

NPFMC October 2007 BSAI Salmon Bycatch Motion

Council Bering Sea Salmon Bycatch Motion to address cap formulation and additional recommendations for the analysis:

Forward the following issues to the Salmon Bycatch Working Group, requesting that they consider the following options to address salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fisheries and report back to the Council at their December 2007 meeting.

Chinook and other salmon bycatch caps representing the following years be developed:

Cap formulation alternatives:

1. Establish Chinook and non-Chinook salmon caps based on:
Average historical bycatch
 - i. 3 years (2004-2006)
Option: 20% increase for non-Chinook
 - ii. 5 years (2002-2006)
 - iii. 10 years (1997-2006)
Option: drop year 2000
Option: drop year 2006
2. Set cap relative to salmon returns: (To determine specific salmon stock impacts from bycatch)
3. The 2007 Incidental Take number (87,500) will be included in the analysis and serve as the upper limit cap for Chinook salmon bycatch in the analysis.
4. International treaty considerations for Chinook salmon
Average historical bycatch pre-2002
 - i. 3 years (1999-2001)
 - ii. 5 years (1997-2001)
 - iii. 10 years (1992-2001)

Status quo in the alternatives will be described as the VRHS system with the existing exemption to the CSSA closures. An option will be explicitly added to the alternatives for new closures which would likewise allow for an exemption for the fleet to these new closures.

Additional rate-based breaks will be considered in formulating criteria for identifying closures such that a more defined and consistent range of rate breaks are considered (e.g. 0.1, 0.2, 0.3, 0.4,...)

Staff will develop a method to apportion caps by closure area in a way that minimizes bycatch (e.g. to evaluate separate trigger caps by closure area apportioned according to the overall limit) as well as a single cap which triggers multiple areas.

The Work Group will examine dividing the final cap by sectors (50% shore based CV fleet; 10 % for the mothership fleet and 40% for the offshore CP fleet). The sector allocations of Chinook salmon bycatch will be divided up by pollock coops within each sector based upon the percent of total sector pollock catch their coop allocation represents. When the Chinook salmon coop cap is reached, the coop must stop fishing

for pollock and may lease their remaining pollock to another coop (inter-cooperative transfer) within their sector for that year (or similar method to allow pollock harvest with individual coop accountability).

The Work Group will also consider developing a new suboption in conjunction with a hard cap or trigger that proposes alternative management measures to remain beneath a proposed cap (with or without closed areas).

The Work Group should be expanded to include a State of Alaska Board of Fisheries member.

Lastly, the Council adopts the proposed Problem Statement as modified by the AP.