Report of the
Arctic Enterprise Association
2003

Presented to the
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
February 1, 2004

Cooperative Membership and Management

The Arctic Enterprise Association was made up of 3 member vessels for the year 2003. Coop membership remained unchanged from 2002. The table below shows the member vessels and their associated Coop percentages. As in the past, Coop percentages listed represent the vessels share of the Coop pollock based on the relevant catch history of each member vessel. Since all member vessels in this Coop are owned and operated by the same Company, it was decided to split all allocations and administration expenses for the Coop evenly among the three vessels. The M/V Arctic Enterprise owned and operated by Trident Seafoods Corp served as the primary purchasing and processing facility for the Arctic Enterprise Association. The Arctic Enterprise is a floating processor and was anchored in Akutan Bay for 2003.

Vessel	Coop Percent
BRISTOL EXPLORER	36.07%
OCEAN EXPLORER	32.93%
PACIFIC EXPLORER	31.00%
TOTALS	**100.00%**

The Arctic Enterprise Association is governed by a Board of Directors as well as through active participation by the owners and operators of the member vessels. The Arctic Enterprise Assoc. remains very active in the Inter Coop process and is bound contractually to the Inter Coop through the Inter Coop Agreement. Inter Coop issues and fishery management decisions are brought back to the Coop level in the form of preferred alternatives. The preferred alternatives are a result of discussions and negotiations with the other Coops resulting in unanimous decisions by all Coop representatives. All preferred alternatives are discussed and voted on at the Coop level prior to being supported at the Inter Coop level by the Coop representatives.

The day to day management of the Coop is the responsibility of the Coop Manager. The Coop Manager is responsible for all communications with the fleet regarding Coop and Inter Coop issues as well as providing all Coop information back to the vessel owners and managers. The Coop Manager also schedules all meetings, budgets and manages Coop costs and attends all Inter Coop meetings.

In addition to the above duties, the Coop Manager is also responsible for all pollock and sideboard distribution as well as the in-season management of all pollock, sideboard fisheries and PSC. Prior to the fishing season or prior to individual season openings, it is common practice for Coop members to "pre-register" for fisheries they will participate in. This is not always a formal process but it provides the Coop Manager adequate information as to which vessels will participate in which fisheries prior to the fisheries commencing. During this process, member vessels are informed of allocations or sideboard restrictions and any other pertinent information that needs to be conveyed. As the fisheries proceed, landing data is obtained by the Coop Manager from the plant that received the catch and landing totals are tabulated and compared

against allocation or sideboards in the pertinent area. This process ensures that no allocation or sideboard limits are exceeded.

All landings data, including prohibited species catches, are also gathered by Sea State, Inc. This data is obtained by Sea State via the NMFS Electronic Logbook, submitted by the plants, or via observer data which is acquired through the observer program office in Seattle. This data allows Sea State to aid the Coop Manager with in-season management as needed. This service is used primarily to monitor the harvest of prohibited species. All data gathered by Sea State is available to the Coop Manager via a password protected website. Data on the website is available in the aggregate or by individual vessel deliveries.

2003 Pollock Allocations and Harvest

Based on the NMFS verified catch histories of its member vessels, the Arctic Enterprise Association was allocated 4.21% of the pollock available for directed fishing by the Bering Sea onshore sector. This resulted in a 2003 initial Bering Sea pollock allocation of 27,273 MT. As mentioned earlier, this total allocation was distributed evenly to member vessels rather than by their individual Coop percentage. Pollock was distributed to the vessels 40%/60%, meaning that 40% of their annual allocation was given to them in the "A" season and the balance in the "B" season. In addition to the initial allocation, two subsequent allocations were made available in the fall from the bycatch account as it was determined by NMFS that there was more pollock in the bycatch reserve account than was needed to cover bycatch in non-pollock fisheries. These reserve releases raised the annual allocation by 221 MT. Since these releases occurred in the fall, all of this fish was harvested in the "B" season. Table 1 shows initial pollock allocations to the Arctic Enterprise member vessels, bycatch reallocation amounts as well as the total harvest of pollock by member vessels. Table 2 shows the pollock harvest along with non-groundfish and PSC catch.

TABLE 1:

As indicated on this table in the bottom right hand corner, 23.26 MT of pollock was left unharvested in this Coop for 2003. Despite difficult fishing conditions in the fall, the Coop was able to harvest all of their allocated pollock.

As evident by looking the each vessel's harvest compared to their allocations, several intra-coop transfers were made. These transfers were made primarily to most efficiently schedule the three boats delivery times. Transferring the fish to another vessel allowed the plant to finish without down time waiting for the last vessel's delivery.

The large Chum and Chinook Salmon Savings Areas that were closed for much of the "B" season had a dramatic effect on the fleet's ability to find pollock while still avoiding the salmon. Available fishing areas outside of the closed areas were very few and late in the season were rather void of pollock. Vessels that had finished their allocations were forced to stay much longer than planned to aid other Coop vessels in harvesting their fish. In addition to the slow fishing, the fleet was also working extremely hard to avoid salmon bycatch. This compounded the problem as often times when pollock were found, they were accompanied by high salmon numbers. It is the belief of this Coop that more economical fishing could have been found with fewer salmon had the fleet had access to the areas closed by the Chum and Chinook Salmon Savings Areas.

One vessel from this Coop, the Bristol Explorer, was contracted by the Akutan Catcher Vessel Association to aid that Coop in completing both their "A" and "B" season allocations.

No member vessels in this Coop exceeded their annual allocation of BS pollock without approval of the Coop manager. Small overages did occur but were easily offset by the vessels that left small amounts on the table.

TABLE 2: Member Vessel's individual harvest of pollock, non-pollock groundfish and PSC species.

TABLE 1
ARCTIC ENTERPRISE ASSOCIATION
2003 POLLOCK ALLOCATIONS AND HARVEST BY VESSEL

2003 Total Pollock Alloc: **27,273** **MT**
27,494 **MT After Bycatch Reserve Release**
221 **MT Reserve Release**

Vessel	Coop Percent	2003 Initial Allocation (MT)	2003 Bycatch Res. Realloc. (MT)	2003 Total Allocation (MT)	Vessel Harvest	(Over)/Under Allocation (MT)
BRISTOL EXPLORER	36.07%	9,091	74	9,165	**9,144.17**	20.83
OCEAN EXPLORER	32.93%	9,091	74	9,165	**8,998.87**	166.13
PACIFIC EXPLORER	31.00%	9,091	73	9,164	**9,327.70**	(163.70)
TOTALS	100.00%	27,273	221	27,494	**27,470.74**	**23.26**

TABLE 2
ARCTIC ENTERPRISE ASSOCIATION
2003 ACTUAL CATCH AND BYCATCH IN DIRECTED POLLOCK FISHERY

Vessel	Pollock Harvest (MT)	Non-Target Groundfish (MT)	Halibut Mort. (MT)	RKC (N)	Bairdi (N)	Tanner Other (MT)	Chinook (N)	Other Salmon (N)
BRISTOL EXPLORER	9,144.17	76.00	1	0	11	9	385	2,208
OCEAN EXPLORER	8,998.87	38.00	0	1	7	6	148	307
PACIFIC EXPLORER	9,327.70	45.00	1	0	6	6	83	964
TOTALS	**27,470.74**	**159.00**	**2**	**1**	**24**	**21**	**616**	**3,479**
TOTAL ALLOC	**27,494.00**							
UNHARVESTED	**23.26**							

2003 Bering Sea Sideboards

Bering Sea sideboards were established for each AFA Coop for Pacific cod, Yellowfin sole and Rock sole. No vessels from the Arctic Enterprise Association participated in either Bering Sea flatfish fishery in 2003. Coop sideboard allocations for Bering Sea flatfish have not been distributed to individual vessels in the Coop.

Based on the Sea State verified catch history of its member vessels, the Arctic Enterprise Association was allocated 4.30% of the Bering Sea cod sideboards available to the AFA non-exempt fleet. This resulted in a total 2003 Pacific cod sideboard total of 1,553 MT to the Arctic Enterprise fleet. All vessels in this Coop are Bering Sea non-exempt vessels. Table 3 shows the cod Coop percentage for each of the member vessels. As with pollock, initial cod sideboard totals were split up evenly among the three vessels rather than by their Coop percentage. Table 4 shows the total cod sideboard harvest as well as the non-target groundfish and PSC harvest for the member vessels.

TABLE 3:

A total of 318.98 MT of cod was left unharvested during 2003. A net amount of 612.48 MT of cod was transferred in to the Arctic Enterprise Association fleet during the months of March and April, 2003. The total sideboard allocation for 2003 after the transfers was 2,165.48 MT, of which, 85% was harvested. All of the cod harvest took place in the winter and spring during the January through April time frame. No member vessels participated in the cod fishery during the second half of the year as this time of the year usually results in poor fishery performance and higher bycatch of non-target species and PSC.

As you can see by looking at each vessel's sideboard totals and harvest amounts, several intra-coop transfers were made. These transfers were the result of vessels stacking sideboards in order to allow some vessels to finish pollock and others to harvest cod in the spring. All vessels that harvested amounts in excess of their own sideboard total did so under the direction of the Coop Manager. Only two of the three boats in this Coop harvested cod sideboards in 2003.

TABLE 4:

PSC caps were established for halibut, Zone 1 red King crab as well as zone 1 Bairdi and Opilio. As the harvest data shows, PSC bycatch was once again low in 2003. A total of 1MT, or 3%, of the Coop's halibut mortality was used to harvest the cod. This was largely due to the area in which the cod was harvested.

TABLE 3
ARCTIC ENTERPRISE ASSOCIATION
2003 BS PACIFIC COD SIDEBOARD ALLOCATIONS AND HARVEST

Vessel	Coop Percent	2003 Sideboard (MT)	Sideboard Transfers (MT)	2003 Total Sideboard	Vessel Harvest (MT)	(Over)/Under Allocation (MT)
BRISTOL EXPLORER	33.33%	517.66	0.00	517.66	**0.00**	517.66
OCEAN EXPLORER	33.34%	517.67	816.48	1,334.15	**897.86**	436.29
PACIFIC EXPLORER	33.33%	517.67	(204.00)	313.67	**948.64**	(634.97)
TOTALS	100.00%	1,553.00	612.48	2,165.48	**1,846.50**	**318.98**

TABLE 4
ARCTIC ENTERPRISE ASSOCIATION
2003 BSAI PACIFIC COD SIDEBOARD HARVEST AND PSC BYCATCH

Vessels	Pacific Cod Harvest (MT)	Non-Target Grndfish (MT)	Halibut Mort (MT)	Red King Crab (N)	Bairdi (N)	Other Tanner (N)	Chinook (N)	Other Salmon (MT)
BRISTOL EXPLORER	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
OCEAN EXPLORER	897.86	19	1	0	194	0	16	0
PACIFIC EXPLORER	948.64	13	0	0	20	0	0	0
TOTALS	**1846.5**	**32**	**1**	**0**	**214**	**0**	**16**	**0**
TOTAL ALLOC	**2,165.48**		**32**	**292**	**4094**	**2789**		
UNHARVESTED	**318.98**		**31**	**292**	**3880**	**2789**		

Salmon Bycatch Management

Chinook and Chum salmon bycatch programs were created for 2003 through the work of the inter-coop group. The Chum salmon program was similar to the program that was used in 2002 while the Chinook salmon program was largely changed which resulted in many more restrictions on vessels during the winter pollock roe season. The results of these programs were the Chinook and Chum Salmon Bycatch Agreements which were adopted by all of the Coops. All Coops were bound contractually to these agreements. The overall goal of both programs is to provide to the fleet real-time bycatch data that is used to alter fishing grounds as needed to harvest pollock with as little salmon bycatch as possible. Incorporated in to these programs were weekly closed areas affecting Coops that had shown high salmon bycatch over the previous couple of weeks.

Under these programs, vessels were asked to transmit tow-by-tow salmon bycatch data to Sea State. Sea State was hired to monitor the fishery and salmon bycatch performance by the Coops. Sea State was responsible for gathering the data, notifying the Coop Managers of bycatch rates by area as well as announcing the weekly closures. Vessels in the Arctic Enterprise Association used two methods for transmitting bycatch data. All of the vessels used software that worked in conjunction with the vessel's VMS system to send the tow data from the grounds. In cases where the VMS transmission was failing, vessels send data directly to Sea State via Sat C email.

It is the general feeling of this Coop that the programs were a success. We feel we were very successful in getting vessel operators to put salmon bycatch as one of their top priorities. We did an adequate job sending our tow-by-tow salmon bycatch estimates to Sea State and we were compliant to all weekly closures that were placed upon us as a result of higher than allowed bycatch rates. Vessels changed harvest areas frequently and as needed to attempt to find cleaner fishing. We had excellent communication between the fleet, the processor and the Coop Manager regarding salmon bycatch issues. Despite all of these efforts, we still had a very difficult time finding clean fishing both in the winter roe fishery as well as throughout the late summer and fall fishery. This appears to be a direct result of the high number of salmon that roamed the Bering Sea this year.

We feel fishing restrictions as a result of the regulatory closures of the Chinook and Chum Salmon Savings Areas significantly impacted the performance of the Chum and Chinook salmon bycatch programs this year. During the times of these closures, fishing grounds were so limited that there were very few places to look for clean fishing. In addition, there were times that vessels had a hard time finding pollock to work on resulting in longer tows and likely more salmon bycatch. Landings from within the Chum Salmon Savings Area after it reopened near the end of the season really proved to vessels and managers that better fishing, with fewer salmon, existed within the boundaries of the Chum Savings Area during times vessels were forced to fish outside that area. It is possible that not having access to the Savings Areas may have actually increases to overall bycatch of salmon for 2003.

Gulf of Alaska Sideboards

Sideboards were established for the major target fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska. For 2003, NMFS published informational tables with GOA sideboards percentages for each Coop's non-exempt vessels. Sideboard totals for each Coop were calculated by taking the Coop's percentage of the overall AFA sideboard for that area and species. Coop percentages are a based on the relevant verified catch histories of member vessels.

No vessels from the Arctic Enterprise Association participated in GOA sideboard fisheries in 2003.

Table 5 shows the Arctic Enterprise Association 2003 non-exempt sideboard limits for pollock and cod .

TABLE 5:

This table lists the total sideboard amounts in MT by area and season based on a total of the member's catch histories.

Again, no harvest of GOA sideboard species took place by vessels in this Coop during 2003. The Area 640 annual pollock allocation of 29.69 MT was transferred to another Coop for harvest in 2003.

TABLE 5
ARCTIC ENTERPRISE ASSOCIATION
2003 GOA SIDEBOARD ALLOCATIONS BY AREA

Area/Species	Coop Sideboards "A" Season (MT)	Coop Sideboards "B" Season (MT)	Coop Sideboards "C" Season (MT)	Coop Sideboards "D" Season (MT)
610 Pollock	11.68	11.68	22.19	22.19
620 Pollock	0	0	0	0
630 Pollock	0	0	0	0
640 Pollock	26.69 Annual			

Area/Species	Coop Sideboards "A" Season (MT)	Coop Sideboards "B" Season (MT)	Coop Sideboards Total Shares (MT)
Pacific Cod Western	106.95	71.27	178.22
Pacific Cod Central	0	0	0
Pacific Cod Eastern	0	0	0

AFA Red King Crab Sideboards

None of the three member vessels in the Arctic Enterprise Association are eligible to fish Red King Crab under the AFA.