



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
P.O. Box 21668  
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

September 30, 2019

## **Agenda B-2: NMFS Management Report**

### **Status of Actions Report Online**

Updated daily at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/akro/amendments.pdf>

### **Progress on Rulemaking**

Highlights on progress since the June 2019 meeting include:

- Comment period for the proposed rule on Charter Halibut Permit Annual Registration closed **September 9, 2019**. The final rule is expected to publish late 2019.
- **Proposed rule** on Pacific cod trawl catcher vessel mothership (Amendment 120/108) published **September 27, 2019**. The final rule is expected to publish by the end of 2019.
- **Proposed rule** on fixed gear retention of rockfish (Amendments 119/107) publishes **October 2, 2019**. The final rule is expected to publish by the end of 2019.
- **Attachment 1** provides additional detail.

### **Emerging Issue: Squid Sold as Bait**

In 2018, NMFS issued regulations to move squid species out of the target category and into the non-target ecosystem component (EC) category, together with grenadiers and forage fish, in the fishery management plans for groundfish in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands and the Gulf of Alaska (GOA). Regulations at 50 CFR 679.20(i) address current EC species and prohibit all sale, barter, trade, and processing of EC species except as provided in 679.20(i)(5), which limits the processing and sale of these species to fishmeal. Historically, squid has been processed and sold as bait. After publication of the final rule implementing regulations to move squid to the EC category, harvesters and processors highlighted inconsistencies between statements made in the analysis and the regulations about the potential use of squid as bait. NMFS has coordinated with harvesters and processors to clarify these regulatory requirements.

The Council could choose to reexamine the range of options for the disposition of squid, or other EC category species, through a subsequent action. At this meeting, the Council is considering moving sculpin species to the EC category in the groundfish FMPs. If sculpins are reclassified as EC species, the Council's preferred alternatives would only allow sculpins to be sold or processed for use as fish meal. We would not anticipate modifying the range of alternatives for the sculpin action currently before the Council, and as stated earlier, the Council could choose to revisit the disposition of EC category species through a separate regulatory amendment.



## **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 PSC to be sorted on deck of trawl catcher/processors (C/Ps) 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.

We expect to publish a final rule in October 2019. This timeframe will provide time for installation and inspection of monitoring equipment prior to the 2020 fishery. Deck sorting is continuing under an EFP in 2019.

## **Exempted Fishing Permit Annual Application Process**

The Alaska Regional Office has established an annual application process for EFPs, starting in 2020. Currently, we receive EFPs on an *ad hoc* basis and planning for processing EFPs with other work requirements can be difficult. Other regions and Councils have adopted an annual EFP process to improve planning and processing of EFPs. Starting in 2020, we will have 2 application periods, as described below.

Application Deadline: May 1 or September 1, each year.

Presentation to and Review by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council:

- October meeting for May applicants
- February meeting for September applicants

Review Process: Applicants should plan on at least 8 to 12 months from the date of application submittal before the EFP is issued. For more complex projects, contact NMFS Alaska Regional Office at least 12 months ahead of desired EFP fishing start date. Review time depends on the complexity of the project, the type of NEPA review, and [North Pacific Fishery Management Council's](#) meeting schedule. If you plan to do an experiment, the design must be approved by the [Alaska Fisheries Science Center](#) before a permit may be issued. Applicants should work with the AFSC on the experimental design before submitting an EFP application.

Each EFP undergoes NEPA review. NMFS may be able to issue a categorical exclusion (which takes a minimal amount of time) or may need to write an environmental analysis of the impacts of issuing the EFP (which could take a long time). The application and NEPA document would support the decision-making and inform the public of the EFP project. There may be an ESA consultation required.

The Regional Administrator is also required to consult with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council before issuing an EFP. This required a **Federal Register** notice of

the receipt of your application (published by NMFS) and may require a presentation of the EFP project to the Council by the applicant.

## EFP Issuance Timeline\* - May Applicants

Dates	w/ EA or ESA Sect 7	w/ Categorical Excl & no ESA Sect 7
May	Initial contact by applicant; initial application submitted; NEPA Analysis / ESA Consultation initiated	Initial contact by applicant; determination on NEPA analysis & ESA consultation
June	Refine application as needed; EA & ESA analyses on-going	Initial Application submitted; Categorical Exclusion drafted
July	Draft NEPA analysis completed; ESA consultation completed; final draft application submitted; AFSC review requested	Final draft application submitted; AFSC review requested
August	AFSC review received; application revised and finalized; Council Consultation requested; ADFG, USCG, IPHC notified	AFSC review received; application revised and finalized; Council Consultation requested; ADFG, USCG, IPHC notified
September	FR Notice published	FR Notice published
October	Public comment period on application and EA ends; Council Consultation; Permit drafted	Public comment period on application ends; Council Consultation; Permit drafted
November	Regional review, GCAK /GC-ENF /OLE review	Regional review, GCAK /GC-ENF /OLE review
December	Permit Issued	Permit Issued
January	EFP fishing can begin	EFP fishing can begin

\* Timing could be longer depending on project complexity. For more complex projects, contact NMFS Alaska Regional Office at least 12 months ahead of desired EFP fishing start date.



## EFP Issuance Timeline\* - September Applicants

Dates	w/ EA or ESA Sect 7	w/ Categorical Excl & no ESA Sect 7
September	Initial contact by applicant; initial application submitted; NEPA Analysis / ESA Consultation initiated	Initial contact by applicant; determination on NEPA analysis & ESA consultation
October	Refine application as needed; EA & ESA analyses on-going	Initial Application submitted; Categorical Exclusion drafted
November	Draft NEPA analysis completed; ESA consultation completed; final draft application submitted; AFSC review requested	Final draft application submitted; AFSC review requested
December	AFSC review received; application revised and finalized; Council Consultation requested; ADFG, USCG, IPHC notified	AFSC review received; application revised and finalized; Council Consultation requested; ADFG, USCG, IPHC notified
January	FR Notice published	FR Notice published
February	Public comment period on application and EA ends; Council Consultation; Permit drafted	Public comment period on application ends; Council Consultation; Permit drafted
March	Regional review, GCAK /GC-ENF /OLE review	Regional review, GCAK /GC-ENF /OLE review
April	Permit Issued	Permit Issued
May	EFP fishing can begin	EFP fishing can begin

\* Timing could be longer depending on project complexity. For more complex projects, contact NMFS Alaska Regional Office at least 12 months ahead of desired EFP fishing start date.



### **Annual Observer Coverage Category Requests**

The deadline for trawl catcher vessels to request to be in the full coverage category for 2019 is October 15, 2018. The deadline for fixed gear vessels in the partial coverage category to request to be in the EM Selection Pool for 2019 is November 1, 2018. Both of these requests are submitted through ODDS.

### **NMFS Recommendations for Regulatory Changes in Rockfish Reauthorization**

NMFS Alaska Region has identified several regulatory changes in addition to the changes brought forward in the Program Review (October 2017) and the Discussion Paper (December 2018). These administrative changes are described in a brief document posted under Staff Tasking Agenda Item E1 and would be analyzed in the initial review draft analysis scheduled for presentation at the December 2019 Council meeting. Analysts are seeking feedback from the Council about including these elements in the December analysis.

### **Staff Changes**

Bridget Mansfield has been selected as the Alaska Region's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Coordinator. Bridget has worked in fisheries and resource management for over 30 years. Bridget has worked for NMFS in the Sustainable Fisheries and Protected Resources (PR) Divisions in the Alaska Region, the Resource Ecology Fishery Management Division in the Alaska Fisheries Science Center, and the PR Division in the SE Region. Bridget started her NMFS career in resource surveys and population dynamics at the Northeast Fishery Science Center and was an observer onboard fishing vessels in the North Pacific.

As the Alaska Region's NEPA Coordinator, Bridget will be a resource for the entire region. She will review NEPA analyses prepared by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and AKR employees to ensure that marine resource conservation and management actions comply with NEPA. She will also advise and coordinate among the Alaska Region, Alaska Fisheries Science Center, and Council about the requirements of NEPA and other federal laws governing the conservation and management of living marine resources off Alaska.

## Attachment 1 -- Status of Regulatory Actions

Changes since June 2019 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 <i>Federal Register</i>	Proposed Rule Published in <i>Federal Register</i>	Final Rule or Notice of Approval Published in <i>Federal Register</i>
<b>FMP Amendments</b>								
Amendment 118 (BSAI) -- Allow halibut Retention in BSAI IFQ Pot Gear Decision date: <b>November 20, 2019</b>	Cleaver Warpinski M. Watson	October 2018	PR: 05/29/19	PR: 06/05/19	<b>PR: 08/09/19</b>	<b>Aug 21, 2019 84 FR 43570 EOC: 10/21/19</b>		
Amendments 120 (BSAI) and 108 (GOA) -- Limit CPs acting as motherships in BSAI trawl Pacific cod fishery Decision date: <b>November 20, 2019</b>	McCracken Mansfield Fortenbery	April 2019	PR: 05/28/19	PR: 05/30/19	<b>PR: 07/23/19</b>	<b>Aug 21, 2019 84 FR 43576 EOC: 10/21/19</b>	<b>Sep 27, 2019 84 FR 51092 EOC: 10/28/19</b>	
Amendments 119 (BSAI) and 107 (GOA) -- Require retention of rockfish by catcher vessels using hook-and-line, pot, or jig gear Decision date: <b>November 20, 2019</b>	McCracken Keaton Fortenbery	April 2019	<b>PR: 07/08/19</b>	<b>PR: 07/11/19</b>	<b>PR: 08/16/19</b>	<b>Aug 22, 2019 84 FR 43783 EOC: 10/21/19</b>	<b>Oct 2, 2019 84 FR XXXXX EOC: 11/1/19</b>	

Regulatory Amendments								
Halibut Deck Sorting on Non-Pollock Trawl Catcher/Processors and Motherships	N/A Krieger Meyer	N/A	PR: 12/16/18 <b>FR: 6/27/19</b>	PR: 2/05/19 <b>FR: 7/10/19</b>	PR: 3/18/19 <b>FR: 8/21/19</b>	N/A	Apr 16, 2019 84 FR 15566 EOC: 5/16/19	
IFQ Beneficiary and Medical Transfer Provisions	Cunningham Warpinski Meyer	April 2019	<b>PR: 7/24/19</b>	<b>PR: 8/06/19</b>	<b>PR: 9/20/19</b>	N/A		
Charter Halibut Permit annual renewal requirement	Marrinan Duncan Lepore	April 2018	PR: 3/12/19 <b>FR: 9/25/19</b>	PR: 3/14/19 <b>FR: 9/27/19</b>	PR: 5/21/19	N/A	<b>Aug 8, 2019</b> <b>84 FR 38912</b> <b>EOC: 9/09/19</b>	
Mixing of halibut from guided and unguided fishing; regulation change	McCraken Iverson Lepore	April 2018	PR: 8/27/18 FR: 4/26/19	PR: 9/05/18 FR: 4/29/19	PR: 11/20/18 <b>FR: 6/14/19</b>	N/A	Feb 12, 2019 84 PR 3403 EOC: 3/14/19	

## Inseason Management Report

Catch during 2019 is through September 21, 2019 and is compared to catch during 2018 through September 22, 2018. All catch amounts are in metric tons. Additional information from catch reports and information bulletins are available at:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/sustainable-fisheries/alaska-groundfish-fisheries-management>

### **Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI)**

#### **Bering Sea Pollock**

The 2019 Bering Sea pollock total allowable catch (TAC) is 1,397,000 mt compared to 1,364,341 mt in 2018. NMFS reallocated 1,900 mt of CDQ pollock TAC and 16,500 mt of the Aleut Corporation's TAC from the Aleutian Islands to the Bering Sea. The B season closes at noon, Alaska local time (A.l.t.), November 1, 2019.

In 2018, the pollock fishery ended the first week of October. The 2019 fishery is expected to continue to the end of October. During the 2019 B season, from June 10 to August 25, the weekly catch averaged 8,870 mt less a week, and the number of vessels (all sectors) participating averaged six vessels less a week than relative to 2018.

Bering Sea	2019 allocation	2019 catch	Percent taken
Inshore	612,690	587,603	96%
C/P	490,152	451,330	92%
Mothership	122,538	96,896	80%
CDQ	141,600	128,209	91%
ICA	46,520	36,037	77%
Total	1,413,500	1,265,553	92%

## Salmon in the Bering Sea Pollock Fisheries

In 2019 relative to 2018, salmon PSC and rates are higher, except for Non-Chinook CDQ.

Species	Chinook				Non-Chinook			
	2019		2018		2019		2018	
Year	#	Rate <sup>1</sup>	#	Rate <sup>1</sup>	#	Rate <sup>1</sup>	#	Rate <sup>1</sup>
CDQ	1,969	1.5%	1,275	0.9%	12,294	10%	26,352	19%
Non-CDQ	19,702	1.7%	12,295	1.0%	312,288	27%	265,297	22%
Total	21,671	1.7%	13,570	1.0%	324,582	26%	291,649	22%

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

## BSAI Pacific cod

NMFS closed directed fishing for non-CDQ Pacific cod in the Aleutian Islands effective September 4, 2019.

For 2020, the Bering Sea guideline harvest level (GHL) will increase from 8% to 9%, and the Aleutian Islands GHL will increase from 31% to 34%. The Aleutian Islands GHL also has a limit of 15 million pounds (6,804 mt) which may constrain the GHL. The 2019 GHL was 6,386 mt, or 418 mt under the 6,804 mt GHL limit.

In March 2019, the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia vacated the rule implementing Amendment 113 and remanded Amendment 113 to NMFS for reconsideration. In May 2019, the U.S. Department of Justice filed a notice of appeal.



**BSAI Pacific cod by Sector**

BSAI Sector	2019				2018			
	Allocation <sup>1</sup>	Catch Sept 21	Closed <sup>2</sup>	# of vessels Sept 21	Allocation	Catch Sept 22	Closed <sup>2</sup>	# of vessels Sept 22
<b>CDQ</b>	19,334	15,040	n/a	97	21,810	17,067	n/a	93
Hook-and-line C/P	78,260	56,960	n/a	23	88,324	63,343	n/a	25
Pot C/P	2,410	2,567	Sept 15	5	2,720	2,810	Sept 20	5
Pot CV >= 60 ft	13,499	6,884	Sept 21	35	15,235	10,832	Oct 30	33
Hook-and-line/Pot CVs < 60 ft	6,235	4,668	Jan 19	37	8,748	6,191	Dec 1	25
Jig	559	146	n/a	3	148	56	n/a	<3
Trawl CV	34,660	31,274	n/a	96	38,027	37,781	Nov 1	103
AFA C/P	3,711	3,082	n/a	15	4,028	4,024	n/a	16
Amendment 80 C/P	21,622	17,916	n/a	20	24,391	20,262	Nov 1	19
Hook-and-line/Pot ICA	400	343	n/a	128	400	292	n/a	126
Total	180,690	138,880		459	203,831	162,658		445

<sup>1</sup>NMFS reallocated 1,200 mt in 2019 and in 1,400 mt in 2018 of the A season jig allocation to the hook-and-line or pot CVs less than 60 ft annual allocation. The table shows current 2019 TACs and 2018 end of the year TACs.

**Pacific cod target - trawl catcher vessels**

In 2019 for the BSAI A season Pacific cod target, 58 trawl CVs reported 22,626 mt relative to 61 trawl CVs reporting 27,747 mt in 2018. Of those amounts, in 2019, 14 CVs delivered 5,793 mt (26%) to seven motherships, and in 2018, 47 CVs delivered 16,833 mt (74%) to nine shoreside/stationary floating processors.

The 2019 BSAI B season for trawl CVs opened for 24 hours, April 1, 2019 with 38 CVs reporting 3,379 mt in the Pacific cod target. Of those amounts, 6 CVs delivered 631 mt (19%) to 4 motherships, and 32 CVs delivered 2,748 mt (81%) to 10 shoreside/stationary floating processors.

The C season opened at noon, A.l.t., June 10, 2019, and 1,493 mt has been reported. Most of the C season catch is incidental to the pollock fishery, and some is in the Pacific cod target.

**Pacific cod for < 60 ft hook-and-line and pot catcher vessels**

In 2019, six hook-and-line CVs continue directed fishing for Pacific cod inside 3 miles after the federal closure reporting 825 mt or 18% of the total catch.

**BSAI Flatfish (includes CDQ)**

In 2019 relative to 2018, overall BSAI flatfish catch is 2,787 mt (1.6%) lower. The catch by species with the highest decrease to the lowest decrease are from Alaska plaice, rock sole, other flatfish, and yellowfin sole. The catch by species with the highest increase to the lowest increase are from flathead sole, arrowtooth flounder, Kamchatka flounder, and Greenland turbot. The remaining flatfish fishing in 2019 is expected to focus on yellowfin sole.

NMFS closed directed fishing May 29, 2019, for BSAI trawl limited access sector yellowfin sole allocation to prevent exceeding the halibut PSC limit for the sector's yellowfin sole fishery. The 12 vessels participating reported 93% of the 18,351 mt yellowfin sole allocation with 1,347 mt remaining, and total halibut PSC is 150 mt of the 150 mt limit for yellowfin sole.

Species	2019			2018		
	Catch	TAC <sup>1</sup>	% Taken	Catch	TAC <sup>1</sup>	% Taken
Alaska plaice	14,274	18,000	79%	21,689	16,100	135%
Arrowtooth flounder	7,583	8,000	95%	5,051	13,621	37%
Flathead sole	13,488	14,500	93%	9,632	14,500	66%
Greenland turbot	2,843	5,294	54%	1,811	5,294	34%
Kamchatka flounder	4,252	5,000	85%	2,877	5,000	58%
Other flatfish	2,256	6,500	35%	3,038	4,000	76%
Rock sole	25,024	47,100	53%	27,893	47,100	59%
Yellowfin sole	106,369	154,000	69%	106,885	154,000	69%
Total	176,089	258,394	68%	178,876	259,615	69%

<sup>1</sup>TAC is the final TAC from the final harvest specifications. No adjustment have been made for nonspecified reserves or flatfish exchanges.

**BSAI Atka mackerel and Pacific ocean perch (POP) (includes CDQ)**

The 2019 total catch for Atka mackerel is lower and for POP is higher relative to 2018. Fishing continues in the Eastern AI. The Western and Central AI are finished for 2019.

Species	2019			2018		
	Catch	TAC <sup>1</sup>	% Taken	Catch	TAC <sup>1</sup>	% Taken
Atka mackerel	49,916	57,951	86%	56,057	71,000	79%
POP	33,194	44,069	75%	26,871	37,361	72%

<sup>1</sup>TAC is the final TAC from the final harvest specifications. No adjustment have been made for nonspecified reserves or flatfish exchanges.

**Gulf of Alaska****Pot gear for IFQ sablefish fishery in the GOA**

Currently for 2019, 32 vessels have registered for 14,932 pot tags. In 2019, 25 vessels have reported 1,637 mt relative to 21 vessels reporting 857 mt in 2018. Also, in 2019, 56% of the catch is from area 630 relative to 49% of the catch from area 630 in 2018.

**Pacific cod - Western GOA**

The B season opened at noon, A.l.t., September 1, except jig gear opened at noon, A.l.t., June 10, 2019.

Sector	2019				2018			
	TAC Allocation	Catch Sept 21	Closed	# of vessels Sept 21	TAC <sup>1</sup> Allocation	Catch Sept 22	Closed	# of vessels Sept 22
Hook-and-line C/P	1,031	916	n/a	3	1,103	1,071	Sept 21	3
Hook-and-line CV	73	86	Jan 1	81	85	72	Jan 1	98
Jig	134	145	n/a	12	125	99	n/a	10
Pot CV/CP	1,979	1,302	n/a	14	2,795	1,328	n/a	16
Trawl CV	2,000	1,421	n/a	25	1,414	1,364	n/a	29
Trawl C/P	125	152	Jan 20	5	134	56	Jan 20	6
Total	5,342	4,022		140	5,656	3,990		162

**Pacific cod - Central GOA**

The B season opened at noon, A.l.t., September 1, except jig gear opened at noon, A.l.t., June 10, 2019.

Sector	2019				2018			
	TAC Allocation	Catch Sept 21	Closed	# of vessels Sept 21	TAC <sup>1</sup> Allocation	Catch Sept 22	Closed	# of vessels Sept 22
Hook-and-line C/P	291	203	n/a	4	268	266	n/a	4
Hook-and-line CV <50 ft	831	744	n/a	125	990	552	Dec 1	134
Hook-and-line CV >=50 ft	381	340	n/a	94	416	395	Sept 1	106
Jig	58	30	n/a	14	1	0	n/a	3
Pot CV/CP	1,583	1,141	n/a	15	1,787	1,161	n/a	15
Trawl CV, non RP	2,148	1,688	Jan 20	48	1,695	1,016	Jan 20	49
Trawl C/P	239	407	Jan 20	6	700	521	Jan 20	6
Total	5,531	4,553		306	5,857	3,911		317

<sup>1</sup>TAC Allocation includes inseason relocations.

**Pollock**

For the Western GOA, Area 610, effort was strong except for a weather stand down over the weekend. For the Central GOA, Areas 620 and 630, effort was delayed for several reasons. The processing plants were limited due to low water levels and the end of the pink salmon fishery. Directed fishing started the first week of September. Catch has been fairly steady in Area 630 and slow in Area 620.

2019 Seasons	610	620	630	640
C season allocation	11,697	10,108	12,283	5,748 (annual)
C season catch	10,509	3,757	6,765	6,424
C season closure	September 8	n/a	n/a	February 26
D season allocation <sup>1</sup>	11,590	8,423	11,664	
D season catch	n/a	n/a	n/a	
D season closure	n/a	n/a	n/a	

<sup>1</sup>The D season allocations will be adjusted by the underages from the C season.

### Chinook Salmon PSC Limits in the GOA

In 2019 relative to 2018, Chinook salmon PSC is 952 salmon higher for fisheries with PSC limits.

Chinook Salmon	2019 Limit	2019 PSC	2018 PSC
Total	n/a	10,098	9,146
Western GOA pollock	6,684	2,065	1447
Central GOA pollock	18,316	5,178	6421
Western/Central trawl CV <sup>1</sup>	3,060	2,518	1,125
Western/Central trawl CP <sup>1</sup>	4,080	108	0
Rockfish Program CV	1,200	229	153

<sup>1</sup>Includes incentive buffers for 2018 and 2019 Western/Central trawl CV limit (360 Chinook), and Western/Central trawl CP limit (480 Chinook).

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

### Non-Chinook Salmon PSC

Non-Chinook Salmon	2019 PSC	2018 PSC
Total	4,996	3,648

## Halibut Mortality Data

In 2019 relative to 2018, the total halibut mortality Alaska-wide is 181 mt higher, in the BSAI is 265 mt higher mostly from yellowfin sole and BSAI trawl CV Pacific cod fisheries. In the GOA, 2019 is 84 mt lower mostly from the deep-water trawl fisheries. The 2019 BSAI rate is 0.02% higher than 2018, and the 2019 GOA rate is 0.1% higher than 2018.

Area, Gear, and Sector	2019		2018	
	Halibut mortality	Rate	Halibut mortality	Rate
BSAI/GOA Total	2,759	0.13%	2,578	0.11%
BSAI Total	1,998	0.10%	1,733	0.08%
Amendment 80	1,217	0.28%	1,084	0.22%
BSAI trawl limited access	604	0.05%	452	0.03%
Non-trawl	62	0.08%	95	0.08%
CDQ	115	0.06%	102	0.04%
GOA Total	761	0.47%	845	0.36%
Trawl, Deep-water	537	1.29%	613	1.57%
Trawl, Shallow-water	152	0.16%	154	0.09%
Trawl, Rockfish Program	26	0.13%	38	0.15%
Hook-and-line CP/CV	45	1.31%	40	1.08%

## Sablefish

### Sablefish Total Catch by Area and OFL

Year	Area	Catch <sup>1</sup>	OFL	Remaining
2019	BS	3,002	3,221	219
2019	AI	490	4,350	3,860
2019	GOA	10,381	25,227	14,846
Total		13,872	32,798	18,926

<sup>1</sup>Catch as of September 30, 2019

## Allocations

In the Bering Sea 50% of the TAC is allocated to trawl gear and 50% of the TAC is allocated to fixed gear.

### Allocation of BS trawl gear sablefish

- TAC = 725 mt
  - Non-CDQ (85%) = 633 mt
  - CDQ (7.5%) = 56 mt

- Nonspecified reserve (7.5) = 56 mt

### **2019 Inseason Actions**

NMFS closed directed fishing for non-CDQ sablefish by vessels using trawl gear in the BSAI effective January 20, 2019.

NMFS prohibited retention of non-CDQ sablefish by vessels using trawl gear in the Bering Sea subarea effective June 29, 2019.

NMFS reallocated 56 mt from the nonspecified reserves to non-CDQ sablefish trawl gear allocation in the Bering Sea subarea effective September 18, 2019.

### **Stock Assessment/Status Determinations/Specification of OFL**

Different management areas are used for the sablefish stock assessment and status determination, and the specification of the sablefish overfishing level (OFL). For Alaska groundfish stocks, sablefish is the only species with these area differences. The status determination is used to identify if a stock is being subjected to overfishing, is overfished, and is approaching an overfished condition.

**Stock Assessment and Status Determination** – OFL is Alaska wide (BSAI and GOA combined)

**Harvest Specification** – separate OFLs for Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, Gulf of Alaska

### **From the Stock Assessment**

- Sablefish are assessed as a single population in Federal waters off Alaska because of their high movement rates.
- Significant stock structure among the federal Alaska population is unlikely given extremely high movement rates throughout their lives (Hanselman et al. 2015, Heifetz and Fujioka 1991, Maloney and Heifetz 1997, Kimura et al. 1998).
- For 2019, applying an adjusted  $F_{35\%}$  as prescribed for OFL in Tier 3b and adjusting for projected whale depredation results in an OFL value of 32,798 mt for the Alaska-wide combined stock.