

C-4 Gulf of Alaska Chinook salmon PSC reapportionment December 11, 2015 Council motion

The Council approves the following changes to the Purpose and Need Statement and selects the following as its preferred alternative:

Regulations establish a Chinook salmon prohibited species catch (PSC) limits of 32,500 Chinook in the Central and Western Gulf of Alaska (GOA) trawl fisheries. Chinook salmon PSC limits are managed under two separate programs; one that apportions 25,000 Chinook to the catcher vessels in the pollock trawl fishery (Amendment 93 to the GOA FMP), and another that apportions 7,500 Chinook to three sectors in the non-pollock trawl fisheries: the catcher/processor (3,600), Rockfish Program catcher vessel (1,200), and the non-Rockfish Program catcher vessel (2,700) sectors (Amendment 97 to the GOA FMP). Closures could occur under the existing Chinook salmon PSC limits.

*The 2,700 Chinook salmon PSC limit on the non-pollock/non-rockfish catcher vessel sector has resulted in a closure in that fishery. Currently, there is no ability for managers to reapportion unused Chinook salmon PSC between the pollock or non-pollock fisheries. Fishery closures could be avoided, or limited, by providing NMFS the authority to use inseason management to reapportion **a limited amount of** unused Chinook salmon PSC between the GOA pollock and non-pollock fisheries. **This** would provide increased management flexibility without exceeding the overall 32,500 Chinook salmon PSC limit **or negating the current caps under Amendments 93 and 97**, increase the likelihood that groundfish resources are more fully harvested, and minimize the adverse socioeconomic impacts of the fishery closures on harvesters, processors, and communities.*

Alternative 1. ~~No action alternative (status quo)~~

Alternative 2. Allow NMFS to reapportion unused Chinook salmon PSC between the GOA pollock and non-pollock sectors based on criteria established for inseason reapportionments ~~(examples in regulations at §679.20)~~. Existing reapportionment procedures from the Rockfish Program catcher vessel to the non-Rockfish Program catcher vessel sector would not be modified.

~~**Option 1.** Only allow reapportionments between the GOA pollock and the non-Rockfish Program catcher vessel sectors (no reapportionment to Rockfish Program catcher vessels).~~

~~**Option 2.** Only allow reapportionments that do not exceed (Suboptions: 10%, 20%, or 30%) of any initial apportionment of a Chinook salmon PSC limit during a calendar year.~~

Option 3. Prohibit the reapportionment of Chinook salmon PSC from catcher vessel sectors to the non-pollock catcher/processor sector.

Option 4. To increase flexibility and options for NMFS Alaska region to manage the different catcher vessel non-pollock Chinook salmon PSC caps, revise the Rockfish Program Chinook salmon PSC reapportionment provision to read as follows:

“If, on October 1 of each year, the Regional Administrator determines that more than 150 Chinook salmon are available in the Rockfish Program catcher vessel sector Chinook salmon PSC limit, the Regional Administrator may reapportion Chinook salmon PSC available to the Rockfish Program catcher vessel sector except for 150 Chinook salmon to the non-Rockfish Program catcher vessel sector Chinook salmon PSC limit.”

Option 5. Only allow a sector to receive a reapportionment that does not exceed ~~(Suboptions: 10% to 50%)~~ of the sector’s initial **(excluding any uncertainty buffer that may have been added as a result of the previous year’s performance per Am 97)** Chinook salmon PSC limit during a calendar year.