

MPAs for Fishery Management off Alaska

David Witherell
North Pacific Fishery Management Council



www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/npfmc
David.Witherell@noaa.gov



FMPs, Exclusive Economic Zones by Regional Council

Nationwide:
 47 FMPs, 909 Fish Stocks
 Dept. Commerce
 2 Secretarial FMPs

North Pacific
 Fishery Mgt. Council
 5 FMPs

Pacific
 Fishery Mgt. Council
 4 FMPs

New England
 Fishery Mgt. Council
 7 FMPs





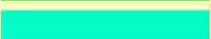



Mid-Atlantic
 Fishery Mgt. Council
 6 FMPs

South Atlantic
 Fishery Mgt. Council
 7 FMPs

Western Pacific
 Fishery Mgt. Council
 5 FMPs

Gulf Of Mexico
 Fishery Mgt. Council
 7 FMPs

Caribbean
 Fishery Mgt. Council
 4 FMPs

Fishery Management Councils	
	North Pacific
	Caribbean
	Pacific
	Gulf of Mexico
	South Atlantic
	Mid-Atlantic
	Western Pacific
	New England



The Fishing Fleet Managed by the Council

Catcher Vessels (deliver shoreside)

- 150 Trawlers: **pollock, cod, flatfish, rockfish**
- 500 Longliners: **cod, halibut, sablefish**
- 75 Jig Gear vessels: **cod**
- 300 Pot Gear vessels: **cod, crabs**

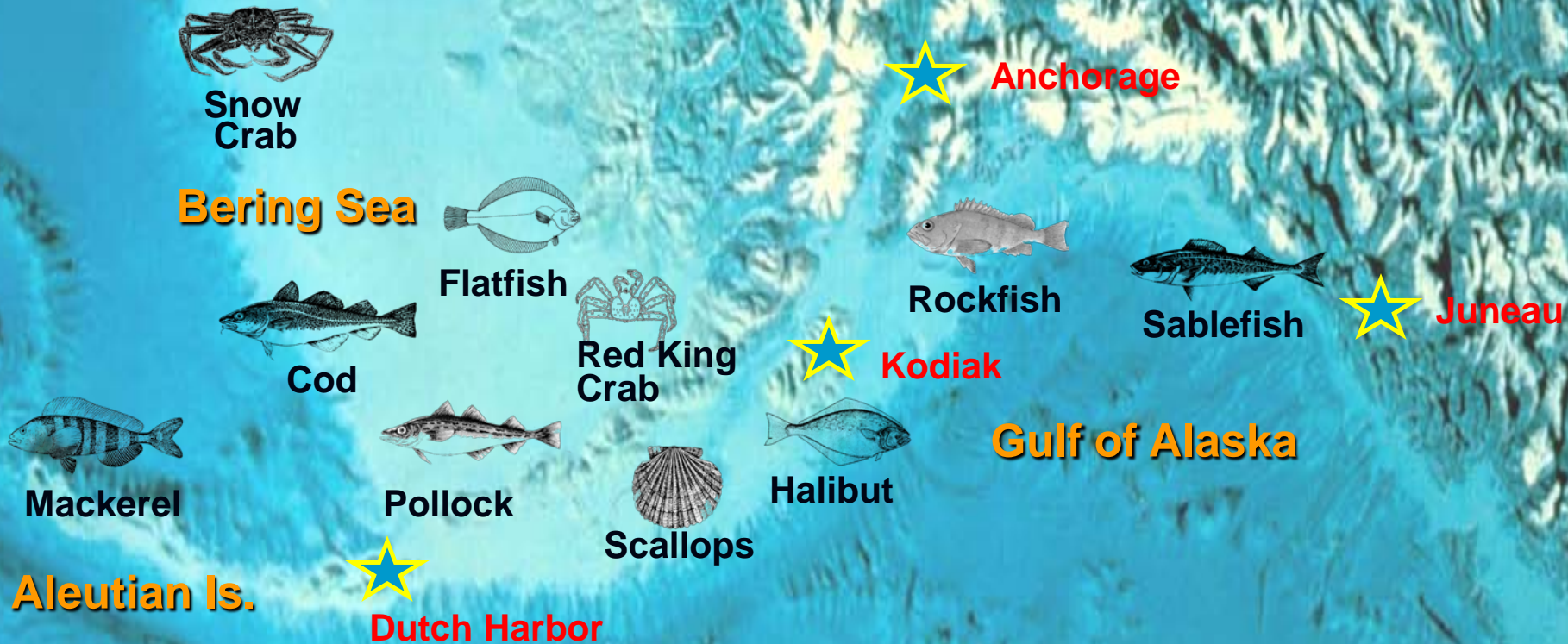
Catcher-Processors (process at sea)

- 35 Trawlers: **pollock, flatfish, mackerel, rockfish**
- 50 Longliners: **cod, sablefish, turbot**
- 10 Pot Gear vessels: **cod, crabs**
- 5 Dredge Gear vessels: **scallops**



Note: vessel numbers are rounded numbers based on recent participation.

Major Fish Species Managed by the Council



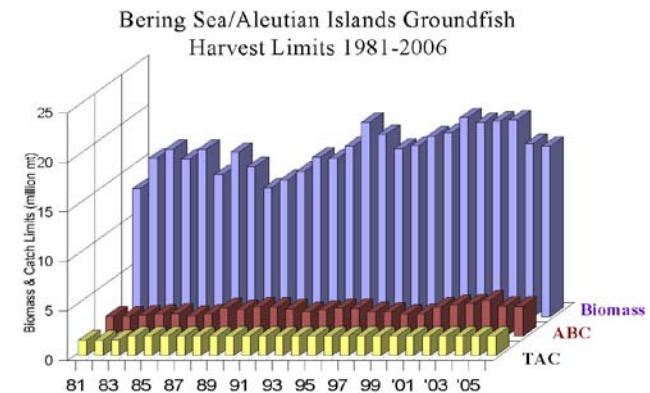
Alaska Fisheries are Well Managed

Fish stocks are healthy: No overfishing; No overfished groundfish.

Reliance on scientific advice, using an ecosystem-based approach to management.

Comprehensive monitoring.

Viable & profitable fisheries.



Total area coverage for all areas that appear to meet MPA Criteria

EEZ = 1,019,261 nm²

Closed Areas = 988,817 nm²

97% covered by MPAs

Pink = No Federal
Fishery MPAs

Salmon closure area

Closed under FMP to salmon
fishing with nets

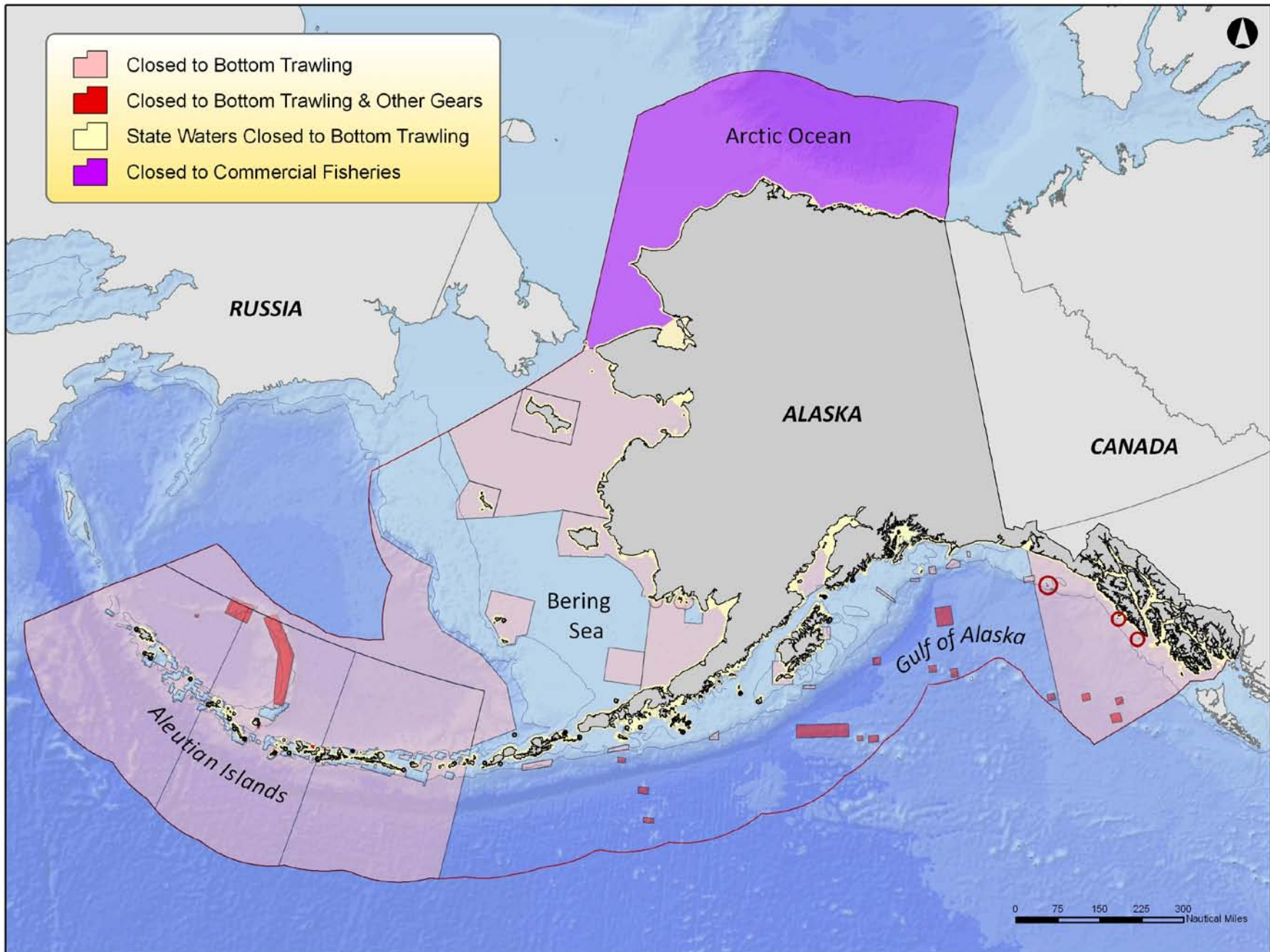
**Southeast Alaska
Trawl Closure**

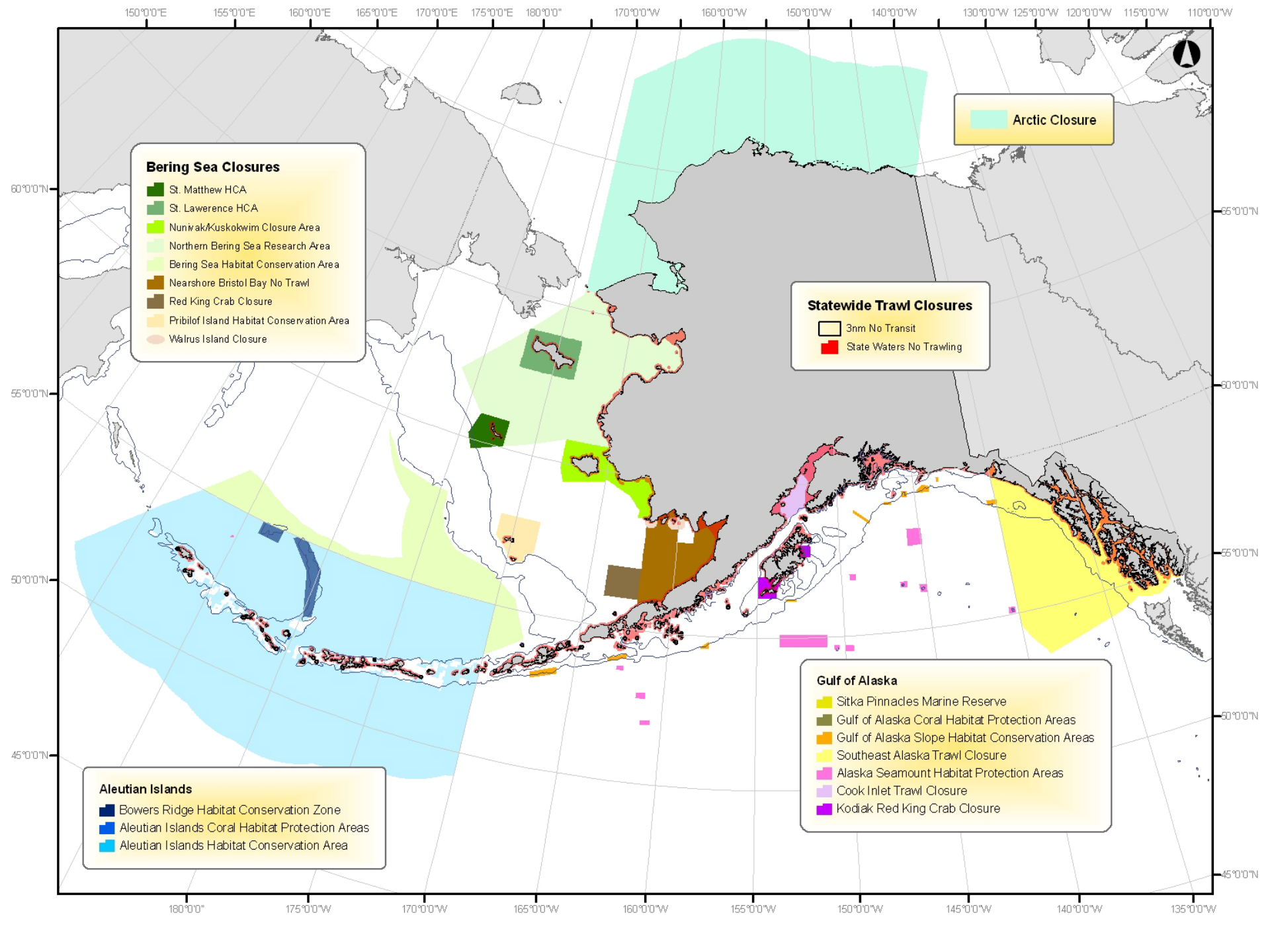
Closed under FMP to
all trawling

0 90 180 270 360
Nautical Miles



175°00'E 180°00' 175°00'W 170°00'W 165°00'W 160°00'W 155°00'W 150°00'W 145°00'W 140°00'W 135°00'W





Bering Sea Closures

- St. Matthew HCA
- St. Lawrence HCA
- Nunivak/Kuskokwim Closure Area
- Northern Bering Sea Research Area
- Bering Sea Habitat Conservation Area
- Nearshore Bristol Bay No Trawl
- Red King Crab Closure
- Pribilof Island Habitat Conservation Area
- Walrus Island Closure

Arctic Closure

Statewide Trawl Closures

- 3nm No Transit
- State Waters No Trawling

Aleutian Islands

- Bowers Ridge Habitat Conservation Zone
- Aleutian Islands Coral Habitat Protection Areas
- Aleutian Islands Habitat Conservation Area

Gulf of Alaska

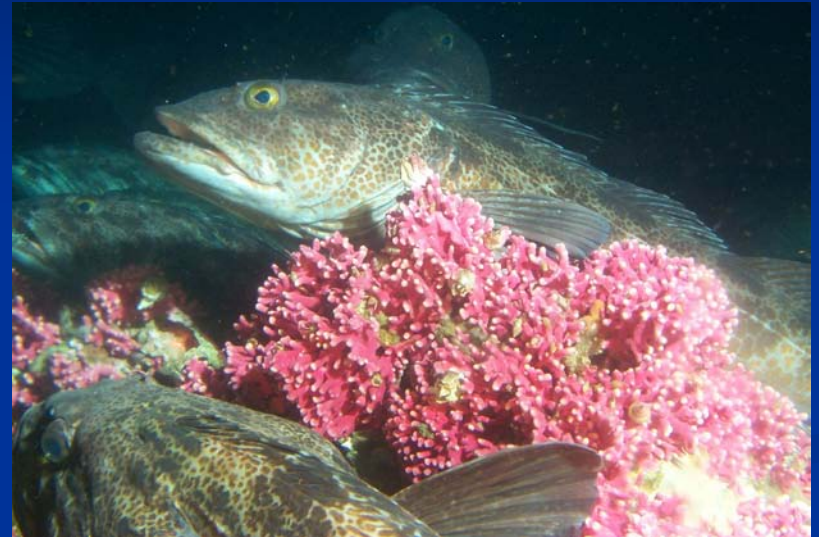
- Sitka Pinnacles Marine Reserve
- Gulf of Alaska Coral Habitat Protection Areas
- Gulf of Alaska Slope Habitat Conservation Areas
- Southeast Alaska Trawl Closure
- Alaska Seamount Habitat Protection Areas
- Cook Inlet Trawl Closure
- Kodiak Red King Crab Closure

Status of region re: MPA system

NMFS sent a letter to the Council in May, with list of eligible sites.

Initial list of eligible sites from MPA Center contained errors and omissions.

Council will review discussion paper and revised list of potential eligible sites in December, and decide how to proceed.



Issues of Concern:

1. Avoid Harm Provision

- Avoid harm provision = new requirement. How do we know if our regulations meet this requirement for our own MPAs? And for evaluating fishing regulatory changes on other agency MPAs, how do we do that if we don't know what resources are protected by the MPA?
- One suggestion: The resource(s) protected by each MPA should be listed, and an evaluation of the avoid harm provision should be made at initial listing, and re-evaluated at every regulatory change.

Issues of Concern:

2. Gap Analysis

- Gap Analysis - entire EEZ will be covered many times over to meet all 21 PCOs using only MPAs. When is enough, enough?
- SSC is the peer review process pursuant to the Information Quality Act. The SSC needs to evaluate the Gap analysis to see if it represents the best scientific information available.



Issues of Concern:

3. Council Authority

- Only the Councils, not NMFS, have the authority to initiate action to develop new fishery MPAs, modify or eliminate them. Yet under MPA framework, NMFS given authority to override Councils recommendations re: MPAs in system.
- Once an MPA is on the list, it is only a presidential signature away from being a national monument [WPFMC experience].

