

C-4 GOA Chinook salmon PSC motion

June 12, 2011

The Council adopts the preferred alternative described below.

Problem statement:

Magnuson-Stevens Act National Standards require balancing optimum yield with minimizing bycatch and minimizing adverse impacts to fishery dependent communities. Chinook salmon prohibited species catch (PSC) taken incidentally in GOA pollock fisheries is a concern, historically accounting for the greatest proportion of Chinook salmon taken in GOA groundfish fisheries. Salmon bycatch control measures have not yet been implemented in the GOA, and 2010 Chinook salmon bycatch levels in the area were unacceptably high. Limited information on the origin of Chinook salmon in the GOA indicates that stocks of Asian, Alaska, British Columbia, and lower-48 origin are present, including ESA-listed stocks.

The Council is implementing initial Chinook salmon PSC management measures for the GOA pollock fishery, including a hard cap and full retention requirement with improved monitoring and sampling opportunities to limit Chinook salmon PSC and support development of a sampling protocol to determine the stock of origin of Chinook taken by the GOA pollock fleet. Management measures are necessary to provide immediate incentive for the GOA pollock fleet to be responsive to the Council's objective to minimize Chinook salmon PSC.

Preferred Alternative:

Chinook salmon PSC limit and increased monitoring.

Component 1: PSC limit:

25,000 Chinook salmon PSC limit.

Apportion limit between Central and Western GOA:

Central GOA: 18,316

Western GOA: 6,684

Chinook salmon PSC limits shall be managed by NMFS in-season similar to halibut PSC limits.

If it is not possible to implement a Chinook salmon PSC limit in the first year for the full calendar year, it shall be implemented midyear for C and D seasons. The PSC limits under this scenario for C and D seasons, combined, will be as follows:

Central GOA: 8,929 Chinook salmon

Western GOA: 5,598 Chinook salmon

Component 2: Improved Chinook salmon PSC estimates:

Extend existing 30% observer coverage requirements for vessels 60'-125' to trawl vessels less than 60' directed fishing for pollock in the Central or Western GOA no later than January 1, 2013. Observer deployment under the restructured North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program will supersede expansion of coverage under this action.

Require full retention of all salmon in pollock trawl fisheries.

NMFS shall work with the processors to evaluate and address the quality of sorting at the plants to assist improvements in observer salmon estimates. The Council encourages NMFS to apply lessons learned from the BSAI to the GOA where applicable.

Processing plants, with assistance from NMFS, should endeavor to ensure their fish tickets accurately reflect the species and number of salmon, which will be delivered and sorted as salmon bycatch at their facilities.

NMFS is also encouraged to collaborate with industry to facilitate information sharing in order to speed delivery of in-season data (total catch and salmon counts, by species) for the NORPAC data system and Catch Accounting System.

C-4 GOA Chinook salmon PSC motion, attachment

Preferred alternative Chinook salmon annual PSC limit:

Central GOA: 18,316

Western GOA: 6,684

Preferred alternative for a Chinook salmon PSC limit for a midyear implementation:

The preferred alternative (PA) PSC limits for the first year under a midyear implementation are the result of the PA annual PSC level in each area multiplied by the average bycatch taken in the C and D seasons within each area across the years noted in the PA and adjusted upward by 25 percent.

According to Table 50 on page 76, the average level of bycatch 2001-2010, drop 2007 and 2010, for the C and D seasons was 39 percent in the Central GOA and 67 percent in the Western GOA.

Midyear PSC limit calculation:

Central GOA: $(18,316 \times 0.39) \times 1.25 = 8,929$

Western GOA: $(6,684 \times 0.67) \times 1.25 = 5,598$