADQ Branch provides the framework where observer data, Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) information, industry and vessel reporting, and State and Federal Permitting data are all consolidated and analyzed to produce Total Catch Estimates used by our consumers.

Our branch provides analytical support for a broad range of analytical projects including: analysis and advice for regulatory analysis; policy documents & discussion papers; data summaries; and expertise on catch estimation issues related to catch accounting.

We also work with the Region's application developers on business rules and requirements, and perform data quality checks and user acceptance related to Catch Accounting and Cost Recovery.





#### **Catch Monitoring and At-Sea Scales**

At-sea flow scales - The use of at-sea scales helps provide precise and accurate groundfish catch estimates. At-sea scales are now used to account for the vast majority of catch by CPs and motherships fishing off Alaska. We conduct annual scale inspections and certification of all at-sea scales to ensure accurate accountability of groundfish landings.

Catch Monitoring Control Plan (CMCP) — Owners and managers of shoreside or stationary floating processors receiving fish in the AFA and CDQ pollock, Aleutian Island directed pollock or the Rockfish Program, with some exceptions, are required to prepare, submit, and have an approved CMCP prior to the receipt of fish harvested in these fisheries. Members of CADQ conduct annual inspections of all processing facilities required to maintain a CMCP.



#### **Compliance Video and Electronic Monitoring**

On large catcher processor and mothership vessels, video monitoring of the flow scale and its components, as well as any crew activities around the scale, allows us to verify that all catch is being weighed, that no one is tampering with the scale, and that the scale is functioning correctly. We work closely with NMFS OLE to review video and identify potential tampering issues and violations.

On small, fixed-gear vessels we are working with AFSC to implement Electronic Monitoring (EM). Data gathered in this new EM program are being used for catch estimation.



## Who We Are

Branch Chief: Jennifer Mondragon At-sea Scales & CMCP team: Jennifer Watson, Vern Shoemaker, and Bill Donaldson



Catch-In-Areas Manager: Steve Lewis Analysis Team: Jason Gasper and Cathy Tide eLandings Program Manager: Suja Hall