



IFQ Omnibus Analysis

October 2021

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Purpose and Need, p8

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IFQ stakeholders, the IFQ Committee, and NMFS have identified regulatory revisions that could increase operational efficiency, reduce administrative burden, and clarify how harvesters can meet existing regulatory requirements. In addition, the Council is considering revisions to pot limits and gear tending restrictions also identified through the recent 3-year GOA sablefish pot review to determine whether they are serving their intended purpose.

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The Community Quota Entity (CQE) program was modified in 2014 to include the Aleutian Islands. This allowed the community of Adak to form a CQE and purchase halibut and sablefish quota. Since the implementation of the Aleutian Islands CQE in 2014, Adak has faced challenges being able to harvest its IFQ. The Council is considering temporarily broadening who is eligible to harvest IFQ held by the Adak CQE to provide more opportunities for more fully harvesting its allocation.



Alternatives, p12

Alternative 1: No action

Alternative 2: Revise IFQ program regulations to address the following regulatory clarifications

Element 1: Clarify that “slinky pots” are a legal gear for the IFQ fishery, and revise regulations to allow the use of biodegradable twine in the door latch or pot tunnel.

Element 2: Remove buoy configuration and flagpole requirements in regulation but retain “LP” marking requirement.

Element 3: Authorize jig gear as a legal gear type for the harvest of sablefish IFQ.

Element 4: Revise the pot gear configuration requirements to remove the 9-inch maximum width of tunnel opening so it does not apply when vessel has unfished halibut IFQ onboard.

Element 5: Pot Limits

- Option 1: Change the Pot Limit for WY and/or SEO to
 - Suboption a) 180 pots per vessel
 - Suboption b) 300 pots per vessel

Element 6: Gear Retrieval requirements

- Option 1: Remove the gear retrieval requirement
- Option 2: Modify the gear retrieval requirement to 7 days for all GOA areas
 - Suboption: 3 days in SEO

Alternative 3: Remove Adak CQE residency requirement for a period of five years.

Note: Alternatives 2 and 3 are not mutually exclusive.



History of Action (Alt 2), p8

- April 2015- Council final action on GOA Am 101
 - Implemented in 2016, pot fishing legal for 2017 IFQ season
 - Allowed retention of incidentally-caught halibut, linked to sablefish IFQ.
- October 2018- Council final action on BSAI Am 118
 - Implemented in 2020
 - Directed halibut pot fishery in BSAI (not linked to sablefish IFQ)
- April 2021- GOA sablefish pot review, Council initiated current action



Alternative 1

p12

Status quo, no action



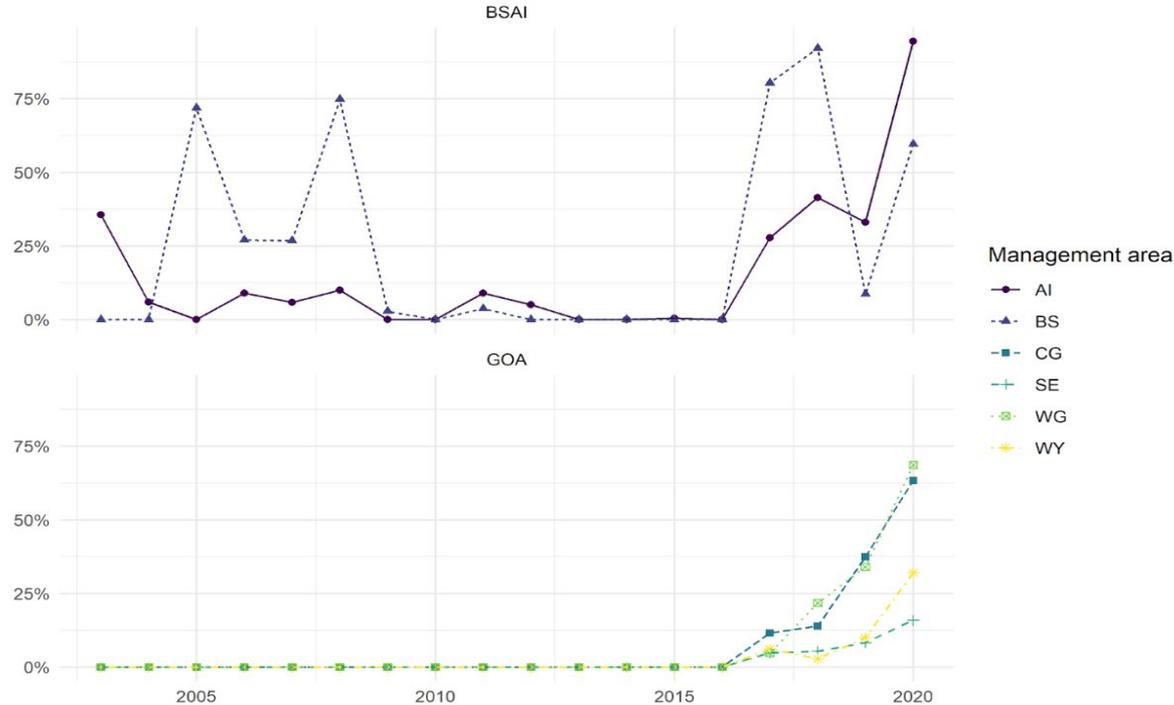
As it relates to Alt 2:

- The IFQ fisheries in the BSAI and GOA would be required to operate as described in regulation.
- Less flexibility for IFQ participants fishing with pot gear than Alt 2
- Table 2-1 on p14 describes status quo vs. Alternative 2



Pots in the IFQ Fisheries, p30

Figure 4-3 Percentage of IFQ sablefish catch by pot gear



Pots in the IFQ Fisheries, p30

Table 4-2 Percent of sablefish IFQ landed by pot/HAL in each GOA subarea

Year	WG		CG		WY		SE	
	% Pot	% HAL						
2017	22%	78%	12%	88%	7%	93%	5%	95%
2018	33%	67%	16%	84%	2%	98%	5%	95%
2019	37%	63%	31%	69%	9%	91%	8%	92%
2020	85%	15%	67%	33%	33%	67%	16%	84%

Source: NMFS Alaska Region Catch Accounting System, data compiled by AKFIN in Comprehensive_BLEND_CA



Slinky pots, p30-32



Photo courtesy of Jane Sullivan, AFSC

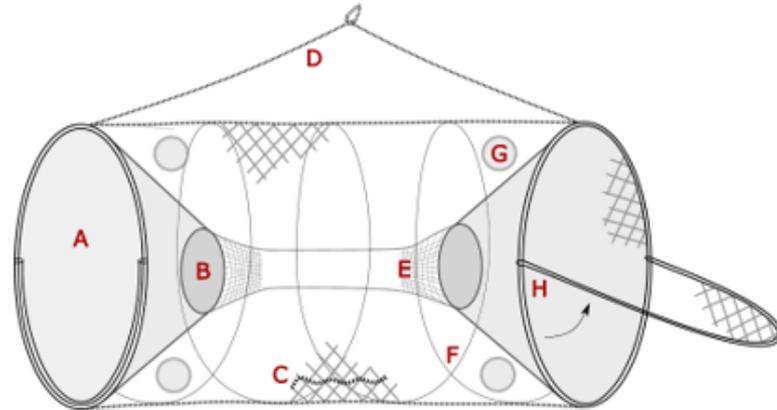


Figure 4-6 Diagram of a slinky pot and components. Courtesy of Jane Sullivan, AFSC.

A = pot end (composed of closed helical spring). B = tunnel opening / tunnel entrance (rigid/hard = stainless steel welded rings or rigid plastic, flexible/soft = pliable stainless steel chord coated with soft plastic, which allows the tunnel opening to elongate in one direction for halibut). C = bio twine/escape panel (aka "rotten cotton"). D = bridle. E = fine mesh tunnel entrance (aka "sock tunnel"). F = slinky/spring coil, which serves as the frame of the pot and also allows it to collapse. G = escape ring (note that there are four escape rings in this diagram). H = door hinge (note that there are doors on both pot ends).



Element 1: Clarify that “slinky pots” are a legal gear for the IFQ fishery, and revise regulations to allow the use of biodegradable twine in the door latch or pot tunnel. p12-13, 44, 47, 48



Photo courtesy of Alexander Stubbs

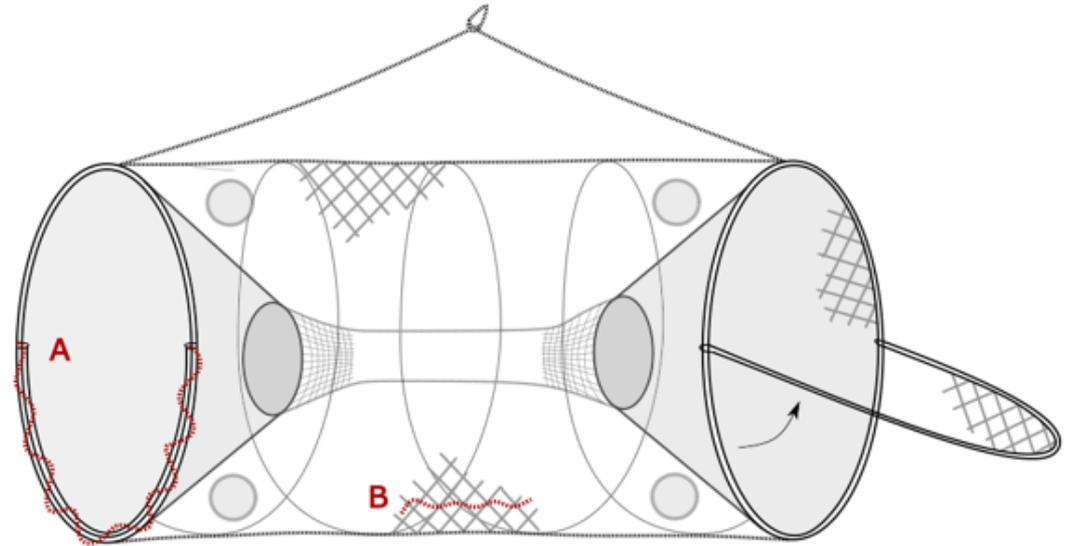


Figure 4-9 Slinky pot with biodegradable twine.

A = Proposed element 1. Cotton biodegradable twine (aka bio twine, rotten cotton) laced around the hinged door opening on the end cap. B = status quo: 18" bio twine "escape panel" cut into pot mesh. Diagram courtesy of Jane Sullivan, AFSC



Element 1: Clarify that “slinky pots” are a legal gear for the IFQ fishery, and revise regulations to allow the use of biodegradable twine in the door latch or pot tunnel. p12-13, 44, 47, 48



Socioeconomic Impacts:

- Increased flexibility to choose most efficient gear design
- No additional burden of adjusting gear



Element 1: Clarify that “slinky pots” are a legal gear for the IFQ fishery, and revise regulations to allow the use of biodegradable twine in the door latch or pot tunnel.

Environmental Considerations and Impacts, p73-75 :

- Concern is ghost fishing
- Efficacy of this escapement mechanism and the status quo mechanism are not well understood
- For optimal performance, two knots (one at each end of the twine), lacing should not overlap in any area (only single wraps, no double wraps)
- If designed with same breaking strength as status quo biodegradable panel = impacts to target/non target species likely minimal



MANAGEMENT, MONITORING, AND ENFORCEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Element 1: Clarify that “slinky pots” are a legal gear for the IFQ fishery, and revise regulations to allow the use of biodegradable twine in the door latch or pot tunnel.

•Increased use of pots and slinky pots

- Slinky pots and the need for data collection (Table 4-15, page 62)
 - Haul and trip-level data are needed to fully understand the use of slinky pots
 - ELandings could provide trip-level data
 - Electronic monitoring and Observer Program could provide haul level data
- Pilot-study experiment, Summer 2021

•Biodegradable Panel

- Council motion limits the scope of this action to IFQ fisheries. Element 1 would create a different gear requirement for different fisheries (i.e., this biodegradable panel configuration would not apply to slinky pots used to harvest Pacific cod)
- If the Council moves forward with recommending a regulatory change to the biodegradable panel, they may also consider if escape rings should be a requirement in IFQ halibut and sablefish fisheries to align federal regulations with state regulations

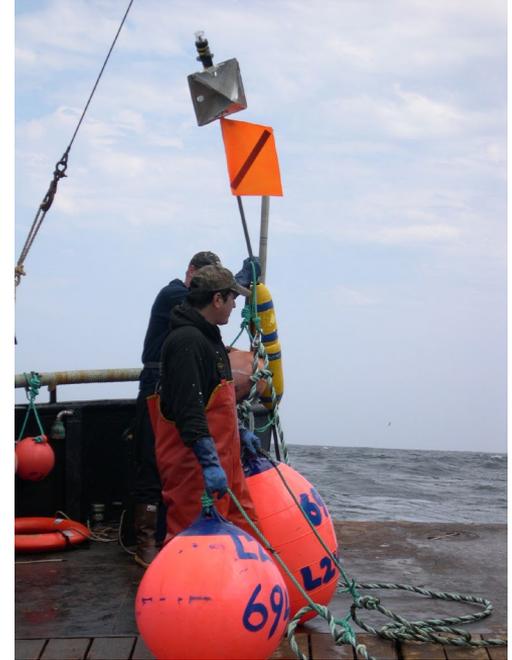


Element 2: Remove buoy configuration and flagpole requirements in regulation but retain “LP” marking requirement. P49-50

	GOA status quo	BSAI status quo	Proposed Alt 2
Element 2: Buoy and flagpole requirements	Each end of a set of longline pot gear deployed to fish IFQ sablefish in the GOA must have attached a cluster of four or more marker buoys including one hard buoy ball marked with the capital letters “LP”, a flag mounted on a pole, and radar reflector floating on the sea surface.	One hard buoy ball marked with the capital letters “LP” and ADFG/FFP number.	Only difference between BSAI and GOA is that radar reflectors would still be required in the GOA and both ends are required to be marked in GOA.

Impacts:

- Fewer gear costs, less space on deck
- Gear may be potentially less visible



MANAGEMENT, MONITORING, AND ENFORCEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Element 2: Remove buoy configuration and flagpole requirements in regulation but retain “LP” marking requirement

- NMFS recommends that any changes are clearly defined and distinguishable from other gear types



Element 4: Revise the pot gear configuration requirements to remove the 9-inch maximum width of tunnel opening so it does not apply when vessel has unfished halibut IFQ onboard. P53-54, EA

Socioeconomic impacts:

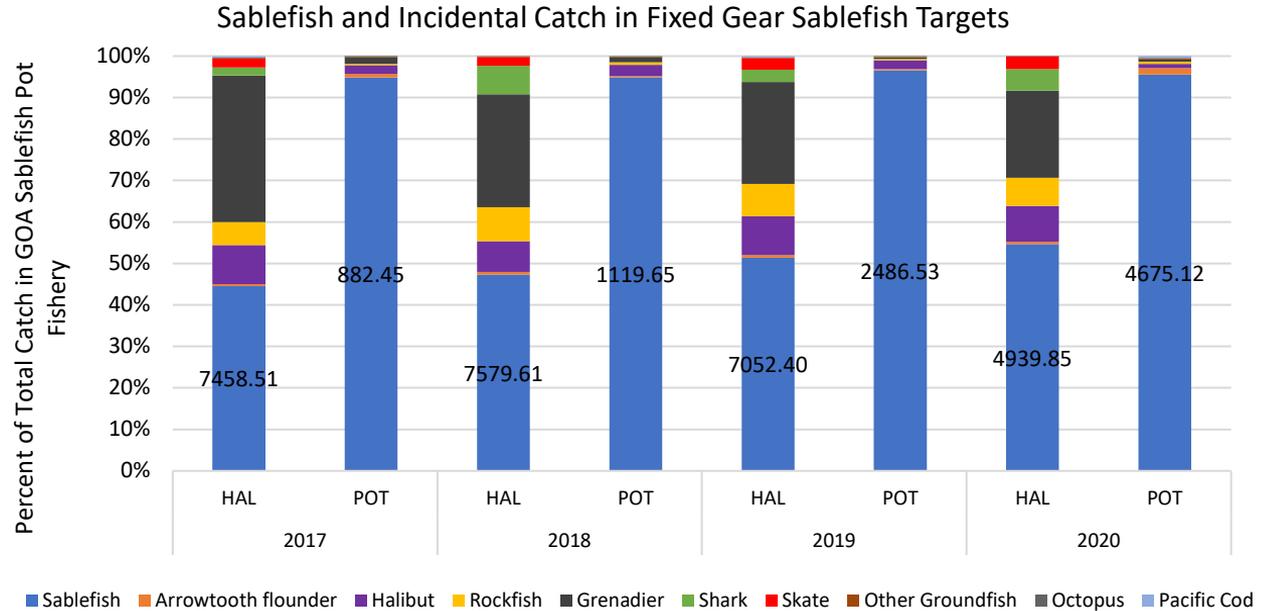
- Increased flexibility for harvesters to choose gear design they find efficient
- Increased ability to target halibut (and potentially larger sablefish)



Element 4: Revise the pot gear configuration requirements to remove the 9-inch maximum width of tunnel opening so it does not apply when vessel has unfished halibut IFQ onboard. P53-54, EA

Environmental impacts:

- Lack of data to determine impacts on catch/size comp but potentially....
- Larger size of halibut and sablefish
- Changes in incidental catch composition & size



MANAGEMENT, MONITORING, AND ENFORCEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Element 4: Revise the pot gear configuration requirements to remove the 9-inch max width of tunnel opening so it does not apply when vessel has unfished halibut IFQ onboard

- This element would only apply to IFQ fisheries and would not change the maximum tunnel opening applicable when harvesting groundfish
- To modify any fishing gear definitions, NMFS must consider the scope of regulatory changes, enforcement, and recordkeeping and reporting requirements



Element 5: Change the pot limit for WY and/or SEO to:
 Suboption a) 180 pots per vessel
 Suboption b) 300 pots per vessel



	GOA status quo	BSAI status quo	Proposed Alt 2
<u>Element 5: Pot limits</u>	Current pot limits: SE- 120 WY- 120 WG – 300 CG- 300	No pot limits	GOA pot limits: SE- 180/300 WY- 180/300 WG-300 CG-300 BSAI – no limits



Element 6: Gear retrieval requirements

Option 1: Remove the gear retrieval requirement

Option 2: Modify the gear retrieval requirement to 7 days for all GOA areas

Suboption: 3 days in SEO



	GOA status quo	BSAI status quo	Proposed Alt 2
<u>Element 6:</u> Gear retrieval requirements	SEO CPs 5 days SEO CVs must remove the gear from the fishing grounds when making a sablefish landing WY/CGOA CV/CPs 5 days WGOA CV/CPs 7 days BSAI no requirements	No gear retrieval requirements	Option 1 – No gear retrieval requirements GOA/BSAI wide. Option 2: GOA- 7 days. BSAI- no requirement <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Suboption: 3 days in SEO



Impacts of Elements 5 and 6

Socioeconomic impacts:

- Increased operational efficiency
- Potential for increased gear conflicts w/ HAL gear

Environmental impacts:

- Non-significant impacts to marine mammals



MANAGEMENT, MONITORING, AND ENFORCEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

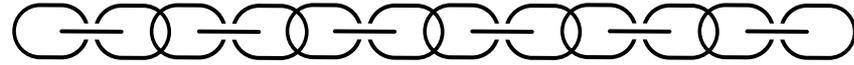
Element 5: Pot Limits and Element 6: Gear retrieval requirements

- No management concerns at this stage of the analysis
- Pot limits will continue to be enforceable through verifying logbook information during dockside, at-sea boardings, or through data collected by observers and longline pot vessels using EM
- Regardless of which options and sub options are selected for Element 5 and 6, enforcement would prefer consistency across IFQ fisheries



Potential for interacting elements

p57



- Consider impacts of Elements chosen together
- Magnitude of cumulative impacts could increase
- Uncertainty highlights need for data collection



Element 3: Authorize Jig Gear for Sablefish IFQ p50-53, EA



- Likely to benefit IFQ holders with small vessels or small amounts of IFQ
- Selective gear type, little incidental catch

Table 4-11 Number of vessels using jig gear by length.

Length overall (LOA)	Number of vessels				
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<26	15	9	8	8	4
26-35	63	55	60	58	40
36-45	112	96	92	81	63
46-55	61	60	59	54	41
56-65	4	2	4	4	4
>66		1	1		
Grand Total	255	223	224	205	152

Source: NMFS Alaska Region Catch Accounting System, data compiled by AKFIN in Comprehensive BLEND_CA. Note: Data include vessels in BSAI and GOA areas, combined.



MANAGEMENT, MONITORING, AND ENFORCEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Additional Considerations (Section 4.9.1.2, page 65)

Daily Fishing Logbook requirements for vessels less than 60 ft LOA using more than one gear type

- NMFS would clarify these regulations so that vessels may record trip information for both pot and hook-and-line gear in the same Daily Fishing Logbook

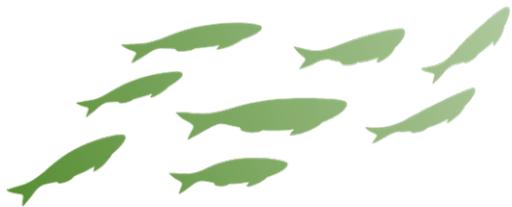
Fishing effort information recorded in the Daily Fishing Logbook

- Fixed gear regulations are challenging to interpret for gear deployment and gear retrieval
- NMFS will conduct an in-depth review of regulations to address this issue and clarify how to record spatial data in the Daily Fishing Logbook for hook-and-line gear

Alternative 2, Element 3: Jig gear

- NMFS does not have management concerns to note for Element 3 at this initial review stage





Questions on Alternative 2?



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Purpose and Need: Adak CQE

3

The Community Quota Entity (CQE) program was modified in 2014 to include the Aleutian Islands. This allowed the community of Adak to form a CQE and purchase halibut and sablefish quota. Since the implementation of the Aleutian Islands CQE in 2014, Adak has faced challenges being able to harvest its IFQ. The Council is considering temporarily broadening who is eligible to harvest IFQ held by the Adak CQE to provide more opportunities for more fully harvesting its allocation.



Alternatives

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Alternative 3: Remove Adak CQE residency requirement for a period of five years.

Note: Alternatives 2 and 3 are not mutually exclusive.



CQE Background, p32

- Implemented in 2004
- 3 performance standards:
 1. *Maximize benefit from use of community IFQ for crew members that are community residents.*
 2. *Ensure that benefits are equitably distributed throughout the community.*
 3. *Ensure that QS/IFQ allocated to an eligible community entity would not be held and unfished.*
- CQEs may purchase catcher vessel QS. IFQ may be transferred to **eligible community residents**



“Eligible community resident” p15

(i) Is a citizen of the United States;

(ii) Has maintained a domicile in a rural community listed in Table 21 to this part for the 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the time when the assertion of residence is made, and who is not claiming residency in another community, state, territory, or country; and



Alternative 3: History of Action, p9

- 2010- ACDC proposal for Adak CQE
- 2014- BSAI Amendment 102 implemented
 - Allowed CQE in Area 4B (Adak)
 - Included 5 year exemption from residency requirement



Alternative 3: Remove Adak CQE residency requirement for a period of five years.

Section 4.5.4

Adak experiencing:

- Population decline
- Few local vessels available
- Processing closures



Alternative 3: Remove Adak CQE residency requirement for a period of five years.

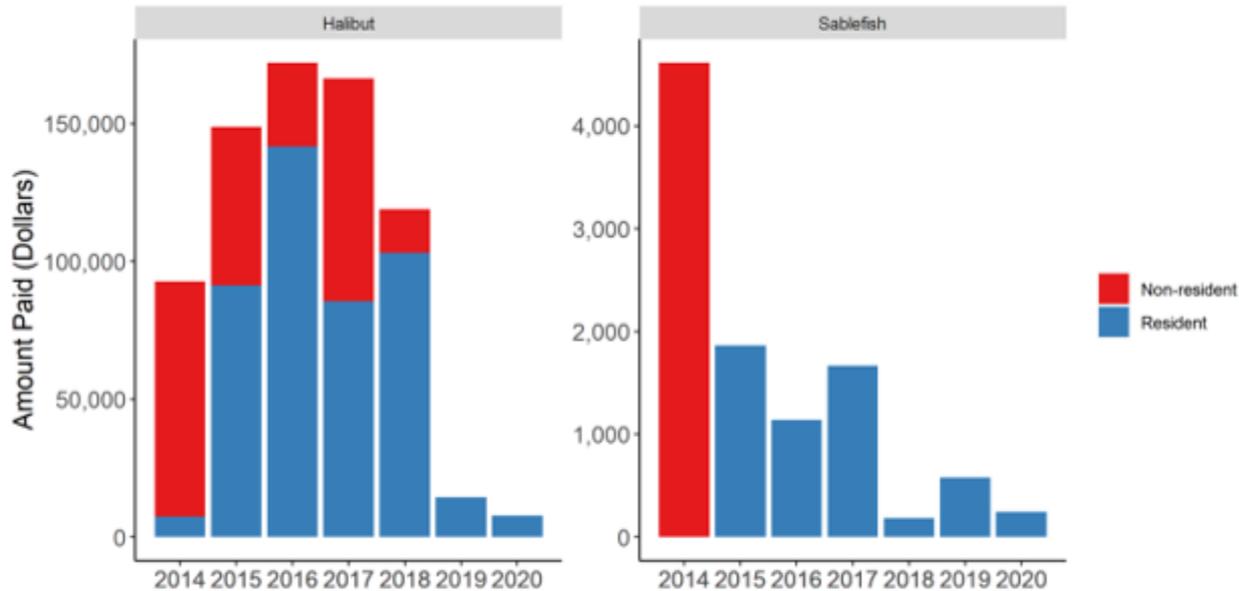


Figure 4-7 Payments made to ACDC
Source: ACDC CQE Annual Reports 2014-2020; ACDC_IFQ_Payments.xlsx

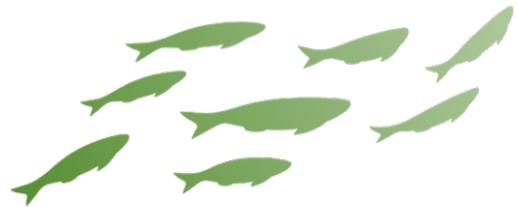


Alternative 3: Remove Adak CQE residency requirement for a period of five years.

Alternative 3: Impacts, Section 4.8 p58

- Larger pool of vessels to harvest IFQ
- Could encourage non-residents to participate in fisheries and eventually become residents
- Impacts influenced by status of processing plant
- Leasing of CQE to non-residents could increase revenue that ACDC would be able to collect and put back into building and stabilizing the fishing economy of Adak
- No significant effects on individual participants in the IFQ fisheries, or residents of non-CQE communities





Questions?



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Clarification points for the Committee/Council

- Element 1- currently would only apply to pots used to fish IFQ
- Element 2- Radar reflectors- current motion continues to include radar reflectors in the GOA. Not required in the BSAI.
- Element 3- authorize jig gear in both GOA and BSAI
- Element 4
 - not linked to sablefish IFQ possession → directed halibut pot fishery (this is how it has been analyzed, consistent with BSAI.
 - consider whether those who do NOT have halibut IFQ and ONLY possess sablefish IFQ can use a larger tunnel opening
- CDQ?

