

North Pacific Fishery Management Council
C4: BSAI Parallel Waters
Council Motion
December 7, 2019

The Council adopts the following purpose and need and alternative for final action.
The preferred alternative is indicated in **bold**.

Purpose and Need statement:

Currently, there are no limits on entry by federally permitted catcher vessels into the Bering Sea /Aleutian Islands (BSAI) parallel waters groundfish fisheries, and no limits on the proportion of BSAI Pacific cod TAC that may be harvested in parallel waters. Currently management inadvertently allows fishing in BSAI parallel waters off a federal Pacific cod TAC even when a sector's federal Pacific cod allocation has been achieved. There is concern that harvests of Pacific cod in the parallel waters fishery by vessels that do not hold BSAI groundfish LLP licenses or the appropriate Pacific cod endorsement may continue to increase. This complicates conservation and management measures which hold sectors to their allocations and circumvents the intent of previous Council decisions regarding license limitation, sector allocations, and catch reporting. The Council, in consideration of options and recommendations for federal catcher vessels that participate in the parallel fishery, intends to ensure robust catch accounting while considering participation in the reliance on the Pacific cod fisheries while recognizing that new entrants who do not hold Federal fishery permits may participate in the parallel fishery.

Alternative 1: Status quo

Alternative 2: Limit access to the parallel fishery for Federal fishery participants.

Hook and line and pot gear vessels - require any pot or hook and line vessel designated on an LLP or FFP to have the appropriate Pacific cod endorsement and area endorsement on the LLP; and the Bering Sea (BS) or Aleutian Islands (AI) area designation and the appropriate gear and operation type designations on the FFP in order to participate in the BS or AI Pacific cod parallel waters fishery.

Trawl gear vessels - require any trawl vessel with an LLP or an FFP to have the appropriate gear and area endorsements on the LLP; and the BS or AI area designation and the appropriate gear and operation type designations on the FFP in order to participate in the BS or AI Pacific cod parallel waters fishery.

In addition, require the above Federally permitted or licensed vessels that fish in the parallel waters to adhere to Federal seasonal closures of the BSAI sector allocations corresponding to the sector in which the vessel operates.

Vessels with a BS or AI area, gear, and operation type designations specified in this alternative cannot remove these designations from the FFP and can only surrender or reactivate the FFP once every three years.