

**2001**

**CATCHER VESSEL INTERCOOPERATIVE**

**FINAL REPORT**

**TO THE**

**NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT**

**COUNCIL**

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## Section 1. Overview

### 1.1 Purpose of the Catcher Vessel Intercooperative Report

The AFA Catcher Vessel Intercooperative Report is a companion report to the nine individual catcher vessel cooperative reports required by the American Fisheries Act. Because regulations regarding sideboard fisheries in which AFA catcher vessels participate allocate fishery limits to the catcher vessel cooperatives in the aggregate, not on a coop-by-coop basis, the coops have established an intercooperative agreement. While the individual coop reports track the annual activities of each coop, they do not provide a summary of all AFA catcher vessel harvest in the Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska fisheries. Therefore, the Catcher Vessel Intercooperative Report serves as the summary of the aggregate fishing activities by the nine AFA catcher vessel cooperatives and provides the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council with a simple means of evaluating the AFA catcher vessel fleet's compliance of sideboard regulations.

Additionally, this report provides the NPFMC with information on the benefits of cooperative style pollock fishing verses the open access "race for fish" style that took place prior to enactment of the American Fisheries Act.

### 1.2 The 2001 Catcher Vessel Intercooperative Agreement

The nine AFA catcher vessels cooperatives renewed the Intercooperative Agreement for 2001 with very few changes from the 2000 Agreement. The most significant addition to this year's contract was language that directed the coops to exercise their best efforts towards minimizing the bycatch of salmon and herring in the directed pollock fishery. To this end, the coops agreed to release their bycatch

data to the Intercoop Monitoring Agent (Sea State, Inc.) and the Intercoop Manager (United Catcher Boats) to use as is appropriate to assist the fleet in their efforts to reduce chum salmon bycatch. These changes in the agreement in 2001 established an industry wide bycatch program aimed at reducing Chum salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery.

The 2001 Agreement also recognized that the catcher vessel coops would begin operating under the Cod Allocation Agreement reached on June 1, 2000 this year. The purpose of the Cod Allocation Agreement is to distribute BSAI cod sideboard amounts among the catcher vessel coops based on catch histories developed over the years 1995, 1996, and 1997 while the overall aggregate sideboard limit is based only on 1997 catch. The Cod Allocation Agreement is not renewed annually, but is a “stand-alone” document. It does not terminate unless: 1) the expiration or modification of the AFA pollock allocations among the inshore, mothership, and catcher/processor sectors; or 2) termination of either the mothership catcher vessel or “1700 mt” BSAI cod sideboard exemptions; or 3) rationalization of the BSAI cod trawl catcher vessel fishery.

The final significant addition addresses concerns by the NPFMC in regards to the leasing of BSAI pollock by vessels exempt to GOA sideboard restrictions. This new section acknowledges that Gulf exempt vessels are not permitted to lease BSAI pollock allocations in order to create an opportunity to participate in Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries beyond their historic catch.

The primary elements of the Intercoop Agreement provides for the following:

- 1) Allocation, monitoring, and compliance of the BSAI and GOA sideboard limits and PSC caps among the AFA catcher vessel fleet;
- 2) Allocation, monitoring, and compliance of BSAI pollock harvest inside the Steller sea lion conservation area;
- 3) Establishment of penalties for coops that exceed pollock and sideboard allocations;

- 4) Provide for the harvest of BSAI pacific cod by the “under 1700mt” exempt vessels while complying with AFA PSC limits;
- 5) Establishment and monitoring of sideboard species transfers between cooperatives;
- 6) Promote compliance of the Council’s recommended sideboard measures and PSC limits while allowing for the maximum harvest of AFA pollock and sideboard allocations; and
- 7) Promote reduction of PSC bycatch in the BSAI pollock fishery.

The 2001 Intercoop Agreement can be found in Appendix 1.

## Section 2. Bering Sea Pollock Fishery

### 2.1 Allocations and Harvest

The Bering Sea pollock TAC for 2001 was set at 1,400,000 metric tons. After the 10% reduction for the Community Development Quota of 140,000 metric tons, the remaining 1,260,000 metric tons was reduced by 4% to create an Incidental Catch Allowance (ICA) of 50,400 metric tons. The initial amount of pollock available to the directed fishery, 1,209,600 metric tons (Directed fishing allowance or DFA), is then divided among the various AFA harvest sectors. The inshore sector allocation is 50% of the DFA, the mothership sector is 10%, and the catcher/processor sector is 40%. Catcher vessels that historically delivered pollock to the c/p sector are allocated 8.5% of the c/p sector's share (3.4% of the DFA). On September 21<sup>st</sup> NMFS determined that 12,000 metric tons of the ICA could be allocated to the directed pollock fishery. The ICA release was divided by NMFS pro-rata to the five pollock sectors and the Intercoop in turn allocated the inshore sector's 6,000 metric tons to the inshore coops based on their respective percentages.

The total number of AFA qualified catcher vessels for 2001 is 112. The inshore sector has ninety-nine qualified vessels of which 96 are members of inshore coops. The remaining three boats made up the "Open Access" category and accounted for 0.304% of the inshore allocation. The mothership sector has a total of 20 qualified vessels of which fourteen are "dual qualified" for both the mothership and inshore sector fisheries. Seven catcher vessels are qualified under the catcher/processor sector.

Table 2.1 provides information on the number of members in each coop, each coop's allocation percentage, their annual allocation as provided by the July 17<sup>th</sup> AFA Emergency Rule, their adjusted allocation after the pollock ICA release on Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>, each coop's total directed pollock actual harvest, and the amount of pollock over/under the adjusted allocation. None of the catcher vessel coops

exceeded their annual pollock allocation; consequently no Intercoop enforcement penalties were assessed.

**Table 2.1**

Data Source: 2001 CV Coop preliminary reports.

<b>2001 AFA CATCHER VESSEL COOPERATIVES' ALLOCATIONS AND DIRECTED FISHING HARVESTS</b>						
<b>Cooperative</b>	<b>Number of Vessels in Coop</b>	<b>Annual Allocation Percentage</b>	<b>Annual Allocation</b>	<b>Annual Allocation Including ICA Release</b>	<b>2001 Harvest in Metric Tons</b>	<b>Over / (Under) Allocation</b>
<b>INSHORE COOPS</b>						
Akutan Catcher Vessel Assoc.	33	28.682%	173,466	175,187	174,923	(264)
Arctic Enterprise Assoc.	4	5.858%	35,431	35,782	35,745	(37)
Northern Victor Fleet Cooperative	12	8.326%	50,358	50,857	50,696	(161)
Peter Pan Fleet Cooperative	9	1.762%	10,657	10,763	10,424	(339)
Unalaska Fleet Cooperative	11	12.255%	74,121	74,856	74,816	(40)
UniSea Fleet Cooperative	13	24.411%	147,640	149,104	149,013	(91)
Westward Fleet Cooperative	14	18.400%	111,286	112,390	111,818	(572)
Inshore Totals	96	99.694%	602,959	608,939	607,435	(1,504)
<b>OFFSHORE COOPS</b>						
Mothership Fleet Cooperative	20	10% of DFA	120,960	122,160	121,330	(830)
High Seas Catchers Cooperative	7	3.4% of DFA	41,126	41,534	Details of the HSCC pollock harvest are covered in the joint PCC and HSCC report	

## 2.2 Cooperative Fishing vs. The Race for Fish

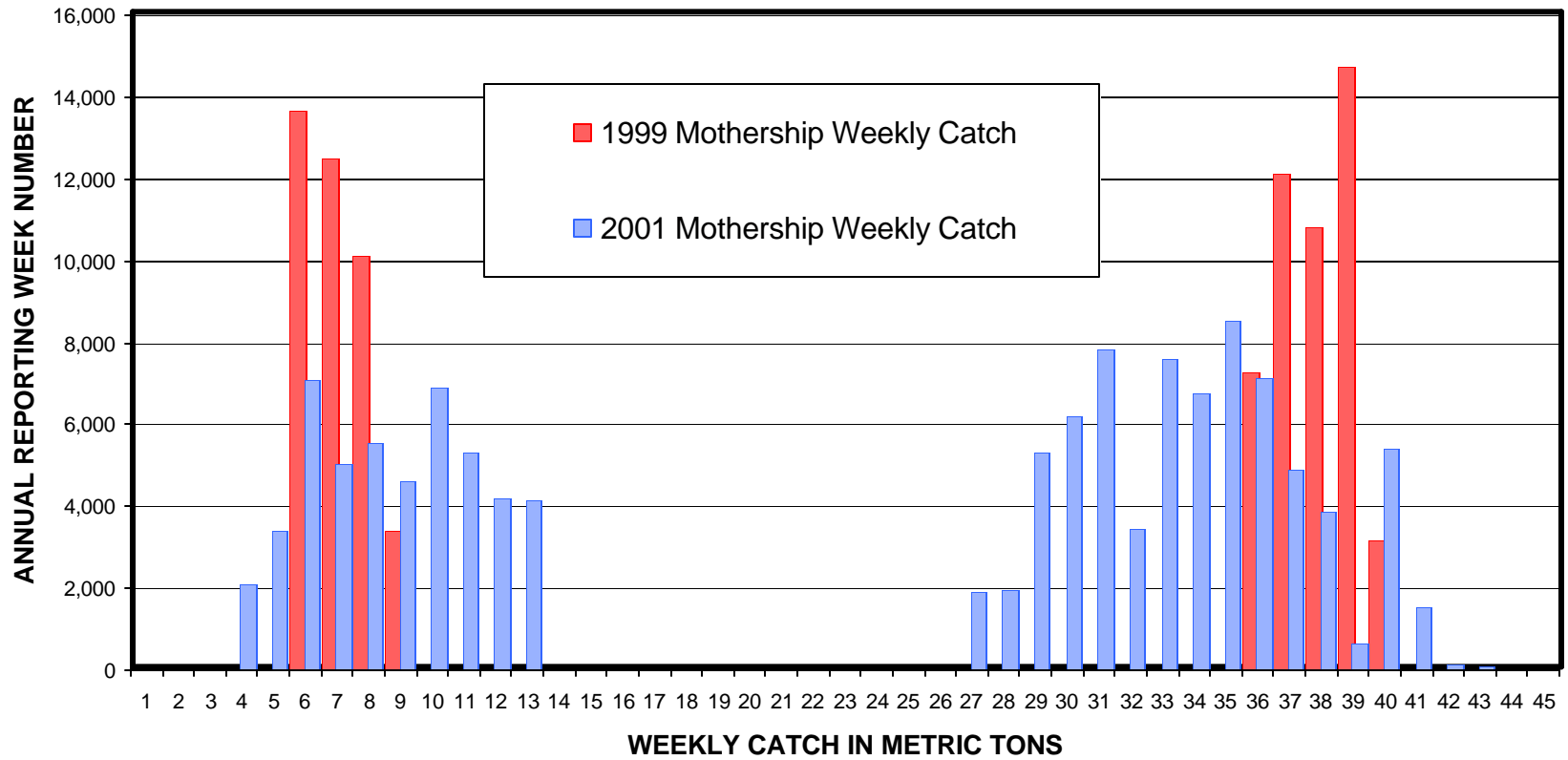
The American Fisheries Act has produced dramatic differences in the temporal characteristics of the pollock fishery. Graphs 2.2a and 2.2b are a comparison of weekly removals by the mothership and inshore sectors for the years 1999 and 2001. 1999 was the last year of the Olympic open access fishery for these sectors the first year the catcher vessels operated under the revised pollock sector splits created by the AFA. The graphs clearly show how the concentrated the fishing effort under an Olympic system was dispersed under the current coop structure.

Daily removals are much lower under the coop regime than the open access “race for fish”. This is especially the case for the mothership sector where the 1999 A season lasted 17 days with an average of over 2,300 mt/day of pollock delivered and a 27 day B/C season that averaged over 1,700 mt/day delivered. Daily removals for the mothership coop during the 2001 A/B season averaged just over 800 mt and the C/D season daily removals averaged close to 700 mt.

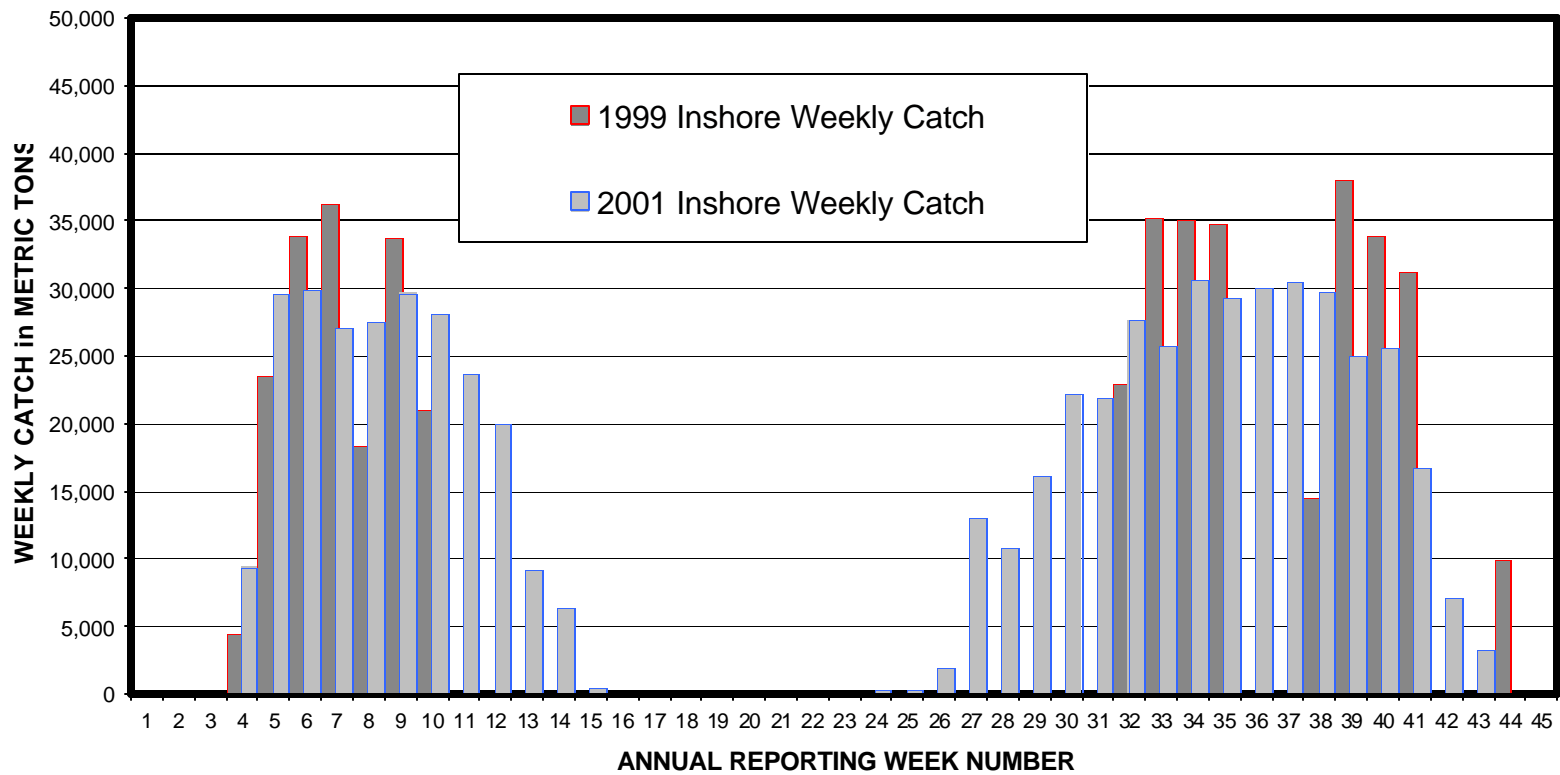
The comparison of average daily inshore harvest made in 1999 and 2001 is not as dramatic as the differences seen in the mothership sector, however there is a significant change. The 1999 open access inshore A1 and A2 seasons lasted a total of 34 days with an average daily removal of over 5,100 mt. The C/D season covered 48 fishing days and averaged over 5,200 mt/day. The seven AFA inshore coops averaged just over 3,000 mt of pollock per day in the 2001 A/B season and 2,800 mt in the C/D season.



**Graph 2.2a 1999 and 2001 BERING SEA MOTHERSHIP POLLOCK FISHERIES**



**Graph 2.2b 1999 and 2001 BERING SEA INSHORE POLLOCK FISHERIES**



## 2.3 Salmon Bycatch Avoidance

In 2001 all ten AFA cooperatives, catcher vessel and catcher/processors alike, entered into the Salmon Bycatch Management Agreement with the purpose of reducing chum salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea C/D pollock fishery. A copy of the agreement can be found in Appendix II. The agreement allows the fleet to monitor and manage its bycatch in two regions of the Bering Sea, one northwest and another southeast, of the Pribilof Islands. Each week, when triggered the equivalent of one ADF&G Stat Area block (30 minutes of latitude by one degree of longitude) in each region is subject to a “Savings Closure”. (A single stat area equals approximately 1,000 square miles.) Additionally, each vessel is categorized into one of three tiers based on their coop’s seasonal bycatch performance. A coop’s tier status is updated weekly and dictates their access to the following week’s Savings Closure areas. Additionally, the coops are required to submit tow-by-tow information to the program monitor. In the event of extremely high bycatch, vessels are required to provide the entire AFA fleet with an immediate report of the “hot-spot”.

The fishing fleet’s participation in both the reporting of and the avoidance of high bycatch areas was very successful. The “policing” of the weekly Savings Closures was left to the fleet and also checked by VMS observations. No violations of the restricted areas was reported, in fact in most cases fishermen had already left the high bycatch areas before the closure deadline. This is a result of the fleet’s increased daily vessel-to-vessel communication and the overall awareness of bycatch avoidance brought about by the creation of the program.

Providing a “proof positive” result of the salmon program is a very difficult task because reporting fish that are caught is much easier than fish that are not. However, the best initial case for the success of the 2001 program is made by the season’s average bycatch rate of .062 chum salmon for each ton of pollock harvest. With the exception of 1995, which was an extremely low bycatch year, the 2001

C/D season is the lowest of the past eight non-roe seasons. Table 2.3 summarizes the chum salmon bycatch rates for these seasons.

**Table 2.3**

Data Source: Sea State, Inc.

YEAR	NON-ROE SEASON CHUM BYCATCH	POLLOCK HARVEST	CHUM BYCATCH RATE
1994	75,816	600,907	0.126
1995	14,242	568,279	0.025
1996	72,200	538,936	0.134
1997	60,841	531,146	0.115
1998	58,934	511,767	0.115
1999	44,238	509,625	0.087
2000	56,616	587,862	0.096
<b>2001</b>	<b>50,887</b>	<b>814,247</b>	<b>0.062</b>

## Section 3. Sideboard Fisheries

### 3.1 Groundfish Sideboards

The American Fisheries Act directed the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council to provide regulations aimed at protecting other fisheries from adverse impacts that may occur due to the creation of BSAI pollock cooperatives. This mandate brought about the development of groundfish, PSC, and crab sideboard restrictions for the AFA catcher vessel fleet. Vessels with less than 1700 mt of historic catch in the BSAI pollock fishery and met minimum landing requirements in either the BSAI and/or GOA are granted exemptions to the BSAI cod fishery and/or GOA groundfish sideboards.

NMFS assigns the non-exempt catcher vessel sector aggregate sideboard caps for each groundfish species in the BSAI and the GOA. The Intercoop Agreement allows for the distribution of sideboard caps among the nine catcher vessel coops for fisheries eligible to AFA catcher vessels. In many cases the assigned caps are so low that without the Intercoop Agreement, and the level of fishery management it provides, many of these fisheries would be closed to the AFA vessels. Even with the Intercoop Agreement, many sideboard caps are too low to allow a directed fishery. Appendix III provides information on the directed groundfish sideboard fisheries the non-exempt vessels participated in during 2001. The tables provide information on initial coop allocation of sideboard caps, the transfer of allocations between coops, and the directed harvest by each coop.

The following tables, 3.1a and 3.1b, provide information on the allocation and harvest of BSAI and GOA sideboard species by AFA non-exempt catcher vessels. The tables cover both direct harvest and species caught as bycatch in other directed fisheries and summarize the amounts of sideboard species harvested over or under the sideboard cap.

Table 3.1a

Data supplied by Sea State, Inc.

2001 BSAI AFA CATCHER VESSEL AGGREGATE GROUND FISH SIDEBOARD CATCH				
Species	Fishery	Sideboard Limit	Aggregate Catch, Directed & Bycatch	Over / (Under) Sideboard Limit
Pacific Cod	Jig Gear	0	0	0
	Hook & Line	0	0	0
	Pot Gear 1/1-6/10	6	0	(6)
	6/10-12/31	4	0	(4)
	CV < 60' H&L or Pot	0	0	0
	Trawl Gear CV 1/1-6/10	18,888	12,414	(6,474)
	CV 6/10-12/31	12,592	1,039	(11,553)
Catcher/Processor	0	0	0	
Sablefish	BS Trawl	0	23	23
	AI Trawl	32	0	(32)
Atka Mackerel	Eastern AI&BS Jig	0	0	0
	Other Gear 1/1-4/15	11	12	1
	Other Gear 9/1-11/1	11	60	49
	Central AI Jan-4/15	2	2	0
	inside CH	1	0	(1)
	9/1-11/1	2	0	(2)
	inside CH	1	0	(1)
	Western AI Jan-4/15	0	0	0
	inside CH	0	0	0
	9/1-11/1	0	0	0
inside CH	0	0	0	
Yellowfin Sole	BSAI	6,839	223	(6,616)
Rock Sole	BSAI	1,626	1,232	(394)
Greenland Turbot	BS	211	19	(192)
	AI	5	0	(5)
Arrowtooth	BSAI	1,091	512	(579)
Other Flatfish	BSAI	1,328	64	(1,264)
Flathead Sole	BS	1,666	731	(935)
POP	BS	150	140	(10)
	Eastern AI	13	9	(4)
	Central AI	3	1	(2)
	Western AI	0	0	0
Sharpchin / Northern	BS	0	0	0
	AI	9	12	3
Shortraker / Roughey	BS	3	0	(3)
	AI	1	0	(1)
Other Rockfish	BS	12	1	(11)
	AI	2	0	(2)
Squid	BSAI	651	1,265	614
Other Species	BSAI	637	767	130

Table 3.1b

Data supplied by Sea State, Inc.

2001 GOA AFA CATCHER VESSEL AGGREGATE GROUND FISH SIDEBOARD CATCH				
Species	Fishery	Sideboard Limit	Aggregate Catch, Directed & Bycatch	Over / (Under) Sideboard Limit
Pollock	WYK	814	0	(814)
	SEO	2,353	0	(2,353)
	Shelikof A	2,075	654	(1,421)
	610 A	4,808	779	(4,029)
	620 A	71	0	(71)
	630 A	1,086	488	(598)
	Shelikof B	1,038	1,007	(31)
	610 B	2,404	280	(2,124)
	620 B	35	0	(35)
	630 B	543	109	(434)
	610 C	6,861	2,018	(4,843)
	620 C	826	53	(773)
	630 C	1,708	387	(1,321)
	610 D	5,717	4,649	(1,068)
	620 D	688	22	(666)
630D	1,424	0	(1,424)	
Pacific Cod	WGOA Inshore A	1,295	86	(1,209)
	WGOA Offshore A	113	0	(113)
	CGAO Inshore A	885	73	(812)
	CGOA Offshore A	131	0	(131)
	WGOA Inshore B	863	144	(719)
	WGOA Offshore B	75	0	(75)
	CGOA Inshore B	596	88	(508)
	CGOA Offshore B	87	0	(87)
	EGOA Inshore (annual)	0	0	0
	EGOA Offshore (annual)	3	0	(3)
Deep-water Flatfish	WGOA	0	0	0
	CGOA	168	20	(148)
	EGOA	5	0	(5)
Rex Sole	WGOA	5	0	(5)
	CGOA	66	13	(53)
	EGOA	7	0	(7)
Flathead Sole	WGOA	26	3	(23)
	CGOA	49	41	(8)
	EGOA	2	0	(2)
Shallow-water Flatfish	WGOA	117	8	(109)
	CGOA	544	108	(436)
	EGOA	21	0	(21)
Arrowtooth Flounder	WGOA	38	64	26
	CGOA	515	210	(305)
	EGOA	8	5	(3)

**Table 3.1b (continued)**

<b>2001 GOA AFA CATCHER VESSEL AGGREGATE GROUND FISH SIDEBOARD CATCH</b>				
<b>Species</b>	<b>Fishery</b>	<b>Sideboard Limit</b>	<b>Aggregate Catch, Directed &amp; Bycatch</b>	<b>Over / (Under) Sideboard Limit</b>
Sablefish	WGOA Trawl	1	3	2
	CGOA Trawl	42	23	(19)
	EGOA Trawl	6	18	12
POP	WGOA	7	0	(7)
	CGOA	655	242	(413)
	EGOA	59	56	(3)
Shortraker / Rougheye	WGOA	0	0	0
	CGOA	13	0	(13)
	EGOA	6	1	(5)
Other Rockfish	WGOA	0	0	0
	CGOA	30	59	29
	EGOA	0	7	7
Northern Rockfish	WGOA	0	0	0
	CGOA	131	100	(31)
Pelagic Shelf Rockfish	WGOA	0	0	0
	CGOA	0	0	0
	EGOA	9	3	(6)
Thornyhead Rockfish	WGOA	5	0	(5)
	CGOA	11	0	(11)
	EGOA	11	0	(11)
Demersal Shelf Rockfish	SEO	0	0	0
Atka Mackerel	Gulfwide	27	0	(27)
Other Species	Gulfwide	91	15	(76)

Review of tables 3.1a and 3.1b shows sideboard overages in species not directly fished by the AFA non-exempt vessels. While the coops have successfully managed the directed fisheries' sideboard limits, the harvest of bycatch species associated with those directed fisheries vary from season to season. Because the bycatch species sideboard limits are a result of a three-year averaging process, it should be expected that a portion of the bycatch species' sideboard limits would be exceeded in any given year.



## 3.2 PSC Sideboards

Tables 3.1a, 3.2b, and 3.2c cover PSC species caught by AFA catcher vessels participating in BSAI and GOA groundfish fisheries. None of the halibut or crab sideboard limits were exceeded by the catcher vessel coops. Herring and salmon bycatch in the BSAI fisheries are at the low end of the historic bycatch range and are exceedingly low considering the 1,400,000 mt pollock TAC in 2001.

**Table 3.2a**

Data supplied by Sea State, Inc.

<b>2001 BSAI AFA CATCHER VESSEL AGGREGATE PSC SIDEBOARD CATCH</b>				
PSC Species	Target Fishery	Sideboard Limit	Aggregate PSC Mortality	Over / (Under) Sideboard Limit
Halibut	Pacific Cod, Trawl	825	236	(589)
	Pacific Cod, fixed gear	2	0	(2)
	Yellowfin Sole			
	1/20 - 3/31	33	0	(33)
	4/1 - 5/20	22	0	(22)
	5/21 - 7/3	6	0	(6)
	7/4 - 12/31	43	0	(43)
	Rock Sole			
	1/20 - 3/31	141	0	(141)
	4/1 - 7/3	51	0	(51)
	7/4 - 12/31	50	0	(50)
	Turbot , Arrowtooth / Sablefish	0	0	0
	Rockfish	2	0	(2)
Pollock / Atka Mackerel / Other Species	5	0	(5)	
Red King Crab, Zone 1	Pacific Cod	7,212	6	(7,206)
	Yellowfin Sole	1,334	0	(1,334)
	Rock Sole / Flathead Sole / Other Flatfish	18,405	0	(18,405)
	Pollock / Atka Mackerel / Other Species	37	0	(37)
C.Opilio, COBLZ	Pacific Cod	324,444	4,224	(320,220)
	Yellowfin Sole	329,127	0	(329,127)
	Rock Sole / Flathead Sole / Other Flatfish	133,280	0	(133,280)
	Pollock / Atka Mackerel / Other Species	1,644	0	(1,644)
	Rockfish	986	0	(986)
	Turbot , Arrowtooth / Sablefish	9,363	0	(9,363)

**Table 3.2a (continued)**

PSC Species	Target Fishery	Sideboard Limit	Aggregate PSC Mortality	Over / (Under) Sideboard Limit
C.Bairdi, Zone 1	Pacific Cod	84,336	4,904	(79,432)
	Yellowfin Sole	142,600	0	(142,600)
	Rock Sole / Flathead Sole / Other Flatfish	77,311	0	(77,311)
	Pollock / Atka Mackerel / Other Species	291	0	(291)
C.Bairdi, Zone 2	Pacific Cod	139,699	4,503	(135,196)
	Yellowfin Sole	142,600	0	(142,600)
	Rock Sole / Flathead Sole / Other Flatfish	118,044	0	(118,044)
	Pollock / Atka Mackerel / Other Species	435	0	(435)
	Rockfish	188	0	(188)

**Table 3.2b**

Data supplied by Sea State, Inc.

<b>2001 GOA AFA CATCHER VESSEL AGGREGATE PSC SIDEBOARD CATCH</b>				
PSC Species	Target Fishery	Sideboard Limit	Aggregate PSC Catch	Over / (Under) Sideboard Limit
Halibut (mortality in metric tons)	Trawl, 1st Season Allowance			
	Shallow water Targets	119	16	(103)
	Deep water Targets	7	0	(7)
	Trawl, 2nd Season Allowance			
	Shallow water Targets	34	9	(25)
	Deep water Targets	21	0	(21)
	Trawl, 3rd Season Allowance			
	Shallow water Targets	85	46	(39)
	Deep water Targets	0	0	0
	Trawl, 4th Season Allowance			
	Shallow water Targets	68	0	(68)
	Deep water Targets	0	0	0
	Trawl, 5th Season Allowance			
	All Targets	62	0	(62)

**Table 3.2c**

Data supplied by Sea State, Inc.

<b>2001 BSAI AFA CATCHER VESSEL AGGREGATE SALMON &amp; HERRING BYCATCH</b>		
PSC Species	Target Fishery	Aggregate Bycatch
Chinook	Pollock	14,114
	Pacific Cod	1,511
	Total	15,625
Other Salmon	Pollock	35,860
	Pacific Cod	527
	Total	36,387
Herring	Pollock	176
	Pacific Cod	1
	Total	177

### 3.3 Bristol Bay Red King Crab Sideboard Fishery

AFA qualified vessels participating in the Bristol Bay Red King Crab Fishery are restricted to a sideboard cap of 10.96% of the guideline harvest level. The GHF for the 2001 fishery, 6,613,750 pounds, resulted in an AFA cap of 724,867 pounds. 32 AFA vessels pre-registered for the 2001 fishery. A final count of 31 AFA vessels fished.

The Alaska Department of Fish & Game provides two harvest options for the AFA vessels: 1) each AFA vessel be assigned an equal amount trip limit by ADF&G, or 2) participate in a cooperative management program developed and managed by United Catcher Boats. This program allows AFA vessels to fish “Olympic Style” to 80% of the cap before being assigned a trip limit for the remainder of the fishery. The trip limit is referred to as the “not to exceed” amount under the cooperative plan. All 31 AFA vessels agreed to participate in the fishing cooperative prior to

the start of the fishery. A copy of the cooperative agreement can be found in Appendix IX.

The AFA vessels face a variety of additional expenses to participate in the crab fishery that are not required of the non-AFA open access vessels. Each vessel participating in the cooperative must pay an advance fee to UCB of \$500.00 (\$15,500 total for the 2001 31 vessel fleet) and agree to cover any costs in excess of the original assessment based on their catch percentage. The assessment covers UCB's management of the cooperative and the AFA fleet observer coverage required by ADF&G. The management of the fishery (monitor's contract, communication charges, meeting expenses, etc.) came to \$4,150.00. The lion's share of the assessment, \$12,301.00, went for observer coverage of the AFA fleet. Under current ADF&G regulations AFA vessels are required to pay for their observer expenses while ADF&G covers the cost of observer coverage for the non-AFA open access fleet

The AFA BBRKC Cooperative Agreement requires each vessel to provide the cooperative monitor with the number of crab retained every 6 hours beginning at noon on the second day of the season. The monitoring agent tabulates the total of retained crab for each time period and applies an estimated average crab size (6.5 lbs. for this season) to establish an in-season estimated catch rate for the AFA fleet (see Table I). Once the monitoring agent determines when the AFA fleet will reach the 80% mark, a fleet-wide notification is made. The notification announces the closure of the "Olympic" portion of the fishery and assigns the "not to exceed" limit. The "not to exceed" calculation is equal to 17% of the AFA vessel quota. The remaining 3% provides for a buffer. This year's notification was made at 12 Noon on October 18<sup>th</sup> and the not to exceed limit was set at 600 retained crab for each vessel.

Twenty-four of the 31 AFA vessels were restricted by the “not to exceed” cap and consequently stopped retaining crab prior to the close of the season. Three vessels came within 5% of the “not to exceed” cap, three vessels came within 25% of the cap, and one vessel was no longer fishing due to storm damage. The AFA fleet stayed within the sideboard limit and no vessel penalties were assessed for the 2001 season.

When totaled at the season’s end, the 6-hour crab reports submitted by the vessel captains to the Coop Monitor varied by .55% when compared to the total landed crab as reported on the AFA fish tickets. The total weight of landed crab, 703,578 pounds, is equal to 97% of the AFA cap. Therefore, the AFA vessels did not exceed their sideboard amount for the second consecutive season.

There are many contributing factors to the success of the AFA BBRKC program. While private contracts among fishermen are rapidly proving to be valuable management tools, as shown by AFA pollock cooperatives and bycatch reduction programs, the real key to this program is the commitment made by the captains and crews. To achieve a reporting accuracy of less than one percent while participating in one of the most difficult fisheries prosecuted in any ocean is a very commendable feat.