



NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE



For more information on the
Gulf of Alaska Rockfish
Program:

<http://www.alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/goarat/default.htm>

Catch Share Spotlight No. 11

Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish

Vital Stats

First year: 2007

Type of Catch Share Program: 5-year pilot Cooperative Program

Management units: Various rockfish species, sablefish, and Pacific cod

Vessels / Gear types: Mid-sized trawl and fixed gear vessels with shore-based and at-sea fleets; divided into catcher vessel and catcher/processor sectors.

Available Trend Data

Season length:

Before Program: 3 weeks

After Program: May 1 - November 15

Ex-vessel value:

Pac. Ocean Perch, Before Program (2005): ~ \$645,521

Pac. Ocean Perch, After Program (2007): ~ \$1,481,492 (worth \$1,395,449 in 2005)

N. Rockfish, Before Program (2005): ~ \$293,897

N. Rockfish, After Program (2007): ~ \$548,424 (worth \$516,572 in 2005)

Consolidation: None

Stock Status:

Before Program (2005): Overfishing: NO; Overfished: NO

After Program (2007): Overfishing: NO; Overfished: NO

Nature of Harvest Privilege

Eligibility: Congress provided specific direction to the Council specifying the years that could be used to establish harvester and processor eligibility. Vessels with landings in the Central Gulf rockfish fishery between 1996 and 2002, and a valid limited license permits with trawl and Central Gulf endorsements are eligible to receive quota share. Processors with rockfish deliveries during 1996 through 2000 are eligible to receive catch from catcher vessels. Each year, 95 percent of the catch limit is assigned for eligible program participants, and 5 percent is set aside for persons not eligible for the program.

Duration: 2007-2011; currently under consideration for reauthorization in 2011.

Transferability: Cooperatives within a sector can transfer shares among each other, subject to consolidation limits. Under the program, catcher/processor cooperatives are not permitted to receive quota transfers from catcher vessel cooperatives. Catcher vessels can however receive quota from the catcher/processor sector. This 'one-way door' is intended to protect interests of shore plants and communities, in the event that catcher/processor production efficiencies exceed those of the shore-based sector.

Accumulation: No person may hold more than five percent of the catcher vessel or more than 20 percent of the catcher/processor quota. No catcher vessel cooperative may harvest more than 30 percent, and no processor may process more than 30 percent of the catcher vessel quota.



For additional Catch Share Spotlights in this series go to:

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/catchshares>

Questions, comments or need more information? Contact us via email at:

catchshares@noaa.gov

Initial Allocation: Each cooperative receives allocations of target rockfish, incidental catch species, and a Pacific halibut bycatch limit from the sector's allocation based on the target rockfish catch histories of its members. The Program uses catch history during the 1996-2002 Central GOA rockfish fisheries (best 5 out of 7 years), and processor history during 1996-2000 (best 4 out of 5 years) as the basis for establishing initial quota share awards.

Management

Identified Costs: N/A

Cost recovery: None

Management: Under the program, catcher vessels are required to maintain 100% observer coverage. The catcher vessel sector is currently working with NOAA Fisheries to develop a video monitoring program that, if successful, could reduce observer costs.

Summary

Gulf of Alaska (GOA) rockfish were historically caught in a limited entry derby fishery during 3 weeks in the middle of the busy Alaska salmon season. Product quality was low, and bycatch and discard rates were high. In 2003, Congress directed the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to create a pilot program for management of the rockfish fisheries in the Central GOA. Following this directive, in 2005 the Council adopted a share-based management program under which the total allowable catch is apportioned as exclusive shares to cooperatives or to a smaller limited access fishery for those fishery participants that chose not to participate in the cooperative. Only those participants in a fishery cooperative receive the benefits of a slower and more rationalized fishery.

The Rockfish Pilot Program is a 5-year pilot project effective from 2007 through 2011 which permits harvesters to form voluntary cooperative associations and receive an exclusive harvest privilege to groundfish species in the Central GOA. Processors can form associations with inshore harvester cooperatives for exclusive processing opportunities. Each cooperative manages its own allocation. The 5-year program targets the fisheries for Pacific ocean perch, Northern rockfish and pelagic shelf rockfish (a complex that includes dusky, dark, yellowtail and widow rockfish), sablefish, thornyhead rockfish, shortraker rockfish, rougheye rockfish, and Pacific cod.

Although still early, the pilot program has achieved some success. Most notably, catcher vessel incidental catch of halibut has been reduced substantially, as have discards. Participants report that cooperative management has allowed them to adopt conservation-minded practices without sacrificing their overall opportunity in the fishery. A longer fishing season also allows fishermen to produce more high-value products, and deliver their catches to processors at times that do not conflict with the salmon season.