



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

June 4, 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 April 2018 meeting include:

- Essential Fish Habitat Omnibus Amendments. **Approved May 31, 2018.**
- Proposed rule implementing Amendment 116 to the FMP for Groundfish of the BSAI – LLP endorsement for BSAI trawl limited access yellowfin sole directed fishery. **Published: June 6, 2018.**
- Notice of Availability for Amendment 116 to the FMP for Groundfish of the BSAI. **Published: May 22, 2018.**
- Proposed rule implementing Amendment 117 to the FMP for Groundfish of the BSAI and Amendment 106 to the FMP for Groundfish of the GOA – Reclassifying squid as Ecosystem Component species. **Published: April 11, 2018.**
- See Attachment 1 for additional detail.

Final Rule for Federal Financing

NMFS published a final rule for financing the purchase of harvesting privileges on May 25, 2018. It will be effective effective June 25, 2018 (see regulation under B2). The NMFS Fisheries Finance Program (FFP) published the proposed rule in October (82 FR 50363, October 31, 2017). The final rule incorporates input from the public and regional offices.

The final rule implements a 2015 Coast Guard Authorization Act provision expanding NMFS' existing IFQ loan authority to authorize "financing the purchase of harvesting rights in a fishery that is federally managed under a limited access system". The final rule expands NMFS' authority by making lending available nationally, to qualified applicants (following existing FFP lending procedures and guidelines), to purchase the privilege to harvest fish in a fishery that is federally managed under a limited access system. A limited access system includes includes purchases of License Limitation Program licenses for groundfish and Charter Halibut Permits, e.g., in addition to quota share and other exclusive harvesting privileges.



The final rule *does not* change the existing IFQ loan program authority, which provides up to \$24 million annually in loans for the North Pacific Halibut/Sablefish and Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab IFQ fisheries. These IFQ loan programs have specific restrictions on participation (i.e., applicants must be entry-level, small vessel fishermen), and the final rule *does not* change those requirements. However, participants in these and other North Pacific fisheries *will be* eligible for loans to finance harvesting rights in any eligible federal fishery under the final rule. Loans made under this new authority, including loans for purchases of quota share in the North Pacific Halibut/Sablefish and Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab fisheries, are not subject to the entry-level, small vessel restrictions specified in the existing IFQ loan programs.

The final rule specifies a process for Councils to comment on the potential or actual effect of a loan program in fisheries under their authority. If you have additional questions please contact Alaska Region/HQ guru Rachel Baker at Rachel.Baker@noaa.gov.

Staff Changes

Longtime SF technical editor **Gabrielle Aberle** was recently appointed as SF's Information Collection Coordinator. This is a voluntary internal transfer for Gabrielle to the vacancy created by Patsy Bearden's retirement in December 2016. The Information Collection Coordinator ensures that SF maintains approval from OMB for approximately 30 information collections; provides expertise and guidance to staff about the requirements of the PRA and other related Federal laws; and works with other AKR staff to provide public access to forms, instructions, and other documents describing information collection requirements. These are very important responsibilities for NMFS and we are grateful that Gabrielle was interested and willing to step into this new role on a permanent basis. We will be recruiting for a new technical editor later in 2018.

We have two Pathways interns with us this summer, **Jennifer Roberts** and **Emma Davis**. The Pathways Internship Program offers federal internship and employment opportunities for current students. Jen is pursuing a M.S. degree in Environmental Policy and Management, with an emphasis in Fish and Wildlife Management from American Public University. Emma is pursuing a B.S. in Environmental Science at Troy University in Troy, Alabama. Jen is primarily working on seabird issues and Emma is primarily working on fishery information collection requirements.

Brandee Gerke will be leaving Federal Service at the end of July for new adventures. Brandee has been a leader throughout her career in Juneau on many highly controversial, complicated, and wide-ranging projects and programs with Sustainable Fisheries and the Protected Resources Division. Many of you became aware of Brandee's superb analytical and management skills when she successfully shepherded the 2014 Steller Sea Lion Biological Opinion to completion in coordination with Sustainable Fisheries. In her time with Sustainable Fisheries, Brandee has led the development of regulations restructuring the observer program, numerous

changes to our bycatch management systems, coordination of numerous exempted fishing permits, and our ecosystem-based fishery management efforts.

We will deeply miss Brandee's outstanding commitment to our work, superb management and analytical skills, and willingness to take on a huge range of complicated and controversial issues with tremendous success.

Attachment 1 -- Status of Regulatory Actions

Changes since October 2017 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>
FMP Amendments								
Amendments 115 (BSAI), 105 (GOA), 49 (KTC), 13 (Salmon), 2 (Arctic) EFH Omnibus (FMP Amendment only) Approved: May 31, 2018	MacLean Mackey Meyer	April 2017	PR: 12/1/17 NOA: 5/14/18	PR: 12/5/17 NOA: 5/14/18	PR: 2/23/18 NOA: 5/25/18	Mar. 5, 2018 83 FR 9257 EOC: 5/4/18	N/A	Notice of Approval June 8, 2018
Amendment 116 (BSAI) LLP endorsement for BSAI trawl limited access yellowfin sole directed fishery Decision Date: August 16, 2018	McCracken Mansfield Smoker	June 2017	PR: 9/29/17	PR: 10/4/17	PR: 5/3/18	May 18, 2018 83 FR 23250 EOC: 7/17/18	June 6, 2018 EOC: 7/6/18	
Amendment 117 (BSAI) 106 (GOA) Reclassifying squid to ecosystem component. FMP Decision Date: June 29, 2018	Stram Mackey Sullivan	June 2017	PR: 11/21/17 FR: 6/5/18	PR: 11/21/17 FR: 6/6/18	PR: 3/21/18	Mar 27, 2018 83 FR 13117 EOC: 5/29/18	April 11, 2018 83 FR 15538 EOC: 5/11/18	

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Regulatory Amendments								
Authorizing a Recreational Quota Entity (RQE) to hold halibut QS	Marrinan Iverson Lepore	October 2016	PR: 5/16/17 FR: 1/28/18	PR: 5/23/17 FR: 2/5/18	PR: 9/6/17	N/A	Oct. 3 2017 82 FR 46016 EOC: 11/17/17	
Authorizing Area 4 IFQ transfer (leasing) to CDQ groups	Marrinan Warpinski Smoker	June 2017	PR: 10/2/17 FR: 3/30/18	PR: 10/19/17 PR: 4/5/18	PR: 1/30/18	N/A	Feb 23, 2018 83 FR 8028 EOC: 3/26/18	
Modify Nontrawl Lead Level 2 observer requirements	Evans Miller Meyer	June 2017	PR: 9/11/17 FR: 3/22/18	PR: 9/13/17 FR: 3/26/18	PR: 11/29/17 FR: 5/25/18	N/A	Dec 27, 2017 82 FR 61243 EOC: 1/26/18	
Close directed fishing for AFA and CR Program sideboard limits that are not large enough to support a directed fishery in the BSAI or GOA	Armstrong Davis M. Watson	February 2018	PR: 5/2/18	PR: 5/7/18		N/A		
Clarifying Regulations for mixing guided and unguided halibut	McCracken Iverson Lepore	April 2018						
Annual Charter Permit Registration	Marrinan Iverson Lepore	April 2018						

Inseason Management Report

Catch during 2018 is through May 26, 2018 and is compared to catch during 2017 through May 27, 2017. All catch amounts are in metric tons. Additional information from daily catch reports and information bulletins are available at: <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries-catch-landings>

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands

Bering Sea Pollock

The 2018 Bering Sea pollock TAC is 1,364,341 mt compared to 1,345,000 mt in 2017. NMFS reallocated 1,900 mt of CDQ and 12,200 mt of the 19,000 mt Aleut Corporation pollock TAC from the Aleutian Islands to the CDQ and non-CDQ Bering Sea TACs. In 2017 and 2018, fishing in the A season continued through the last weeks of April.

Bering Sea	2018 A season allocation	2018 A season catch	Percent taken
Inshore	268,249	253,030	94%
C/P	214,599	213,813	100%
Mothership	53,650	52,510	98%
CDQ	62,250	61,997	100%
Total	598,748	581,350	97%

Salmon in the Bering Sea Pollock Fisheries

Chinook and non-Chinook PSC rates and use are lower in 2018 relative to 2017.

Species	Chinook				Non-Chinook			
	2018		2017		2018		2017	
Year	#	Rate ¹	#	Rate ¹	#	Rate ¹	#	Rate ¹
CDQ	933	1.46%	2,116	3.47%	54	0.06%	238	0.39%
Non-CDQ	7,593	1.50%	19,487	3.89%	334	0.09%	1,592	0.32%
Total	8,526	1.42%	21,603	3.84%	388	0.07%	1,830	0.33%

¹Rate is number of salmon per metric tons of groundfish.

Aleutian Islands Pollock

NMFS approved five catcher vessels and one shoreside processor to participate in the Aleut Corporation's allocation of pollock in the Aleutian Islands. Some directed fishing of the current 2,500 mt allocation has occurred.

Aleutian Islands (AI) Pacific cod

In 2018, fishing effort in the Aleutian Islands is low, and no AI or Western AI closures are projected at this time. Nineteen processors (catcher/processors and shoreplants) have reported 6,879 mt of non-CDQ Pacific cod or 49% of the TAC for Pacific cod in all targets, with seven processors reporting landings in the Pacific cod target. In 2017, directed fishing in the AI remained open all year for sectors open for directed fishing. For the Western AI limit, directed fishing closed July 29, 2017.

Aleutian Islands Pacific cod set-aside

Catch for the AI shoreplant set-aside reached 1,000 mt by February 28, 2018. The set-aside remained in place until March 15, 2018.

BSAI Pacific cod by Sector

BSAI Sector	2018				2017			
	Season allocation	Catch May 26	Season closed	# of vessels May 26	Season allocation	Catch May 27	Season closed	# of vessels May 27
CDQ	13,086	12,628	n/a	37	15,369	16,174	n/a	50
Hook-and-line C/P	45,045	42,821	n/a	24	52,893	52,738	n/a	28
Pot C/P	1,387	1,407	Jan 20	5	1,629	1,626	Jan 25	4
Pot CV >= 60 ft	7,770	7,709	Jan 19	31	9,123	9,378	Jan 25	30
Hook-and-line/Pot CVs < 60 ft	5,027	5,521	Jan 23	23	5,959	6,396	Jan 29	22
Jig	129	0	n/a	0	96	0	n/a	0
Trawl CV ²	34,193	36,486	Feb 11/ Mar 4/ Apr 3	101	40,159	42,978	Feb 23	97
AFA C/P	4,186	3,635	n/a	16	4,712	4,398	n/a	16
Amendment 80 C/P	24,391	13,552	n/a	19	28,647	14,354	n/a	18
Total	135,214	123,759		256	158,587	148,042		265

¹ NMFS reallocated 1,400 mt in 2018 and 1,700 mt in 2017 of the A season jig allocation to the hook-and-line or pot gear less than 60 ft length annual allocation.

² For the trawl CV sector, in 2018, directed fishing for the Bering Sea Pacific cod A season limitation closed on February 11, and directed fishing for the total BSAI A season on March 4, 2018. The B season was open April 1 – April 3, 2018.

Pacific cod target - trawl catcher vessels

In 2018, 65 trawl CVs targeting Pacific cod reported 33,619 mt relative to 56 trawl CVs targeting Pacific cod reporting 37,616 mt in 2017. The 4,425 mt B season allocation became available April 1 for 48 hours. NMFS closed directed fishing on April 3, 2018. In 2018, 6,144 mt of Pacific cod was harvested by 11 CVs delivering to motherships in

the trawl Pacific cod directed fishery. This compares to 18 vessels harvesting 6,963 mt of Pacific cod in 2017.

Pacific cod target - Less than 60 ft hook-and-line and pot CVs

The 2018 annual allocation is 3,627 mt compared to 4,259 mt in 2017. NMFS reallocated 1,400 mt from the jig sector to the less than 60 ft hook-and-line/pot sector for a total 2018 allocation of 5,027 mt. For the 2018 opening, 23 CVs reported 4,789 mt. NMFS closed directed fishing in the BSAI on January 23, 2018. After the federal closure, hook-and-line CVs are continuing directed fishing for Pacific cod inside 3 miles and have reported an additional 732 mt of Pacific cod catch to this sector.

In 2017, there was a 1,700 mt reallocation from the jig sector for a total TAC of 5,959 mt. In 2017, 21 CVs made deliveries and NMFS closed directed fishing February 2, 2017.

BSAI Flatfish (includes CDQ)

The 2018 flatfish total catch is slightly higher relative to 2017. This is primarily driven by higher catch of yellowfin sole, Alaska plaice and other flatfish.

Species	2018			2017		
	Catch	TAC	% Taken	Catch	TAC	% Taken
Alaska plaice	14,419	16,100	90%	9,686	13,000	75%
Arrowtooth flounder	1,113	13,621	8%	1,544	14,000	11%
Flathead sole	4,199	14,500	29%	3,328	14,500	23%
Greenland turbot	117	4,356	3%	336	3,719	9%
Kamchatka flounder	332	5,000	7%	735	5,000	15%
Other flatfish	3,031	4,000	76%	1,538	2,500	62%
Rock sole	21,518	47,100	46%	25,482	47,100	54%
Yellowfin sole	65,858	154,000	43%	61,053	154,000	40%
Total	110,587	258,677	43%	103,702	253,819	41%

BSAI Atka mackerel and Pacific ocean perch (includes CDQ)

The 2018 total catch is almost the same relative to 2017, with higher catch of Atka mackerel and lower catch of Pacific Ocean perch.

Species	2018			2017		
	Catch	TAC	% Taken	Catch	TAC	% Taken
Atka mackerel	28,810	71,000	41%	26,793	65,000	41%
Pacific ocean perch	1,801	35,582	5%	2,324	33,250	7%

Gulf of Alaska

IFQ Halibut and Sablefish season

The IFQ/CDQ halibut and sablefish fisheries opened March 24, 2018 until noon, A.l.t., November 7, 2018.

Pot gear for IFQ sablefish fishery in the GOA

For 2018, 24 vessels have registered for 11,067 pot tags. Thirteen CVs have reported 364 mt of sablefish for 2018 relative to 11 CVs reporting 185 mt of sablefish in 2017. Also, 6 CVs have reported 24 mt of retained halibut in 2018 relative to 8 CVs reporting 9 mt of retained halibut in 2017.

Pacific cod - Western GOA

All sectors reached their A season allocations, except the jig sector which remains open. A season directed fisheries did not open the hook-and-line catcher vessel and trawl catcher/processor sectors.

Sector	2018				2017			
	A season allocation	Catch May 26	A season closed	# of vessels May 26	A season allocation	Catch May 27	A season closed	# of vessels May 27
Hook-and-line C/P	607	592	Mar 16	<3	2,700	2,635	n/a	5
Hook-and-line CV	39	24	Jan 1	24	173	51	n/a	5
Jig	51	19	n/a	4	381	48	n/a	5
Pot CV/CP	1,103	1,208	Feb 1	14	4,904	5,160	Feb 16	35
Trawl CV	1,543	1,349	Feb 23	19	6,861	7,489	Mar 8	29
Trawl C/P	50	C	Jan 20	C	223	C	n/a	C
Total	3,393	3,192		61	15,242	15,383		79

Pacific cod - Central GOA

All sectors opened to directed fishing reached their A season allocations. A season directed fisheries did not open for the jig, trawl catcher vessel, and trawl catcher/processor sectors.

Sector	2018				2017			
	A season allocation	Catch May 26	A season closed	# of vessels May 26	A season allocation	Catch May 27	A season closed	# of vessels May 27
Hook-and-line C/P	248	266	Mar 6	3	1,347	1,225	n/a	7
Hook-and-line CV	562	523	Mar 1	49	3,056	1,821	n/a	83

<50 ft								
Hook-and-line CV >=50 ft	338	357	Mar 14	59	1,840	467	n/a	92
Jig	37	0	Jan 1	0	199	18	n/a	20
Pot CV/CP	1,075	1,161	Feb 14	14	7,349	6,624	Feb 23	58
Trawl CV	1,274	363	Jan 20	47	5,433	3,046	n/a	47
Trawl C/P	121	109	Jan 20	<3	657	C	Jan 20	C
Total	3,653	2,779		172	19,881	13,201		307

In 2017, NMFS reallocated of 1,500 mt from trawl CVs to pot CV/CP.

Pollock

Most of the A and B season allocations have been reached. However, the area 630 B season directed fishery did not open because the allocation did not support the projected effort.

2018 Seasons	610	620	630	640
A season allocation	1,317	27,314	9,025	6,833 (annual)
A season catch	1,080	28,398	9,273	3,894 (annual)
A season closure	Mar 9	Feb 23	Feb 14	n/a
B season allocation	1,317	32,155	4,184	n/a
B season catch	2,034	33,134	91	n/a
B season closure	Mar 12	Mar 23	Mar 10	n/a

Salmon PSC Limits in the GOA

In 2018, Chinook salmon PSC is 5,837 salmon lower and the rate of Chinook salmon PSC use is 7 percent lower relative to 2017 for fisheries with PSC limits.

Chinook Salmon	2018 Limit	2018 PSC (Rate ²)	2017 PSC (Rate ²)
Total	n/a	6,512 (7%)	12,349 (14%)
Western GOA pollock	6,684	177 (6%)	592 (13%)
Central GOA pollock	18,316	5,162 (7%)	9,880 (13%)
Western/Central trawl CV ¹	3,060	692 (5%)	2,125 (9%)
Central Rockfish Program CV	1,200	179 (2%)	34 (0.2%)
Western/Central trawl CP ¹	4,080	0	133 (0%)

¹Includes incentive buffers for 2017 and 2018 Western/Central trawl CV limit (360 Chinook), and Western/Central trawl CP limit (480 Chinook).

Non-Chinook Salmon	2018 PSC (Rate ²)	2017 PSC (Rate ²)
GOA Total	60 (0.06%)	376 (0.3%)

²Rate is number of salmon per metric tons of groundfish.

Halibut Mortality Data

In 2018 relative to 2017, the total halibut mortality in the BSAI is 99 mt higher and 234 mt lower in the GOA. For most areas, gear, and sectors the rate is lower in 2018.

Area, Gear, and Sector	2018			2017		
	Halibut mortality	Groundfish	Rate	Halibut mortality	Groundfish	Rate
BSAI Total	1,141	800,299	0.14%	1,042	791,824	0.13%
Amendment 80	622	136,205	0.46%	471	120,079	0.39%
BSAI trawl limited access	407	594,946	0.07%	444	587,663	0.08%
Non-trawl Pacific cod	56	68,466	0.08%	79	84,082	0.09%
Non-trawl Other	< 1	682	0.00%	0	0	0.00%
CDQ	56	83,182	0.07%	48	88,487	0.05%
GOA Total	464	108,521	0.43%	698	126,348	0.55%
Trawl, Deep-water	404	18,662	2.16%	495	17,171	2.88%
Trawl, Shallow-water	25	80,265	0.03%	119	94,199	0.13%
Hook-and-line CV/CP	35	9,594	0.36%	84	14,978	0.56%
BSAI/GOA Total	1,605	908,820	0.18%	1,740	918,172	0.19%