

# North Pacific Fishery Management Council

## News and Notes



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Volume 5-04

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December 2004

## 2004 Appointments Announced

To accommodate the Council's recommendations to have the Advisory Panel members serve staggered 3 year terms, the following appointments were announced:

### 1 year Appointment

John Bruce  
Duncan Fields  
David Fraser  
Jeb Morrow  
Michelle Ridgway  
Jeff Stephan

### 2 year Appointment

Al Burch  
Craig Cross  
Jan Jacobs  
Kent Leslie  
Matthew Moir  
John Moller  
Jim Preston

### 3 year Appointment

Joe Childers  
Cora Crome  
Tom Enlow  
Bob Jacobson  
Eric Olson  
Ed Poulsen  
John Henderschedt

New to the panel this year are **Jeb Morrow**, a longliner from Sitka; **Matthew Moir**, Plant Manager, Alaska Pacific Seafoods, Kodiak; **Joe Childers**, Director of Western Gulf of Alaska Fishermen, Juneau; **Ed Poulsen**, Crab Advisor, Seattle; and **John Henderschedt**, Premier Pacific Seafoods, Seattle

We would like to thank the AP members that aren't returning, and for their contributions: Dan Falvey, Lance Farr, Teresa Kandianis, Kris Norosz, and Mitch Kilborn.

The SSC noted a significant change with the retirement of Rich Marasco. Dr. Marasco has been on the SSC 26 years, and has served as chairman for many years. During the Council meeting, GOAC3, WFN and NPFMC hosted a reception and a farewell for Rich. We will miss him and his significant contributions to the management of the North Pacific Fisheries. Appointments to the SSC remain unchanged, and a replacement for Dr. Marasco will be announced at a later date.

On the BSAI and GOA groundfish Plan Teams, Michele Culver, the Marine Resources Policy Coordinator of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will be replacing Farron Wallace. Additionally, Scott Miller of NMFS in Juneau was added to the Scallop Plan Team.

## GOA Rockfish

At its December 2004 meeting, the staff presented the Council with preliminary analyses of some options within the alternatives of the demonstration program to rationalize the Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA) rockfish fishery. The demonstration program is being developed in consultation with NOAA Fisheries, who was directed by Congressional legislation to establish a pilot rationalization program for the CGOA rockfish fishery. Staff analysis was intended to provide the Council with preliminary information concerning the rationalization alternatives and provide the Council the opportunity to refine the alternatives to the extent necessary and to request additional information concerning impacts of the alternatives. The Council selected preferred options in some instances and requested additional information from staff concerning other options.

The Council elected to include only LLP holders in the program and chose to retain a suboption that would include holders of interim licenses in the program. The option for maintaining a maximum retainable allowance (MRA) for Pacific cod in the offshore sector was revised to consider an MRA range of 1.4 percent to 7 percent. The Council also revised provisions concerning cooperative formation and eligibility. In addition, the Council developed additional provisions that would provide for cooperative management of catcher processor sideboards.

Lastly, the Council requested staff to provide additional information concerning incidental catch in the target rockfish fisheries and halibut, sablefish, and Pacific cod longline fisheries to aid in the consideration of allocations of Pacific cod, sablefish, shortraker/rougheye and thornyheads to the rockfish fishery.

A complete copy of the alternatives, elements, and options as updated through the December meeting is available on the Council website. Staff contacts are Mark Fina or Jim Richardson.



## HAPPY HOLIDAYS

# GOA Groundfish Rationalization

At its December 2004 meeting, the Council endorsed coordinated management in the federal and state fisheries, considered several aspects of its rationalization program for the Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries, and continued to refine its rationalization alternatives. The Council received a report from the State of Alaska Board of Fisheries Vice Chair Ed Dersham concerning progress of the Board of Fisheries in developing a Gulf management program for State waters and coordination of that management with the rationalization program in the Federal fisheries. In addition, the Council received two discussion papers from staff concerning the alternatives for rationalization of the Gulf groundfish fisheries. The first discussion paper summarized the work of the community committee that the Council formed to refine options intended to benefit communities in the Gulf. The second discussion paper reviewed several issues in the Council motion, requesting clarification and suggesting that the Council consider resolving several decision points on a policy basis in order to simplify the alternatives. Based on these reports and public testimony, the Council continued the process of refining its rationalization alternatives.

The Council gave its endorsement to the creation of a system of coordinated management of the state and federal fisheries to achieve the goals of increased efficiencies, improved safety, improved stock conservation, reduced bycatch and reduced gear conflict. The Council also expressed its support of the State of Alaska's pursuit of legislative authority enabling the Alaska Board of Fisheries to implement a dedicated access program under which the Board could allocate fishery resources based on historic landings of skippers, crew, vessel owners and other entities.

The Council's Gulf Rationalization Community Committee met for the first time on December 3 to discuss the design and implementation issues associated with the proposed Community Fisheries Quota (CFQ) and Community Purchase Program (CPP). The Council adopted the committee's recommendations on the overall purpose statement and eligibility criteria, and requested the committee meet again to address several outstanding issues. The Council approved further changes to the purpose statement for the CPP and amended the eligibility criteria for that program to include an option for communities with populations of less than 7,500 (but not less than 25). Further, the Council approved several placeholder options to establish use caps on an individual community and cumulative basis. The Council also approved a new eligibility option for both the CFQ and CPP, which would qualify all Western Gulf, Western Yakutat, and Central Gulf communities eligible under the GOA Amendment 66 Community Purchase Program for halibut and sablefish.

The Council refined several other provisions in the overall motion. First, the Council expressed its general intent that catch history should be credited a single time, either in the Federal or State fisheries. In addition, the Council expressed its intent that holders of interim LLP licenses should be excluded from the initial allocation under the program, as NOAA Fisheries should have

resolved all disputes concerning the status of licenses by the time of initial allocation.

Several aspects of the regionalization program were clarified. Specifically, the Council elected to include all "primary species" in the Central Gulf management area (including flatfish, rockfish, Pacific cod, and Area 620 and Area 630 pollock) and Central Gulf trawl sablefish in the regionalization component under all of the rationalization alternatives. The Council also modified options concerning cooperative formation, limitations on leasing of shares, owner on board requirements, overages, and processing of catcher vessel harvests on catcher processors.

The Council also tasked staff with updating the discussion paper on GOA crab and salmon bycatch controls for review at the February meeting. Additionally, the discussion paper will include trends in crab abundance, charts showing the distribution of crab biomass from survey data relative to existing closure areas, as well as charts depicting relative bycatch rates by area. Staff contact is Mark Fina or Jane DiCosimo. Staff contact on community issues is Nicole Kimball.

## IR/IO

At this meeting, the Council received a discussion paper from staff requesting clarification and modification of several components revised at the October meeting. In addition, staff also presented revised strawman alternatives for analysis purposes. Based on the information provided by staff and public comment, the Council refined the components and options for the proposed action and narrowed the problem statement to reflect changes in the proposed action.

The Council elected to remove Alaska plaice and arrowtooth flounder from the list of allocated species since they are not targeted species. The Council also removed several allocation options including retained and total catch over ABC and retained catch over TAC, but added retained catch of the sector over total catch of all sectors. To minimize the "race for fish," the Council elected to restrict access to the general limited access fishery to trawl participants (except Non-AFA Trawl Catcher Processor sector participants) with the appropriate LLP endorsements and catch history from 1995-2004. The Council simplified and reduced the number of PSC apportionment options to only two, one based on PSC usage and the second based on PSC usage but adjusted for flatfish allocation. The Council also elected to reinsert into the proposed action the threshold fishery option, but only for yellowfin sole. Finally, the Council clarified that vessels under 125' LOA that join a Non-AFA Trawl Catcher Processor cooperative, are required to have NOAA Fisheries approved flow scales onboard the vessel and maintain observer coverage of every haul, in order to comply with GRS standards.

A complete copy of the Council's motion concerning the components and options for allocating flatfish to the Non-AFA Trawl Catch Processor sector and developing a cooperative program is available at the Council's website. Staff contact is Jon McCracken.

# BSAI Pacific cod Allocations

The Council reviewed a discussion paper on the potential scope of a new FMP amendment to evaluate and modify the allocations of BSAI Pacific cod to all participating gear sectors (trawl, jig, hook-and-line, and pot). At its October meeting, the Council modified the elements and options for BSAI Amendment 80 and removed Pacific cod allocations from that amendment package. The Council subsequently initiated this discussion paper as a starting point for a new plan amendment to address BSAI Pacific cod allocations.

Upon review of the discussion paper, the Council approved two problem statements and a strawman document outlining draft components and options for the new amendment. The problem statements focus on the following two issues: 1) BSAI Pacific cod allocations to all gear sectors; and 2) apportionment of the BSAI Pacific cod sector allocations between the BS and AI subareas. The first part of the problem statement notes the annual inseason reallocations of TAC among gear sectors and concerns that the current BSAI Pacific cod allocations do not adequately reflect actual use by sector. The second part of the problem statement addresses the need to establish a methodology by which to maintain sector allocations and minimize competition among gear groups, should the BSAI Pacific cod TAC be apportioned between the BS and AI subareas during a future specifications process.

The Council's current motion represents a scoping document for public consideration. A discussion paper (or annotated motion) will be provided at the February meeting to identify any potential issues with the motion and further define the current components and options. The primary difference from the options provided under Am. 80 is the absence of eligibility requirements for each sector, the intent being to simplify the action and focus only on sector allocations. The February paper will include a discussion of the various eligibility requirements currently established for each sector and the issue of latent licenses in the trawl sectors. The Council is looking for specific feedback in February on the following: 1) options for allocating halibut PSC among the trawl sectors (Part B, Components 1 and 2); 2) how to consider catch history from the nine catcher processors whose fishing rights were extinguished under the AFA; and 3) the need for eligibility requirements. The full motion is available on the Council website. Staff contact is Nicole Kimball.

## Salmon Bycatch

Regulations to control the bycatch of chum salmon and Chinook salmon taken in BSAI trawl fisheries have been in place since the mid-1990s. These regulations established closure areas based on historical bycatch data. However, record numbers of salmon were taken as bycatch in 2003 and 2004, and information from the fishing fleet indicates that bycatch was exacerbated by the regulations, as much higher salmon bycatch rates were encountered outside of the closure areas.

In December, the Council approved a draft problem statement and five alternatives for initial consideration to address the salmon bycatch problem. In February, staff will bring back a preliminary discussion paper and action plan to address the analytical components and timelines associated with the various alternatives. The Council's written motion on this issue will be posted on the Council's web site. Staff contacts are Dave Witherell and Diana Stram.

## 2005 List of Fisheries

### *Comment Period Extended*

As required by the Marine Mammal Protection Act, NMFS annually publishes a List of Fisheries (LOF) that places all U.S. commercial fisheries into one of three categories based on the level of serious injury or mortality to marine mammals that occur in each fishery. The Proposed Rule for the LOF for 2005 was published December 2, 2004 (69 FR 70094). During the December meeting, the Council received a report on the LOF for 2005, and heard a review of the data and analyses NMFS used to move from Category III to Category II five Alaskan EEZ groundfish fisheries. These fisheries are the BSAI Pacific cod longline, BSAI Greenland turbot longline, BSAI pollock trawl, and BSAI flatfish trawl fisheries and the Bering Sea sablefish pot fishery. The SSC also received this report, and recommended that the Council consider requesting NMFS to extend the comment period on the Proposed Rule to permit time for the SSC and the public to review the technical reports that document the mortality-serious injury incidents, how observed mortalities are assigned to target fisheries, and how observed mortalities are scaled to estimate mortalities. After receiving the SSC report and hearing public comment, the Council requested that NMFS extend the period of comment so that more time is available for public review of the proposed changes. NMFS agreed to grant a 60-day extension of the comment period on the LOF for 2005, with comments now due March 4, 2005. The Council intends to receive additional information on this issue at their February 2005 meeting, including a report from the SSC. Staff contact is Bill Wilson.

## State Groundfish Proposals

The Alaska Board of Fisheries met in November to consider proposals for Cok Inlet fisheries, but delayed action on several proposals to allow Council review at its December meeting. The Council did not specifically comment on the proposals, but there are some which could be of interest to those fishing in either state or federal waters. The Board is scheduled to take action on proposals 1, 2, 5, 7, 8, 9, and 11 at its meeting in Anchorage, January 7-10, 2005. The relevant proposals may be viewed at [www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/fishinfo/meetinfo/fcal.php](http://www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/fishinfo/meetinfo/fcal.php).

# Crab Rationalization

In October 2004, NOAA Fisheries released for public comment its draft of the proposed rule intended to implement the Council's preferred alternative for rationalization of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands crab fisheries. (A copy of the proposed rule can be obtained from the NMFS' website [www.fakr.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/crab/crfaq.htm](http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/crab/crfaq.htm).) At its December meeting, the Council undertook a review of the proposed rule to comment on its consistency with the Council motion and the Council's intent.

The Council expressed its appreciation of the great efforts that NOAA Fisheries devoted to rapidly completing the proposed rule for the rationalization program. Although the proposed rule embodies many of aspects of the Council's program, the Council expressed its concern that in some areas the proposed rule does not accurately reflect the program defined by the Council motion or the Council's intent. The Council endorsed a detailed set of comments to be submitted to NOAA Fisheries. Some major comments of the Council include:

1. The rule allows either IFQ holders or IPQ holders to initiate binding arbitration. The motion intended to allow only IFQ holders to initiate arbitration. (§680.20(h)).
2. The rule assumes that "harvest cooperatives" under the Council motion are intended to be FCMA cooperatives. This interpretation appears to have led the NOAA Fisheries to conclude that any processor affiliated QS holder could not join a cooperative. The motion intended cooperatives for the limited purpose of coordinating harvest activity to allow all holders of harvest shares to achieve efficiencies and should not require FCMA qualification. The Council noted that the December 3, 2004 memorandum of NOAA General Counsel on Harvesting Cooperatives under the Crab Rationalization Program clarifies that the cooperative system intended by the Council can be implemented consistent with antitrust law, providing NOAA Fisheries with the latitude to address this critical flaw. (§680.21)
3. The rule allows a person to join a single cooperative on an "all or nothing" basis. Persons would not be permitted to join different cooperatives for different fisheries. This could limit the ability of some harvesters to achieve efficiencies in some fisheries. (§680.21(b)(4) and (5)).
4. The rule provides that crew shares (C shares) are converted to standard IFQ, if the holder joins a cooperative, effectively removing any owner on board requirement relative to C shares. The motion intended the C share pool to benefit persons actively on board vessels in the fisheries. (§680.21(d)(4)) and (§680.42(d)(5)).
5. The rule allows cooperative to freely engage in intercooperative transfers without regard to individual use caps. The motion intended intercooperative transfers to be conducted through members to allow the application of use caps. (§680.21(g)).
6. The rule provides that persons with 10 percent common ownership with a processor share holder would receive all A shares (and no B shares). The motion intended that the exclusively A share allocation be limited to the amount of

IFQ "controlled" by the IPQ holder, with the remainder allocated as Class A and Class B shares. (§680.40(h)(4)).

7. The rule revised the rules of the right of first refusal. The motion clearly identifies the terms of the right of first refusal. (§680.40(m) and (§680.41(c) and (d)).
8. The rule waives all use caps with respect to harvest shares. The motion establishes use caps. (§680.41(1)(2) and (4)).
9. The rule could limit the benefits from the license buyback to persons that purchased licenses after June 10, 2002 that were put over the use caps by the buyback. (§680.42(b)(1)(i)).
10. The rule does not apply a control date (June 10, 2002) to the acquisition of history in excess of the use caps for CDQ groups and vertical integration. The motion intended to apply this control date to all use caps. (§680.42(b)(3) and (4)).
11. The rule contains no provision for the crew loan program. This program is a critical component that should be implemented simultaneously with all other aspects of the program. In addition, the provision of seed money to fund the program from its inception would substantially increase the effectiveness of the loan program.
12. The rule exempts all PQS holders from the individual IFQ caps and applies a higher use cap to those persons. The motion intended a very limited exemption that would not apply to individuals. (§680.42(b)(4)).

Although the Council's comments may appear voluminous, the Council stated that its comments are not intended as criticism of NOAA Fisheries efforts in developing the proposed rule. Given the complexity of the program and the short time frame in which the rule was produced, the Council believes that NOAA Fisheries should be given tremendous credit for this work.

A complete copy of the Council's comments can be obtained at the Council's website. Staff contact is Mark Fina.

## FMP Revisions

The Council approved Amendments 83/75 to the BSAI and GOA Groundfish FMPs. The amendments include housekeeping changes that reorganize the content of the FMPs, technically edit the language, and update certain descriptions within the FMPs that do not reflect the current status of the groundfish fisheries. Additionally, the Council adopted a substantive change to the groundfish FMPs, namely to remove language in the BSAI and GOA FMPs that allows TAC or OY to be set higher than ABC or the sum of ABCs, respectively. This change has been identified as a priority item by the Council in the implementation of the recently-adopted programmatic groundfish management policy. The status of the Council's workplan for implementing the policy is available on our website. Staff contact is Diana Evans.

## Observer Program

The Council and SSC reviewed a preliminary analysis for an FMP amendment to restructure the funding and deployment mechanism in the North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program. Under the new system, NMFS would contract directly with observer providers for observer coverage, and this would be supported by a user fee and/or Federal funding. The problem statement identifies the data quality and disproportionate cost issues resulting from the current program structure. These include the inability of NMFS to determine when and where observers are deployed in the <100% covered fisheries, the inflexible nature of coverage levels fixed in regulation, the cost-equity issues among the various fishing fleets, and the difficulty in responding to evolving data and management needs in individual fisheries under the current program structure.

The six action alternatives under consideration range from including only Gulf groundfish vessels in the new program to including all vessels and processors operating in the Federal fisheries of the North Pacific. For the most part, the coverage levels established in regulation that are based on vessel length and processing volume would be eliminated, and a vessel/processor would only take an observer when requested to do so by NMFS. Under most of the alternatives, the fee assessed on vessels and processors for observer services would be based on a percentage of ex-vessel value. For the two alternatives that include the major fisheries of the BSAI that require 100% or 200% coverage (either by statute or specific program requirements), the fee for those fisheries would be based on the cost of a vessel's daily observer coverage.

The preliminary analysis also proposes a four-tier system of coverage, to replace the existing vessel-length based categories. This approach was presented for the first time for consideration by the public and Council. Vessels and processors would be placed into one of four coverage levels based on their fishery and operating mode. The purpose is to establish clear and uniform criteria for determining what level of coverage is required in each fishery. The Council noted that the concept has merit and would like it to be developed further. The Council also suggested modifying the terminology from "tier" to "level," so as not to be confused with stock assessment terminology.

The Council and the SSC requested several additions to the analysis for the initial review draft, including but not limited to: further discussion of the observer compensation and overtime issues; the potential contract model; criteria to be used in determining coverage levels in the <100% fisheries; discussion of the impact on government operating costs, and refinement of the coverage concept outlined above. Council and NMFS staff are meeting in January to plan the completion of the document. The Council requested that the Observer Advisory Committee meet prior to Council initial review of the analysis, which is tentatively scheduled for April 2005. The Council will also evaluate whether all affected sectors are adequately represented on the committee, specifically, the <60' sector and CDQ sector. Staff contact is Nicole Kimball.

## Habitat Areas of Particular Concern

The HAPC process was modified to update the proposal screening and scientific review process as recommended by the joint Plan Teams, and will be included as Appendix J within the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) EIS. Additionally, the Council requested a periodic review of existing HAPCs to allow for input of new scientific research. The Council will take final action on the EFH EIS during the February, 2005 meeting.

Within the proposed HAPCs, the Council has become aware that a portion of the Dixon Entrance HAPC lies in disputed waters over which both the United States and Canada claim jurisdiction. Because of territorial concerns, the Council directed staff to remove the Dixon Entrance option from the HAPC EA but still remain interested in exploring potential avenues to protect coral habitat areas at Dixon Entrance.

The Council will take final action on the HAPC EA during the February 2005 meeting. More information on the HAPC process and the environmental assessment (EA) alternatives can be found on the council website. Staff contact is Cathy Coon.

## Essential Fish Habitat

The Council received a report from NMFS regarding options being considered for Alternative 5b of the EFH EIS, including proposed option 3 which defines 'open areas' in the Aleutian Islands as encompassing areas fished based on location of trawl tows.

The Council recommended that the EFH EIS Alternative 5b incorporate the 3 suboptions as follows:

1. The original Alternative 5 b open areas for bottom trawling with coral and sponge bycatch caps and TAC reductions (as currently analyzed in the EFH EIS).
2. Revised open areas and modification based on Oceana's April 29<sup>th</sup> letter to NFPMC with:
  - a. No bycatch caps for corals/sponges, and no TAC reductions for any groundfish.
  - b. Including coral/sponge bycatch caps and TAC reductions for Atka mackerel and rockfish.
3. The revised industry proposal based on the bottom trawl areas where vessels fish (this map is available on the Council website).

All versions of Alternative 5B will include a post implementation research and monitoring component, as well as provide for a review process to evaluate subsequent re-opening of areas as appropriate (including a potential option for a 5-year sunset). Elements will include: Seafloor mapping, benthic research, evaluation of the efficacy of mitigation measures, and experimental fishing permits to identify additional open areas.

The Council will take final action on the EFH EIS in February, 2005. The full motion is available on the website. Staff contact is Cathy Coon.

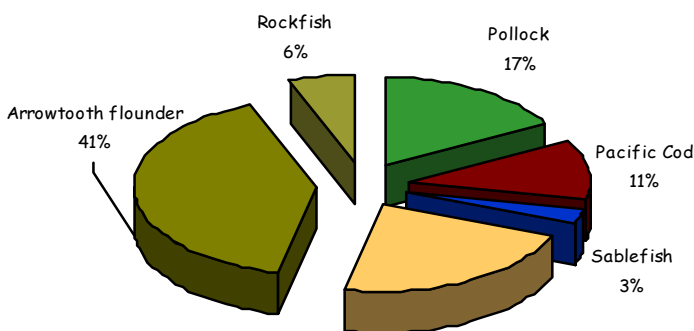
# Groundfish Specifications

## Gulf of Alaska

The Council approved the 2004 Gulf of Alaska Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report and recommended final catch specifications for the 2005 and 2006 groundfish fisheries. Under Amendments 48/48 to the BSAI and GOA Fishery Management Plans (FMPs), Overfishing (OFL) levels, Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) levels and Total Allowable Catch (TAC) levels may be specified for a period of up to two years. For this reason, catch specification recommendations are provided for both 2005 and 2006. Amendment 48 also allowed for biennial assessments for long-lived GOA species, such as rockfishes and flatfishes, as trawl surveys in the GOA are conducted on a biennial cycle.

The sum of the recommended ABCs for 2005 is 539,263 mt. The sum of the ABCs increased 6% from the 2004 ABC of 498,948 mt. The ABC levels increased in pollock (+27%), deep water flatfish (+12%), arrowtooth flounder (+11%), Pacific ocean perch (+2%), pelagic shelf rockfish (+2%) and northern rockfish (+5%). Of these stocks, a full assessment was prepared only for pollock this year, the other ABC increases were based on projected biomass increases. The species with ABCs that declined relative to 2004 are Pacific cod (-6%), sablefish (-4%), flathead sole (-13%), and demersal shelf rockfish (-9%). Of these stocks, full assessments were prepared for Pacific cod and sablefish. The ABCs for the remaining stocks were rolled over from the 2004 ABCs. Full assessments for all GOA stocks will be prepared next year.

2005 ABCs by species groups are shown below:



The abundances of Pacific cod, Pacific ocean perch, northern rockfish, dusky rockfish, thornyhead rockfish, flathead sole, Dover sole, and arrowtooth flounder are above target stock size. The abundances of pollock and sablefish are below target stock size. **None of the groundfish stocks are overfished or approaching an overfished condition.**

For most stocks, the Council established TACs equal to ABCs with some exceptions. These exceptions include Pacific cod, where the quota was reduced approximately 23.5% to account for removals in the state managed fishery, and those fisheries where the bycatch of other target species is a concern, specifically for Shallow water

flatfish (W and C GOA), Flathead sole (W and C GOA), Arrowtooth flounder (GOA wide) and Other slope rockfish (EYAK/SEO). For those fisheries, the TAC was set below the ABC. The Council recommended OFLs, ABCs and TACs for 2005 and 2006 are attached. The SAFE Report for the GOA groundfish for 2004 may be viewed at <http://www.afsc.noaa.gov/refm/stocks/assessments.htm>.

### Skates:

Due to continuing conservation concerns for GOA skate species, and the lack of available information prior to the 2005 trawl survey, the Council recommended splitting out Big skates and Longnose skates by species and area in the GOA. Gulfwide OFLs and area-specific ABCs and TACs were established separately for Big skates and for Longnose skates. For the "other" skates (combined *bathyraja spp.*) complex, OFL, ABC and TAC remain gulfwide.

### Shortraker and Rougheye rockfish:

Given enhanced observer sampling and identification protocols, the Council recommended breaking out shortraker rockfish and rougheye rockfish from the combined category in which they were being managed, such that individual OFLs, ABCs and TACs are specified by species.

### Prohibited Species Catch Limits:

The Council adopted the following halibut prohibited species catch limits, by season and gear apportionment for 2005:

#### 2005 Trawl

Jan 20 - Apr 1	550 mt
Apr 1 - Jul 5	400 mt
Jul 5 - Sep 1	600 mt
Sept 1 - Oct 1	150 mt
<u>Oct 1 - Dec 31</u>	<u>300 mt</u>
TOTAL	2,000 mt

#### 2005 Hook and Line

1st trimester	Jan 1 - Jun 10	250 mt
2nd trimester	Jun 10 - Sep 1	5 mt
3rd trimester	Sept 1 - Dec 31	35 mt
DSR	Jan 1 - Dec 31	10 mt
TOTAL		300 mt

#### Trawl fishery categories

Season	Shallow Water	Deep Water	Total
Jan 1 - Apr 1	450 mt	100 mt	550 mt
Apr 1 - Jul 5	100 mt	300 mt	400 mt
Jul 5 - Sep 1	200 mt	400 mt	600 mt
Sept 1 - Oct 1	150 mt	any rollover	150 mt
<u>Oct 1 - Dec 31</u>	<u>no apportionment</u>		<u>300 mt</u>
TOTAL	900 mt	800 mt	2,000 mt

### Other species and Dark rockfish recommendations:

The Council initiated an analysis of an amendment to revise the other species TAC calculation in the GOA FMP. Currently under the FMP, the TAC for other species is calculated as equal to the sum of the TACs for all of the target species. No OFL or ABC is specified for this complex. As an interim measure and prior to a more



comprehensive non-target species initiative, the Council recommended that an analysis examine the following alternatives:

Alt. 1: Status Quo (other species TAC = 5% of the sum of all target species TACs)

Alt. 2: Other species TAC ≤ 5% of the sum of the target species TACs. This would allow for some conservative flexibility in establishing other species TAC below the maximum allowed.

Alt. 3: Establishing an OFL, ABC and TAC for the aggregate other species complex.

The Council also initiated an amendment to remove Dark rockfish from the GOA FMP. Dark rockfish are currently part of the pelagic shelf rockfish complex, although they are primarily located in nearshore waters. Removing them from the FMP entails turning dark rockfish over to the State for management. This was previously done in 1998 in the GOA for black and blue rockfish, two other primarily nearshore rockfish species.

Staff will report back to the Council in February regarding the timing and prioritization of these two amendments. Staff contact is Diana Stram.

### Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands

The Council adopted the 2004 Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Groundfish SAFE report and specifications for the '05 and '06 fisheries. ([www.afsc.noaa.gov/refm/stocks/assessments.htm](http://www.afsc.noaa.gov/refm/stocks/assessments.htm))

The overfishing levels (OFLs), allowable biological catches (ABCs), and total allowable catches (TACs) that were approved by the Council are attached. Total groundfish biomass for 2005 (17.5 million mt) is down slightly from last year. Overall, the status of the stocks continues to appear favorable, although some stocks are declining due to poor recruitment in recent years. The sum of the ABCs for 2005, as recommended by the Scientific and Statistical Committee, is about 3 million mt, approximately 575,000 mt less than the sum of the 2004 ABCs. The Council set the sum of the TACs at 2 million mt.

The 2005 Eastern Bering Sea (EBS) *pollock* ABC was set at 1.96 million mt, a value below the maximum permissible level. The TAC was set at 1,478,500 mt. For the Aleutian Islands, pollock ABC and TAC were set at 29,400 mt and 19,000 mt.

The 2003 bottom trawl survey resulted in a *Pacific cod* biomass estimate that is down 1 percent from the 2003 estimate and near the minimum for the time series. Due to a declining trend in abundance, the 2005 ABC was set at 206,000 mt, below the maximum permissible level. The TAC was set equal to ABC.

The *sablefish* survey abundance index decreased 5 percent from 2003 and follows an 8 percent decrease between 2002 and 2003. Spawning biomass is projected to decrease slightly (2 percent) from 2004 to 2005. The ABC and TAC for the Bering Sea were set at 2,440 mt. The ABC and TAC for the Aleutian Islands were set at 2,620 mt.

*Yellowfin* sole biomass increased 13 percent from last year, which resulted in an increased ABC of 124,000 mt and TAC of 90,686 mt. Large uncertainties in the *Greenland turbot*

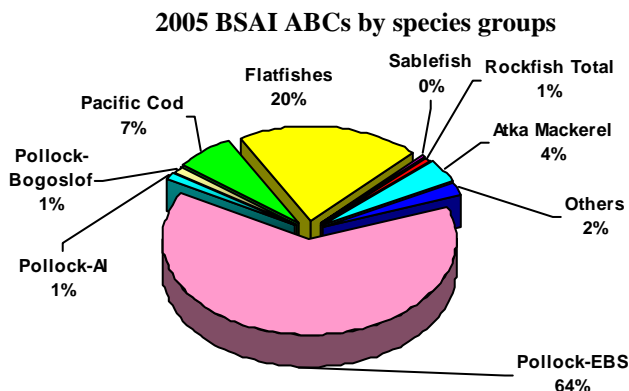
assessment led to an ABC of 3,930, a value less than the maximum permissible, and a TAC of 3,500 mt. *Arrowtooth flounder* biomass remains high, and ABC was set at 108,000 mt and a TAC of 12,000 mt. This year's EBS bottom trawl survey resulted in a *northern rock sole* biomass estimate that was 18 percent higher than last year. Nevertheless, the stock is expected to decline, as are several other flatfish stocks, due to low recruitment in the last decade. The ABC was set at 132,000 mt and the TAC at 41,500 mt.

*Pacific ocean perch* biomass estimates increased 23 percent since 2003, and the ABC and TAC increased to 14,600 and 12,600 mt BSAI-wide. Area-wide ABCs and TACs were set for *northern*, *shortraker*, and *rougeye rockfishes*. Specifications for *Other rockfish* were set for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands separately, but *shortspine thornyheads* were not broken out of the complex. The recommended 2005 ABC of 124,000 mt for *Atka mackerel* is 86 percent higher than the 2004 ABC; the TAC was set at 63,000 mt. **None of the groundfish stocks are overfished or approaching an overfished condition.**

Specification recommendations also are provided for 2006, which will start the fishing year until replaced by the final rule implementing final specification recommendations made at the Council's December 2005 meeting.

The Council adopted the same bycatch and seasonal apportionments of prohibited species catch (PSC) limits that were used in 2004, except that (1) the July 4<sup>th</sup> halibut mortality release date will be July 5 in 2005; (2) the herring PSC limit would be set at 2,012 mt; and (3) the *C. opilio* PSC limit would be set equal to 0.1133 percent of the 2004 abundance estimate (which was not available during the meeting). The Council also adopted new halibut discard mortality rates (DMR) for CDQ fisheries as recommended by IPHC staff (BSAI Appendix A at <http://www.afsc.noaa.gov/refm/stocks/assessments.htm>). Halibut DMRs are in place for the non-CDQ fisheries through 2006.

The Council also discussed a potential plan amendment to break out sharks, skates, sculpins, and octopi from the *other species* category and set specifications at the group level as an interim step for revising management of non-target species. The proposed action would result in separate specifications for the four groups. Council staff will prepare an action plan for review at the February Council meeting. A complementary amendment to the Gulf of Alaska FMP may result from Council discussion. Staff contact is Jane DiCosimo.



# Halibut

## *Subsistence*

In December, the Council approved several amendments to the subsistence halibut fishery regulations. In reviewing proposed changes to local areas, the Council adopted changes only for the **subsistence halibut fisheries** in the Kodiak road zone and Chiniak Bay, and the Sitka local area management plan (LAMP). For Kodiak, the only change was to lower the limit for stacking gear on a longline from three limits of gear (a maximum of 90 hooks) to two limits of gear (a maximum of 60 hooks) provided the subsistence users are both on board the vessel. A community harvest permit (CHP) program would be implemented that would allow an eligible tribe to fish under the current regulations ( $\leq 90$  hooks on a longline), with additional recordkeeping and reporting requirements. For the Sitka LAMP, the Council adopted the following changes to seasonal gear and vessel limits: (1) for June 1 through August 31: (a) prohibit power hauling, (b) limit the number of halibut per day per vessel to 5; and (c) lower the gear limit from 30 to 15 hooks per vessel; and (2) for September 1 through May 31: limit the number of halibut per day per vessel to 10. The Council also stated that it supports mandatory retention of rockfish, but did not recommend any specific changes to federal subsistence halibut regulations.

The Council took no action on proposed changes to Area 2C subsistence halibut fisheries, but notified the public that the Council will assess whether individual and vessel limits may be needed after reviewing two more years of subsistence fishery data in Fall 2006. The Council encouraged NMFS to implement cooperative tribal monitoring projects as soon as possible to assist in providing greater information to the Council and users. The Council took no action on proposed changes for Cook Inlet or Prince William Sound. The Council also did not add Port Tongass Village as an eligible community because the 'community' is comprised of a single individual.

The Council recommended five other changes to the subsistence halibut regulations:

1. Add Naukati to the list of eligible communities;
2. Add a possession limit equal to one daily limit in Areas 2C, 3A, and 3B;
3. Revise the definition of a charter vessel to be a vessel registered as such with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game; restrict the use of the charter vessel to the owner of record and the owner's immediate family (the owner must be an eligible halibut subsistence user); prohibit the use of a charter vessel for subsistence halibut fishing while clients are on board; and prohibit the transfer of subsistence halibut to clients;
4. Eliminate the \$400 customary trade limit, but limit customary trade to:
  - a. Rural residents eligible for subsistence harvest of halibut actual trip expenses may be reimbursed by other residents of the same rural community for ice, bait, food and/or fuel directly related to the harvest of subsistence halibut;
  - b. Members of an eligible Alaskan tribe eligible for subsistence harvest of halibut actual trip expenses may be reimbursed by other members of an Alaskan tribe for ice, bait, food and/or fuel expenses directly related to the harvest of subsistence halibut; and subsistence-caught halibut may not enter commerce;
5. Allow educational and ceremonial permits in non-subsistence use areas by tribes whose traditional fishing grounds are located within these areas.

## *Halibut/Sablefish IFQ Program*

The Council also recommended changes to the **commercial halibut/sablefish IFQ and CDQ fisheries**. The Council approved allowing Area 4C IFQ and CDQ fishermen to harvest their halibut quota shares in Area 4D. The Council will review the status of the fishery three years after this change is implemented. The International Pacific Halibut Commission must also change its regulations to allow the proposed change to be implemented. The IPHC staff has raised no objections to the proposed change. The IPHC will make its recommendation in late January. The Council has requested that implementing this action be prioritized so that it is in effect for the 2005 IFQ and CDQ fisheries.

A second package of regulatory amendments to the commercial IFQ fisheries will be on a separate timeline for implementation. The Council recommended the following changes to the regulations:

1. Allow emergency medical transfers, if the applicant has not received an EMT in two of the previous five years, and affidavits in support of the transfer are signed by a licensed medical doctor or nurse practitioner (including local representatives);
2. Require QS holders who are eligible to hire a skipper to have continuously owned the vessel for 12 months on which a hired skipper is used, with an exemption for the time period to allow the replacement of a vessel in the event of a vessel loss due to sinking or fire;
3. Require either a vessel monitoring system or check-in/check-out in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands sablefish fishery;
4. Change the product recovery rate for bled sablefish from 0.98 to 1.0;
5. Increase the limit from two to three blocks of halibut quota shares in all IPHC areas, unless unblocked QS is held (in which case the limit remains at one block);
6. Unblock QS in excess of 20,000 lb (equivalent to QS in 2004) in Areas 3B and 4A;
7. Increase the halibut sweep-up limit in Areas 2C and 3A from the 1996 QS equivalent of 3,000 lb to 5,000 lb;
8. In areas 3B and 4C, allow IFQ derived from category D QS to be fished on vessels  $\leq 60'$  LOA
9. Allow IFQs derived from all category B QS to be fished on vessels of any length in all halibut and sablefish fisheries (eliminate the fish-down prohibition in Southeast fisheries).

The motions are posted on the Council website. The Council reviewed four new proposals presented to the Council during testimony at the October meeting in Sitka and tasked staff with the development of the following regulatory amendments: (1) allow non-IFQ species to be frozen onboard while directed fishing for halibut and sablefish; (2) allow category A quota shares to be fished at any time and in any sequence with category B, C, and D quota shares; (3) allow the use of pot longline gear in the Bering Sea sablefish fishery during June; and (4) withdraw halibut and sablefish QS from initial recipients who have never fished any of those shares across all regulatory areas. The Council will discuss the timeline for action for these new proposals at its February meeting. Contact Jane DiCosimo (subsistence of IFQ) or Diana Evans (IFQ block program).



**Gulf of Alaska groundfish  
Council Recommendations for 2005-2006 OFLs, ABCs, and TACs**

Species		OFL 2004	ABC 2004	TAC 2004	*Catch 2004	OFL 2005	ABC 2005	TAC 2005	OFL 2006	ABC 2006	TAC 2006
Pollock	W (610)		22,930	22,930	22,930		30,380	30,380		30,452	30,452
	C (620)		26,490	26,490	23,736		34,404	34,404		34,485	34,485
	C (630)		14,040	14,040	14,332		18,718	18,718		18,762	18,762
	WYAK		1,280	1,280	144		1,688	1,688		1,691	1,691
	<b>SubTotal</b>	91,060	64,740	64,740		144,340	85,190	85,190	103,250	85,390	85,390
	EYAK/SEO	8,690	6,520	6,520	0	8,690	6,520	6,520	8,690	6,520	6,520
<b>Total</b>	99,750	71,260	71,260	61,142	153,030	91,710	91,710	111,940	91,910	91,910	
Pacific Cod	W		22,610	16,957	15,218		20,916	15,687		18,396	13,797
	C		35,800	27,116	26,794		33,117	25,086		29,127	22,064
	E		4,400	3,960	112		4,067	3,660		3,577	3,219
	<b>Total</b>	102,000	62,810	48,033	42,124	86,200	58,100	44,433	65,800	51,100	39,080
Sablefish	W		2,930	2,930	1,986		2,540	2,540		2,407	2,407
	C		7,300	7,300	7,002		7,250	7,250		6,870	6,870
	WYAK		2,550	2,550	2,133		2,580	2,580		2,445	2,445
	SEO		3,770	3,770	3,726		3,570	3,570		3,383	3,383
	<b>Total</b>	22,160	16,550	16,550	14,847	19,280	15,940	15,940	17,530	15,105	15,105
Deep water flatfish <sup>1</sup>	W		310	310	7		330	330		330	330
	C		2,970	2,970	614		3,340	3,340		3,340	3,340
	WYAK		1,880	1,880	55		2,120	2,120		2,120	2,120
	EYAK/SEO		910	910	4		1,030	1,030		1,030	1,030
	<b>Total</b>	8,010	6,070	6,070	680	8,490	6,820	6,820	8,490	6,820	6,820
Rex sole	W		1,680	1,680	526		1,680	1,680		1,680	1,680
	C		7,340	7,340	936		7,340	7,340		7,340	7,340
	WYAK		1,340	1,340	0		1,340	1,340		1,340	1,340
	EYAK/SEO		2,290	2,290	0		2,290	2,290		2,290	2,290
	<b>Total</b>	16,480	12,650	12,650	1,462	16,480	12,650	12,650	16,480	12,650	12,650
Shallow water flatfish <sup>2</sup>	W		21,580	4,500	136		21,580	4,500		21,580	4,500
	C		27,250	13,000	2,806		27,250	13,000		27,250	13,000
	WYAK		2,030	2,030	1		2,030	2,030		2,030	2,030
	EYAK/SEO		1,210	1,210	0		1,210	1,210		1,210	1,210
	<b>Total</b>	63,840	52,070	20,740	2,942	63,840	52,070	20,740	63,840	52,070	20,740
Flathead sole	W		13,410	2,000	831		11,690	2,000		11,111	2,000
	C		34,430	5,000	1,559		30,020	5,000		28,527	5,000
	WYAK		3,430	3,430	0		3,000	3,000		2,842	2,842
	EYAK/SEO		450	450	0		390	390		370	370
	<b>Total</b>	64,750	51,720	10,880	2,390	56,500	45,100	10,390	53,800	42,850	10,212
Arrowtooth flounder	W		23,590	8,000	2,837		26,250	8,000		27,924	8,000
	C		151,840	25,000	12,227		168,950	25,000		179,734	25,000
	WYAK		10,590	2,500	76		11,790	2,500		12,539	2,500
	EYAK/SEO		8,910	2,500	34		9,910	2,500		10,543	2,500
	<b>Total</b>	228,130	194,930	38,000	15,174	253,900	216,900	38,000	270,050	230,740	38,000

Species		OFL 2004	ABC 2004	TAC 2004	*Catch 2004	OFL 2005	ABC 2005	TAC 2005	OFL 2006	ABC 2006	TAC 2006
Other Slope rockfish	W		40	40	242		40	40		40	40
	C		300	300	527		300	300		300	300
	WYAK		130	130	76		130	130		130	130
	EYAK/SEO		3,430	200	27		3,430	200		3,430	200
	<b>Total</b>	5,150	3,900	670	872	5,150	3,900	670	5,150	3,900	670
Northern rockfish	W		770	770	1,025		808	808		755	755
	C		4,100	4,100	3,711		4,283	4,283		3,995	3,995
	E <sup>3</sup>		0	0	0		0	0		0	0
	<b>Total</b>	5,790	4,870	4,870	4,736	6,050	5,091	5,091	5,640	4,750	4,750
Pacific ocean perch	W	2,990	2,520	2,520	2,195	3,076	2,567	2,567	3,019	2,525	2,525
	C	9,960	8,390	8,390	8,446	10,226	8,535	8,535	10,008	8,375	8,375
	WYAK		830	830	877		841	841		813	813
	SEO		1,600	1,600	0		1,632	1,632		1,579	1,579
	E	2,890				2,964			2,860		
	<b>Total</b>	15,840	13,340	13,340	11,518	16,266	13,575	13,575	15,887	13,292	13,292
Shortraker rockfish	W						155	155		155	155
	C						324	324		324	324
	E						274	274		274	274
	<b>Total</b>					982	753	753	982	753	753
Rougheye rockfish	W						188	188		188	188
	C						557	557		557	557
	E						262	262		262	262
	<b>Total</b>					1,531	1,007	1,007	1,531	1,007	1,007
Shortraker/ rougheye rockfish	W		340	254	270						
	C		870	656	328						
	E		550	408	375						
	<b>Total</b>	2,510	1,760	1,318	973						
Pelagic shelf rockfish	W		370	370	277		377	377		366	366
	C		3,010	3,010	2,158		3,067	3,067		2,973	2,973
	WYAK		210	210	199		211	211		205	205
	EYAK/SEO		880	880	11		898	898		871	871
	<b>Total</b>	5,570	4,470	4,470	2,645	5,680	4,553	4,553	5,510	4,415	4,415
Demersal Shelf Rockfish	<b>Total</b>	690	450	450	228	640	410	410	640	410	410
Thornyhead rockfish	W		410	410	270		410	410		410	410
	C		1,010	1,010	400		1,010	1,010		1,010	1,010
	E		520	520	135		520	520		520	520
	<b>Total</b>	2,590	1,940	1,940	805	2,590	1,940	1,940	2,590	1,940	1,940
Atka Mackerel	<b>Total</b>	6,200	600	600	817	6,200	600	600	6,200	600	600
Big skates	W						727	727		727	727
	C						2,463	2,463		2,463	2,463
	E						809	809		809	809
	<b>Total</b>					5,332	3,999	3,999	5,332	3,999	3,999
Longnose skates	W						66	66		66	66
	C						1,972	1,972		1,972	1,972
	E						780	780		780	780
	<b>Total</b>					3,757	2,818	2,818	3,757	2,818	2,818
CGOA Big and longnose		4,435	3,284	1,423							
Other skates	<b>Total</b>		3,709	3,709	1,385	1,769	1,327	1,327	1,769	1,327	1,327
All skates (2003)		10,859	6,993	2,808							
Other Species	<b>Total</b>	NA	NA	12,942	1,625	NA	NA	13,871	NA	NA	13,525
<b>Total</b>		660,319	507,534	271,776	166,365	713,667	539,263	291,298	662,918	542,456	284,023

1/ "Deep water flatfish" includes Dover sole, Greenland turbot and deepsea sole.

2/ "Shallow water flatfish" includes rock sole, yellowfin sole, butter sole, starry flounder, English sole, Alaska plaice, and sar

3/ The EGOA ABC of 2 mt for northern rockfish has been included in the WYAK ABC for other slope rockfish.

NOTE: ABCs and TACs are rounded to nearest mt.

GW means Gulfwide.

\*Catch through 11/06/04 data source: NMFS

**Council approved OFLs, ABCs, and TACs for 2005 and 2006.**

**DRAFT**

Species	Area	2004				Recommended 2005			Recommended 2006		
		OFL	ABC	TAC	Catch**	OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	TAC
Pollock	EBS	2,740,000	2,560,000	1,492,000	1,248,817	2,100,000	1,960,000	1,478,500	1,944,000	1,617,000	1,487,756
	Aleutian Islands	52,600	39,400	1,000	1,128	39,100	29,400	19,000	39,100	29,400	19,000
	Bogoslof District	39,600	2,570	50	0	39,600	2,570	10	39,600	2,570	10
Pacific cod	BSAI	350,000	223,000	215,500	166,776	265,000	206,000	206,000	226,000	195,000	195,000
Sablefish	BS	4,020	3,000	2,900	748	2,950	2,440	2,440	2,690	2,310	2,310
	AI	4,620	3,450	3,100	912	3,170	2,620	2,620	2,880	2,480	2,480
Yellowfin sole	BSAI	135,000	114,000	86,075	68,822	148,000	124,000	90,686	133,000	114,000	90,000
Greenland turbot	Total	19,300	4,740	3,500	2,136	19,200	3,930	3,500	11,100	3,600	3,500
	BS	—	3,162	2,700	1,730	—	2,720	2,700	—	2,500	2,500
	AI	—	1,578	800	406	—	1,210	800	—	1,100	1,000
Arrowtooth flounder	BSAI	142,000	115,000	12,000	17,130	132,000	108,000	12,000	103,000	88,400	12,000
Rock sole	BSAI	166,000	139,000	41,000	47,875	157,000	132,000	41,500	145,000	122,000	42,000
Flathead sole	BSAI	75,200	61,900	19,000	16,611	70,200	58,500	19,500	56,100	48,400	20,000
Alaska plaice	BSAI	258,000	203,000	10,000	7,624	237,000	189,000	8,000	115,000	109,000	10,000
Other flatfish	BSAI	18,100	13,500	3,000	4,669	28,500	21,400	3,500	28,500	21,400	3,000
Pacific Ocean perch	BSAI	15,800	13,300	12,580	11,032	17,300	14,600	12,600	17,408	14,600	12,600
	BS	—	2,128	1,408	701	—	2,920	1,400	—	2,920	1,400
	AI total	—	11,172	11,172	10,331	—	11,680	11,200	—	11,680	11,200
	WAI	—	5,187	5,187	4,998	—	5,305	5,085	—	5,305	5,085
	CAI	—	2,926	2,926	2,970	—	3,165	3,035	—	3,165	3,035
	EAI	—	3,059	3,059	2,363	—	3,210	3,080	—	3,210	3,080
Northern rockfish	BSAI	8,140	6,880	5,000	4,166	9,810	8,260	5,000	9,480	8,040	5,000
Shortraker rockfish	BSAI	701	526	526	207	794	596	596	794	596	596
Rougheye rockfish	BSAI	259	195	195	189	298	223	223	298	223	223
Other rockfish	BSAI	—	—	—	—	1,870	1,400	1,050	1,870	1,400	1,050
	BS	1,280	960	460	304	—	810	460	—	810	460
	AI	846	634	634	309	—	590	590	—	590	590
Atka mackerel	Total	78,500	66,700	63,000	54,789	147,000	124,000	63,000	127,000	107,000	63,000
	WAI	—	24,360	20,660	17,341	—	46,620	20,000	—	40,230	20,000
	CAI	—	31,100	31,100	27,832	—	52,830	35,500	—	45,580	35,500
	EAI/BS	—	11,240	11,240	9,616	—	24,550	7,500	—	21,190	7,500
Squid	BSAI	2,620	1,970	1,275	814	2,620	1,970	1,275	2,620	1,970	1,275
Other species	BSAI	81,150	46,810	27,205	21,795	87,920	53,860	29,000	87,920	57,870	29,200
<b>Total</b>	<b>BSAI</b>	<b>4,193,736</b>	<b>3,620,535</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>1,676,853</b>	<b>3,509,332</b>	<b>3,044,769</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>	<b>3,093,360</b>	<b>2,547,259</b>	<b>2,000,000</b>

\***TECHNICAL CORRECTION:** The Council recommendation for the Bering Sea Greenland turbot TAC for 2006 was reduced from 2,700 mt to 2,500 mt to comply with the Council's policy to not have TAC exceed ABC; 200 mt was added to the Aleutian Islands TAC so the total Greenland turbot TAC remained the same at 3,500 mt.



16601  
July 21, 2004

**- CAPTAIN OF THE PORT WESTERN ALASKA NAVIGATIONAL ADVISORY -**

The Captain of the Port Western (COTP) Alaska has noted a recent increase in non-compliance with the Title 33, Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), Part 160 Advance Notice of Arrival (ANOA) requirements. Specifically of concern are the number of submissions not supplied within the required time frames, lack of submissions for subsequent port calls in Western Alaska, and submissions with incomplete information. This advisory supersedes my ANOA policy letter dated April 8, 2003 and serves two general purposes.

The first purpose is to remind owners, operators and agents of the requirements for submitting timely and complete ANOA's in order for your vessel to be cleared for port entry. ***Failure to do so will cause your vessel to be delayed and/or be subjected to civil penalty proceedings.*** The second purpose is to solicit vessel operators and agents to voluntarily provide routine position updates through the use of the following standards of care described in paragraphs (2a), (2b), (4a), and (4b). The following current guidance is provided for ANOA submissions for vessels greater than 300 gross tons as measured by the International Tonnage Convention (ITC) and is effective immediately:

1. Requirements for Initial Port of Call: Commercial vessel operators shall submit an ANOA to the National Vessel Movement Center (NVMC) 96 hours prior to every voyage into COTP Zone Western Alaska. Vessel operators are strongly encouraged to use the most current Notice of Arrival forms (version 4.0), which are available on the internet at <http://www.nvmc.uscg.gov>
2. Requirements for Subsequent Ports of Destination: Following arrival into the initial port of destination in Western Alaska, ANOAs shall be submitted for any voyages to subsequent ports of destination in Western Alaska. A port of destination is defined as any place where a vessel is docked, at anchor, or moored to another vessel that is at anchor. There are two locally approved waivers provided under 33 CFR 160.214 to relieve operators from submitting ANOAs for subsequent ports of destination in Western Alaska. To receive this waiver, vessel owners, operators, or their agents must meet one of the following standards of care described in paragraph (2a) or (2b).
  - a. Standard of Care for Position Updates (Preferred Option): Vessels may utilize a vessel tracking and monitoring system which would allow this office to track vessels on a real time basis via the internet. There are several providers of this service in Alaska.
  - b. Standard of Care for Position Updates (Acceptable Option): Vessels in non-liner trade (e.g. foreign freight vessels, freight and tank barges), may provide electronic updates to MSO Anchorage using a spreadsheet format approved by this office which details the location and operation of their vessel. An approved spreadsheet is provided as Enclosure (1).
3. Requirements for Crew Changes: An updated ANOA shall be submitted to the NVMC for any crew changes while the vessel is operating in Western Alaska. When reporting crew change information to the NVMC, the following information as described in 33 CFR Table 160.206 is required to be submitted.

4. Requirements for Vessels Operating Exclusively with COTP Zone Western Alaska: 33 CFR Part 160.203(b)(2) provides that vessels operating *exclusively* within a COTP Zone are not required to submit notice of arrivals for any ports of destination within the COTP Zone. I strongly recommend, however, that these vessels also voluntarily comply with the standards of care described in paragraph (4a) and (4b.)

a. Standard of Care for Position Updates (Preferred Option): Vessels may utilize a vessel tracking and monitoring system which would allow MSO Anchorage to track vessels on a real time basis via the internet. There are several providers of this service in Alaska.

b. Standard of Care for Position Updates (Acceptable Option): Vessels in non-liner trade (e.g. freight and tank barges) may provide electronic updates to MSO Anchorage using an format approved by this office which details the location and operation of their vessel. An approved spreadsheet is provided as Enclosure (1).

5. Waiver for certain commercial fishing industry catcher vessels: As provided for under 33 CFR 160. 214, catcher vessels greater than 300 gross tons that deliver to a single shoreside processing plant (including those vessels making deliveries to the FPV Northern Victor and the FPV Arctic Enterprise) need not provide subsequent ANOAs once the vessel has initially arrived in the COTP zone Western Alaska for the fishing season. However, catcher vessels greater than 300 gross tons that make port calls to more than one port must submit a new ANOA for each subsequent port of destination. This exemption in this paragraph does not apply to any catcher processor or fish processing vessels.

I would like to reiterate that the standards of care described in paragraphs (2a) and (2b) and (4a) and (4b) are strictly voluntary and do not carry the weight of law or regulation. It is my hope that responsible operators will voluntarily adopt these new standards when operating in Western Alaska. The goal of these regulations and standards is to increase the U.S. Coast Guard's maritime domain awareness of vessel operations for the safety and security of all vessels operating in western Alaska.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding these ANOA requirements or guidelines, please feel free to contact LCDR Chris Woodley at (907) 271-6723.

Sincerely,



R. J. MORRIS  
Captain, U.S. Coast Guard  
Captain of the Port  
Western Alaska

Dist: Marine Safety Office Puget Sound  
Seventeenth Coast Guard District (m) (p)  
North Pacific Fishing Vessel Owner's Association  
Alaska Marine Exchange  
Marine Exchange of Puget Sound

**DRAFT NPFMC THREE-MEETING OUTLOOK - updated 12/19/04**

February 7, 2005 Seattle, Washington	April 4, 2005 Anchorage, Alaska	June 1, 2005 Girdwood, Alaska
AFA: <b>Review co-op reports/agreements</b>	Bairdi Crab Amendment: <b>Initial Review (T)</b>	Bairdi Crab Amendment: <b>Final Action (T)</b>
GOA Rockfish Demonstration: <b>Preliminary Review (T)</b>	CDQ Management of Reserves: <b>Initial Review (T)</b>	CDQ Management of Reserves: <b>Final Action (T)</b>
GOA Rationalization: <b>Review crab/salmon bycatch data and Community Committee Report</b>	GOA Rockfish Demonstration: <b>Initial Review (T)</b>	Crab Overfishing: <b>Initial Review (T)</b>
HAPC: <b>Final Action</b>	GOA Rationalization: <b>Action as necessary</b>	GOA Rockfish Demonstration: <b>Final Action (T)</b>
EFH: <b>Final Action</b>		GOA Rationalization: <b>Action as necessary</b>
Scallop SAFE: <b>Review</b>	PSEIS Priorities: <b>Review</b>	
Scallop FMP Update: <b>Final Action</b>		
Flatfish IRIU Trailing Am80: <b>Review Progress</b>	Flatfish IRIU Trailing Am80: <b>Initial Review (T)</b>	Flatfish IRIU Trailing Am80: <b>Final Action (T)</b>
	Observer Program: <b>Initial Review (T)</b>	Observer Program: <b>Final Action (T)</b>
Rockfish Management: <b>Review Discussion Paper</b>	Rockfish Management: <b>Determine next steps</b>	
AI Special Management Area: <b>Review Discussion paper</b>	AI Special Management Area: <b>Determine next steps</b>	
IFQ Amendments: <b>Review Preliminary Action Plan</b>		
GOA Pollock Trip Limits: <b>Review Discussion Paper</b>		
GOA Dark Rockfish and Other Species: <b>Review Action Plan</b>		
GOA Other Species Calculation: <b>Review Action Plan</b>	GOA Other Species Calculation: <b>Initial Review (T)</b>	GOA Other Species Calculation: <b>Final Action (T)</b>
GOA and BSAI Other Species Breakout: <b>Review Action Plan</b>		
P.cod sector allocations: <b>Finalize Alternatives</b>	P.cod sector allocations: <b>Action as Necessary</b>	P.cod sector allocations: <b>Action as Necessary</b>
BSAI salmon bycatch: <b>Action Plan/Finalize Alternatives</b>	BSAI salmon bycatch: <b>Action as Necessary</b>	BSAI salmon bycatch: <b>Action as Necessary</b>

TAC - Total Allowable Catch  
 BSAI - Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands  
 IFQ - Individual Fishing Quota  
 AFA - American Fisheries Act  
 HAPC - Habitat Areas of Particular Concern  
 LLP - License Limitation Program  
 PSC - Prohibited Species Catch

MSA - Magnuson Stevens Act  
 GOA - Gulf of Alaska  
 SSL - Steller Sea Lion  
 VIP - Vessel Incentive Program  
 SEIS - Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement  
 CDQ - Community Development Quota  
 IRIU - Improved Retention/Improved Utilization

SAFE - Stock assessment and fishery evaluation  
 VMS - Vessel Monitoring System  
 CV - Catcher Vessel CP- Catcher Processor  
 SSC - Scientific & Statistical Committee  
 FMP - Fishery Management Plan  
 DPSEIS - Draft Programmatic Groundfish SEIS  
**(T) Tentatively scheduled**





North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
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### NPFMC Tentative Meeting Dates for 2005-2007

	<b>February</b> Week of/ Location	<b>April</b> Week of/ Location	<b>June</b> Week of/ Location	<b>October</b> Week of/ Location	<b>December</b> Week of/ Location
2005	7/Seattle, Downtown Renaissance Madison (800) 278-4159	4/Anchorage	1/Girdwood	3/Anchorage	5/Anchorage
2006	6/Seattle	3/Anchorage	5/Kodiak*	2/Dutch Harbor	4/Anchorage
2007	5/Portland*	2/Anchorage	4/Sitka*	1/Anchorage	3/Anchorage

\*Meeting dates subject to change depending on availability of meeting space. Any changes will be published in the Council's newsletter.