

Final Report
of the
Mothership Fleet Cooperative
2006

Presented to the
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
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Introduction

In 2006 the mothership sector (as defined in Section 208 (c) and (d) of the American Fisheries Act) managed its Bering Sea pollock allocation under the provisions of a cooperative agreement. All nineteen of the vessels qualified to participate in the mothership sector are members of the “Mothership Fleet Cooperative” (MFC) and are bound by the terms of that cooperative’s membership agreement. Only seventeen of the nineteen vessels belonging to the MFC participated in Alaska groundfish fisheries in 2006. The mothership sector is assigned 10% of the BSAI directed pollock quota as per Section 206 (b) of the American Fisheries Act (AFA).

In addition to the membership agreement mentioned above, the MFC is a signatory to the 2006 Intercooperative Agreement, the Cod Allocation Agreement, and the Salmon Bycatch Management Agreement. These contracts establish the global rules by which all of the cooperatives jointly manage pollock harvest limits and non-pollock groundfish sideboards, prohibited species sideboards, and salmon bycatch avoidance measures.

Reporting Requirements

This report is intended to fully disclose all information required and identified for inclusion in an annual report to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council pursuant to Section 210 (a)(1) A and B of the American Fisheries Act and C.F.R. 679.60 (American Fisheries Act Management Measures) Section (d).

Mothership Fleet Cooperative Shares

It is important to note that the AFA requires a “cooperative of the whole” rather than separate and distinct cooperatives oriented to each processor within the sector, as is the case in the inshore sector. The AFA also provides an exemption to the Sherman Anti-Trust Act for the three AFA-qualified mothership processors (EXCELLENCE, GOLDEN ALASKA, OCEAN PHOENIX), allowing them to participate as members of the cooperative if at least eighty percent of the eligible catcher vessels are members of the co-op. Despite this allowance, the three mothership processors are not currently members of the MFC.

Neither the language in the AFA nor the Mothership Fleet Cooperative Membership Agreement binds catcher vessels delivering to motherships to a particular processor within a fishing year or season.

Membership in the MFC consists of all 19 eligible catcher vessels. Each vessel has a cooperative share representing its percentage share of the directed pollock quota allocation by the AFA to the mothership sector. Vessel names, owners, and their cooperative shares are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Mothership Fleet Cooperative Share Percentages

Co-op Member(s)	Vessel(s)	Cooperative Share
Alakanuk Beauty L.L.C.	American Beauty	6.000%
Pacific Dawn	Pacific Challenger	9.671%
Fury Group, Inc.	Nordic Fury Pacific Fury	6.177% 5.889%
Great West Seafoods, Ltd.	Margaret Lyn	5.643%
Katahdin, Inc.	Misty Dawn	3.569%
King and Winge, Inc. Futura Fisheries, Inc.	Vanguard	5.350%
Kydaka Corporation	California Horizon	3.786%
Langesater Fisheries, Inc. Reiten Enterprises, Inc. Arruela Fisheries, Inc.	Oceanic	7.038%
MarGun Fisheries, Inc.	Mar-Gun	6.251%
Mark 1, Inc.	Mark 1	6.251%
Meddar Corporation	Aleutian Challenger	4.925%
Emmonak Leader L.L.P.	Ocean Leader	6.000%
Ocean Thunder, Inc.	Papado II	2.953%
Supreme Alaska Seafoods, Inc.	Morning Star	3.601%
Traveler Fisheries L.L.C.	Traveler	4.272%
Vesteraalen L.L.C.	Vesteraalen	6.201%
Wa'atch, Inc.	Alyeska	2.272%
Western Dawn L.L.C.	Western Dawn	4.150%

TOTAL

100%

Term of the Mothership Fleet Cooperative Membership Agreement

In 2002 the MFC Membership Agreement was amended to remove a five-year sunset. Under the amendment language, the MFC can be terminated if and when eighty percent of the MFC members vote in favor of terminating the agreement.

Transfer of Shares Between Catcher Vessels

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative Membership Agreement allows members of the coop to transfer cooperative shares among themselves. Transfers of quota made within a fleet of catchers delivering to a particular mothership (intra-fleet) must be reported to that mothership at the time of delivery. Transfers of allocations between vessels fishing in different mothership fleets (inter-fleet) must be reported to the monitoring agent within seven days prior to the transfer and, in any case, prior to the harvest of the transferred amount. Both intra- and inter-fleet transfers occurred in 2006.

Catch Monitoring

All in-season data used for individual vessel and fleet-wide catch monitoring and management within the mothership sector was obtained from the National Marine Fisheries Service Observer Program. The MFC has contracted with Sea State, Inc. to process the catch data provided by the observer program and to provide in-season management support.

Sea State regularly provides catch reports to each mothership fleet. These reports include cumulative fleet-wide and vessel-level catch data as well as a tow-by-tow summary. Fleet managers are able to reconcile the tow-by-tow catch information provided by Sea State against their own catch records to identify possible data errors and insure accurate catch accounting throughout the fishing season.

Catch and Bycatch of Groundfish and Prohibited Species

The harvest and bycatch of non-pollock and prohibited species (PSC) in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and Gulf of Alaska is limited by groundfish and PSC sideboards as recommended by the Council and implemented through regulation. Pollock harvest by AFA catcher vessels is limited in the Gulf of Alaska as well. The intent of the sideboards is to limit the catch and bycatch of these species by AFA vessels to "traditional harvest levels". The Mothership Fleet Cooperative Membership Agreement authorized the cooperative board to allocate sideboard amounts available for directed harvest to each catcher vessel in the cooperative in amounts prorated to each boat's catch history.

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative Membership Agreement provides that PSC sideboard apportionments may be administered as aggregate caps within the mothership sector. Where necessary and appropriate, the cooperative board is authorized to allocate PSC apportionments to individual vessels. The board is further authorized to order a vessel to stop fishing if that vessel exceeds an assigned apportionment or rate, and to obtain an injunction restraining the

activity of any vessel that fails to heed such an order. PSC was not assigned to individual vessels in 2006.

None of the sideboard caps were exceeded by the Mothership Fleet Cooperative in 2006.

Penalties

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative Agreement includes provisions allowing penalties to be assessed against vessels that exceed their agreed harvest share of pollock and non-pollock species. The Agreement includes a penalty of \$500 per metric ton for pollock harvested in excess of a vessel's allocation. The penalty for overages in the non-pollock fisheries include \$1000 per metric ton of cod harvest in excess of an allocation, \$300 per metric ton for over-harvests of all other BSAI and GOA directed groundfish fisheries. The cooperative established penalties for exceeding assigned PSC caps as well.

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative assessed no penalties in 2006.

Salmon Bycatch Avoidance Reporting

As described above, the Mothership Fleet Cooperative is a signatory to the Intercooperative Salmon Bycatch Management Agreements. In an effort to maximize the incentive to avoid salmon bycatch within the mothership fleet, the MFC created an intra-fleet salmon bycatch reporting program for the 2006 "A" and "B" seasons. This program consists of a daily report from each mothership to the other two motherships and their fleet managers. This report, sent via e-mail, includes the amount of groundfish delivered during the previous day, the number of salmon (Chinook during "A" season and other salmon during "B" season) in the delivered catch, the salmon bycatch rate for that day, and more specific information regarding any tows with a bycatch rate in excess of a pre-determined threshold.

These reports are an efficient way to monitor "real-time" bycatch performance within the mothership fleet and an effective vehicle for "peer pressure"-motivated bycatch reduction.

2006 Directed Pollock Fishery Results

Table 2. 2006 Mothership Fleet Co-op Pollock Allocations and Harvest - MT

Catcher	Co-op %	Co-op MT	Actual MT	Actual %
Aleutian Challenger	4.925%	6504.2	7,744.0	5.86%
Alyeska	2.272%	3000.5	676.7	0.51%
American Beauty	6.000%	7923.9	6,766.7	5.12%
California Horizon	3.786%	5000.0	3,052.8	2.31%
Margaret Lyn	5.643%	8255.4	12,179.9	9.22%
Mar-Gun	6.251%	7452.4	11,953.8	9.05%
Mark I	6.251%	8255.4	5,388.8	4.08%
Misty Dawn	3.569%	4713.4	7,558.1	5.72%
Morning Star	3.601%	4755.7	0.0	0.00%
Nordic Fury	6.177%	8157.7	4,571.4	3.46%
Ocean Leader	6.000%	7923.9	13,364.9	10.12%
Oceanic	7.038%	9294.7	11,361.7	8.60%
Pacific Challenger	9.671%	12772.0	3,892.4	2.95%
Pacific Fury	5.889%	7777.3	8,772.3	6.64%
Popado II	2.953%	3899.9	0.0	0.00%
Traveler	4.272%	5641.8	6,970.3	5.28%
Vanguard	5.350%	7065.5	7,336.6	5.56%
Vesteraalen	6.201%	8189.4	11,872.4	8.99%
Western Dawn	4.150%	5480.7	7,940.8	6.01%
TOTAL	100.0%	132,064	131,404	99.50%
TOTAL UNHARVESTED			660	0.50%

Table 3. PSC Bycatch in 2006 Mothership Fleet Co-op Directed Pollock Fishery by Vessel

Catcher	Groundfish (MT)	Halibut (MT)	Herring (MT)	R. King Crab	Bairdi	Opilio	Chinook	Other salmon
Aleutian Challenger	68	0.1	2	0	0	0	629	145
Alyeska	3	0.0	0	0	0	0	46	0
American Beauty	47	0.0	2	0	0	5	312	78
California Horizon	50	0.1	0	0	0	0	282	6
Margaret Lyn	57	0	1	0	0	0	26	245
Mar-Gun	186	0.8	1	0	2	0	353	63
Mark I	111	0	0	0	0	0	352	6
Misty Dawn	96	0.3	0	0	0	0	376	53
Morning Star	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nordic Fury	67	0.1	0	0	0	0	297	0
Ocean Leader	81	0	2	0	0	3	292	349
Oceanic	130	0.4	1	0	0	0	292	216
Pacific Challenger	68	0.4	0	0	0	0	223	6
Pacific Fury	107	0.1	1	0	0	14	120	129
Popado II	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Traveler	87	0.5	0	0	0	0	326	271
Vanguard	72	0.4	0	0	0	0	456	246
Vesteraalen	148	1	2	0	0	3	389	127
Western Dawn	130	1.0	0	0	1	0	207	75
TOTAL	1,506	5	12	0	3	24	4,981	2,014

**Table 4. Aggregate PSC and Groundfish Bycatch in 2006
Mothership Fleet Cooperative Directed Pollock Fishery.**

Species	Number	Weight (mt)
Opilio crab	24	
C. bairdi crab	3	
Red king crab	0	
Other species		175.37
Pacific cod		925.3
Other flatfish		7.56
Arrowtooth flounder		30.23
Flathead sole		194.2
Rock sole		134.2
Yellowfin sole		0.83
Turbot		3.79
Other rockfish		0.2
Pacific ocean perch		14.98
Shortraker/Rougheye		0.26
Northern rockfish		0.18
Atka mackerel		9.42
Pacific halibut		5.93
Chum salmon	2,014	
King salmon	4,981	
Pollock		131,403.57
Pacific herring		12.15
Sablefish		0.63
Squid		6.35

Non-Pollock Groundfish Fisheries

In 2006 mothership catcher vessels participated in fisheries other than in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands directed pollock fishery. These fisheries included the BSAI Pacific cod fishery and the several directed fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska.

When developing recommendations for AFA groundfish harvesting sideboards, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council provided an annual exemption to mothership sector catcher vessels from sideboard limitations on harvests of BSAI Pacific cod after March 1.

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative is a signatory to the inter-cooperative agreements and was actively involved in the development of measures and protocols by which the catcher vessels insure compliance with the groundfish and PSC sideboard provisions.

Some of the catcher vessels qualified to participate in the Mothership Fleet Cooperative also participate in an inshore cooperative. Regardless of inshore eligibility, however, all catcher vessels qualified to participate in the mothership sector fish under the mothership sector groundfish and PSC sideboards in the directed BSAI cod fishery. Any of the mothership

catcher vessels that are “dual qualified” fish under the inshore cooperative sideboards in any groundfish fisheries other than BSAI pollock and cod.

Groundfish and PSC mothership cooperative catch and bycatch in non-pollock BSAI and GOA groundfish fishery information is contained in the tables below. As detailed in these report tables, none of the mothership sector groundfish or PSC sideboard caps were exceeded.

Table 5. Mothership Fleet Cooperative 2006 BSAI Pacific Cod Sideboard Amounts and Actual Landings by Vessel.

Vessel	% of Mothership Sideboard	Cod Sideboard MT	Landed Cod RWE
Aleutian Challenger	3.40%	122	1004
Alyeska	1.13%	40	0
American Beauty	3.37%	121	0
California Horizon	4.42%	158	0
Mar-Gun	6.62%	237	56
Margaret Lyn	4.15%	148	922
Mark I	14.51%	519	63
Misty Dawn	0.00%	0	0
Nordic Fury	8.56%	306	0
Ocean leader	3.79%	136	0
Oceanic	12.97%	464	0
Morning Star	0.25%	9	0
Pacific Challenger	10.27%	367	628
Pacific Fury	7.95%	284	23
Popado II	0.97%	35	0
Traveler	1.99%	71	510
Vanguard	0.98%	35	0
Vesteraalen	8.09%	289	47
Western Dawn	6.59%	236	123
Total	100%	3,578	3,376

Table 6. Mothership Fleet Cooperative Halibut Bycatch Mortality Sector Allocation and Actual PSC Bycatch Mortality in the 2006 Directed BSAI Pacific Cod Fishery.

Vessel	Halibut Mortality Allocation (MT)	Actual Halibut Mortality (MT)	Chinook	Other salmon	Red king crab	Bairdi	Other Tanner	Herring (MT)
Aleutian Challenger	3.7	14	22	63	0	1,353	1,159	0
Alyeska	1.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Beauty	3.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
California Horizon	4.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mar-Gun	7.1	1	6	0	0	62	10	0
Margaret Lyn	4.5	23	36	12	0	2,063	948	0
Mark I	15.7	1	7	0	0	70	12	0
Misty Dawn	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nordic Fury	9.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ocean leader	4.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oceanic	14.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morning Star	0.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pacific Challenger	11.1	11	30	2	0	702	235	0
Pacific Fury	8.6	0	2	0	0	25	4	0
Papado II	1.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Traveler	2.1	9	42	13	0	578	209	0
Vanguard	1.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vesteraalen	8.7	1	5	0	0	49	8	0
Western Dawn	7.1	3	7	0	0	190	44	0
Total	108.0	61.5	157	90	0	5,093	2,630	0.0

Table 7. Total Groundfish Catch in 2006 Mothership Fleet Cooperative BSAI Directed Pacific Cod Fishery.

Species	Landed MT	Discarded MT	Total Groundfish MT
Pacific Cod	3,376	29	3,406
Other Flatfish	0	17	18
Arrowtooth Flounder	1	25	26
Flathead Sole	0	27	27
Rock Sole	7	86	93
Yellowfin Sole	0	2	2
Greenland Turbot	0	0	0
AI - SC/NO	0	2	2
BS - SC/NO	0	0	0
Other Rockfish	0	0	1
Other Species	1	50	51
BS - SR/RE	0	0	0
Atka Mackerel	0	18	18
AI - Pollock	0	0	0
Pollock	3	42	45
Squid	0	0	0
Incidental pollock	62	161	223
AI Turbot	0	0	0
Eastern AI POP	0	0	0
Eastern AI Mackerel	6	1	7
Central AI POP	0	0	0
Central AI Mackerel	0	1	1
Western AI POP	0	0	0
Western AI Mackerel	0	6	6
Total	3,459	469	3,927

Summary

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative successfully managed all directed harvest and bycatch limits in 2006. In addition to insuring that all harvest limits were observed, the MFC dedicated extensive resources to the reduction of salmon bycatch, which proved to be a formidable challenge to the MFC and the pollock harvesting fleet at large.

Our efforts to reduce salmon bycatch included participation in the intercooperative salmon bycatch reduction agreement, the MFC salmon bycatch avoidance reporting program, and ad hoc efforts on the fishing grounds including increased communications between fishermen and fishing fleets and extensive searches for fishing areas with low salmon bycatch rates. Mothership Fleet Cooperative salmon bycatch avoidance measures will be reviewed by the cooperative members with an aim toward increasing the effectiveness of such measures in 2007.