

Gulf of Alaska Pollock Trip Limit

Problem Statement (as revised by the Council 10/9/2007)

Section 679.7(b)(2) placed a 136 mt. (300,000 lb) limit for the amount of pollock that can be aboard a catcher vessel in the Gulf of Alaska to meet the objectives of Steller sea lion protection measures, but it places no limit on the number of trips per day, and does not place a limit on the total amount of pollock that can be harvested and landed by a catcher vessel in a day. The trip limit was intended to slow down the race for fish in the pollock fishery by limiting harvests on catcher vessels to 300,000 lb of unprocessed pollock per fishing trip.

Catcher trawl vessels may be circumventing the intent of the trip limit by making multiple 300,000 deliveries in a day. It was generally believed that only one trip per vessel would occur per day when the Council made its recommendation, but the regulation, as written, does not impose a daily limit. Multiple offloadings in a day allows a faster catch rate by those vessels than if only one trip was allowed per day.

Alternative 2: (as revised by the Council 10/9/2007)

- (a) Limit trawl catcher vessels in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) pollock fishery to landing no more than 136 metric tons, through any delivery means, in a calendar day - 12 AM to 12 AM (or 0001 hrs to 2400 hrs); and
- (b) The cumulative amount of pollock harvested from any GOA regulatory area landed by a trawl catcher vessel cannot exceed the daily trip limit of 136 metric tons times the numbers of calendar days the fishery is open in the respective regulatory area.