



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
P.O. Box 21668  
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

February 2, 2015

## Agenda B-2: NMFS Management Report

### Status of Actions Report online

Status of Actions report is provided in **Attachment 1** and is updated daily at:  
<http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/status/amendments.pdf>.

### Progress on Rulemaking

Highlights on progress since the December 2014 meeting include:

- Approval of Amendment 104 to the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Fishery Management Plans (FMP) – Establishment of Skate Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPC)  
**Approved January 5, 2015:** <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/frules/80fr1378.pdf>
- Final rule for Amendment 107 to the BSAI FMP – Establishment of vessel transit areas through Walrus Protection Areas at Round Island and Cape Peirce in Northern Bristol Bay  
**Effective February 4, 2015:** <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/frules/80fr194.pdf>
- Notice of Availability for Amendment 31 to the BSAI Crab FMP – C-Share Active Participation Requirements and Modification of Cooperative Application Deadline  
**Notice of Availability - December 15, 2014 - Comment through February 13, 2015**  
<http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/prules/79fr74058.pdf>

Proposed rule for Amendment 31 to the BSAI Crab FMP  
Published December 24, 2014. Comment period closed on January 23, 2015  
<http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/prules/79fr77427.pdf>

- Proposed rule to Implement Cost Recovery for AFA, AI Pollock, Amendment 80, and CDQ Programs  
**Proposed Rule - January 7, 2015 - Comment through February 6, 2015**  
<http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/prules/80fr936.pdf>



- Notice of Availability for Amendment 45 to the BSAI Crab FMP – Remove Non-AFA Pacific Cod Sideboards for Freezer Longline Vessels in the GOA  
**Notice of Availability – February 2, 2015 – Comment through April 3, 2015**  
<http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/prules/80fr5499.pdf>

### **Consultation with the Council on Changes from Proposed to Final Rules**

NMFS anticipates publishing a final rule for Amendment 31 to the King and Tanner Crab FMP, Amendments 100/91 to the BSAI and Gulf of Alaska (GOA) FMPs, and the final BSAI and GOA 2015/2016 harvest specifications between the February 2015 and April 2015 Council meetings. Consistent with past practice and our requirements under section 304(b)(3) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, we are consulting with the Council before publishing final rules that may make revisions to the proposed regulations. NMFS has not identified any substantive changes that would be made between the proposed and final regulations. We note that these rules are still under review, and we will consult with the Council if there are substantive changes.

### **Emergency Rule Petition**

On December 18, 2014 NMFS received a petition for emergency rulemaking from the State of Alaska co-signed by all six voting members on the Council from Alaska. The petition asked NMFS to “promulgate emergency regulations to reduce the BSAI halibut prohibited species catch (PSC) limits for the North Pacific groundfish fisheries by 33 percent in 2015.” The petition stated that “data indicate that a reduction in the BSAI halibut PSC limit by 33 percent, which equates to about 20 percent reduction in actual BSAI bycatch from 2014, would result in an Area 4CDE catch limit of about 0.96 mlbs [960,000 pounds].” Area 4CDE corresponds to a large area of the eastern and northern Bering Sea.

The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) recommended an Area 4CDE catch limit of 1,285,000 pounds at its 2015 Annual Meeting that concluded on January 30, 2015. NMFS is in the process of reviewing the emergency rule petition in light of the recent IPHC recommendation for Area 4CDE catch limits in 2015.

The review of petitions for emergency rulemaking are governed by section 305(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1855(c), and the National Marine Fisheries Service’s (NMFS) Policy Guidelines for the Use of Emergency Rules (March 31, 2008). NMFS promulgates emergency regulations only in extremely urgent, special circumstances where substantial harm to or disruption of the resource, fishery, or community would occur in the time it would take to follow the standard rulemaking process. NMFS must consider whether circumstances warrant forgoing consultation with the Council, advance notice, public comment, and deliberative consideration of the impacts on all participants in the fishery. NMFS is in the process of reviewing the request for an emergency rule and will provide a response soon.

## **Tribal Consultation Update**

On December 9, NMFS held a tribal consultation with representative from the Tanana Chiefs Conference and the Association of Village Council Presidents. These tribal governments had requested a consultation to discuss the Council's salmon bycatch management measures before the Council meeting. The final report of that consultation is available on our website at <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/tc/tcbycatchreport120914.pdf>.

On January 8, 2015, NMFS Headquarters staff held a tribal consultation with representatives several different tribal governments from the community of St. Paul, Alaska. NMFS Alaska Region staff attended. These tribal governments requested consultation with NMFS Headquarters staff on issues related to halibut bycatch in the BSAI groundfish fisheries and the importance of the directed halibut fishery to these communities. NMFS Headquarters staff has the lead on providing a report of that consultation.

## **Staffing Changes**

Karen Palmigiano will be transferring from the Alaska Region Sustainable Fisheries office to the West Coast Regional Office in Seattle on March 5, 2015. During her time in the Alaska Region, Karen worked on a number of BSAI Crab Rationalization Program rulemaking projects and served as the project lead to develop and implement the cost recovery program for the AFA, AI Pollock, Amendment 80, and CDQ programs. While we will miss Karen as a member of our staff, we are pleased that she will continue her career with NMFS as part of the West Coast Region team.

Sustainable Fisheries published a recruitment announcement for two fishery management specialist positions from January 7 through January 20, 2015. These positions could fill a variety of analytical and rule making roles within Sustainable Fisheries depending on the specific expertise of the applicant. These positions could fill gaps we have in both our Catch Share Branch, Ecosystem Branch, and in our vacant Observer Program Liaison position. We hope to complete the hiring process in the next month and have the new staff members on board as soon as possible.

**Inseason Management Report**

2015 catch (metric tons) is through January 24, and 2014 catch is through January 25. Additional information from daily catch reports and information bulletins are available at: <http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sustainablefisheries/catchstats.htm>

**Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands****Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Pollock**

NMFS reallocated 1,900 mt of CDQ Aleutian Islands pollock TAC to the CDQ Bering Sea pollock TAC. The Aleut Corporation has stated that it plans to have vessels fish their Aleutian Islands pollock TAC. At this time, NMFS does not plan to reallocate Aleutian Islands Aleut Corporation pollock to the Bering Sea subarea.

**Aleutian Islands Pacific cod**

Nine vessels have reported 1,439 mt relative to 5 vessels reporting 23 mt in 2014. NMFS is setting a 2015 non-CDQ Pacific cod directed fishing allowance around 6,400 mt. In 2014, NMFS closed the Federal Aleutian Islands Pacific cod directed fishery on March 16, 2014.

**BSAI Hook-and-line catcher/processors**

This sector has similar catch rates in 2015 relative to 2014.

Year	2015	2014
Total catch	11,277	11,584
A season TAC	55,116	56,108
Remaining A season TAC	43,839	44,524
Number of vessels	26	26

**BSAI Pot catcher vessels (CVs) greater than or equal to 60 ft length overall**

In 2015, total catch is lower with less vessels targeting Pacific cod relative to 2014.

Year	2015	2014
Total catch	3,495	9,602
A season TAC	9,507	9,678
Remaining A season TAC	6,012	76
A season closure	n/a	January 24
Number of vessels	12	31

**Pot catcher/processors**

In 2015, total catch is lower with the same number of vessels targeting Pacific cod relative to 2014.

Year	2015	2014
Total catch	946	1,670
A season TAC	1,698	1,728
Remaining A season TAC	752	58
A season closure	n/a	January 26
Number of vessels	4	4

**Hook-and-line or pot gear less than 60 feet length overall**

NMFS reallocated 1,700 mt of the A season jig allocation to the less than 60 feet allocation.

Year	2015	2014
Total catch	5,197	4,294
Annual TAC	6,138 (4,438 + 1,700 from jig)	6,218 (4,518 + 1,700 from jig)
Remaining TAC	941	1,924
Closure	February 2	February 4
Number of vessels	19 (2 hook-and-line, 17 pot)	19 (5 hook-and-line, 14 pot)

**Trawl catcher vessels**

In 2015, 25 CVs have reported 807 mt in the Pacific cod target relative to 23 CVs reporting 2,724 mt in the Pacific cod target in 2014.

Year	2015	2014
Total Catch	863	2,737
A season TAC	36,426	37,079
Remaining TAC	35,563	34,342
A season closure	n/a	None
Number of vessels	Pacific cod target 25	Pacific cod target 23
	All targets 55	All targets 42

**Halibut mortality – Preliminary for 2015 trawl gear (no CDQ)**

In 2015, the total halibut mortality in the BSAI is 36 mt lower and in the GOA is 1 mt lower relative to 2014. Overall halibut mortality rates are lower in 2015 compared to this time last year.

Area and Gear	2015			2014		
	Halibut mortality	Groundfish	Rate	Halibut mortality	Groundfish	Rate
BSAI non-pelagic trawl CP	54	9,798	0.006	89	12,961	0.007
BSAI non-pelagic trawl CV	23	2,201	0.010	19	3,705	0.005
BSAI pelagic trawl CP	1	5,307	0	0	2,463	0
BSAI pelagic trawl CV	9	10,512	0.001	0	6,108	0
BSAI hook-and-line CP	33	13,386	0.002	47	14,040	0.003
BSAI hook-and-line CV	0	234	0	1	311	0.003
BSAI Total	121	41,438	0.003	157	39,587	0.004
GOA non-pelagic trawl CV	6	920	0.007	17	1,570	0.011
GOA pelagic trawl CV	0	483	0	0	144	0
GOA hook-and-line CP	11	1,128	0.010	2	172	0.012
GOA hook-and-line CV	17	1,293	0.013	16	1,226	0.013
GOA Total	34	3,824	0.009	35	3,113	0.011

**Gulf of Alaska**

**Pacific cod Western GOA**

Sector	2015				2014			
	A season allocation	Catch Jan 24	A season closed	# of vessels Jan 24	A season allocation	Catch Jan 25	A season closed	# of vessels Jan 25
Hook-and-line C/P	2,879	853	n/a	3	2,436	151	Mar 4	7
Hook-and-line CV	185	0	n/a	0	156	0	Mar 13	<3
Jig	406	2	n/a	< 3	344	3	Jun 10	0
Pot CV/CP	5,230	2,977	n/a	34	4,425	4,152	Jan 22	4
Trawl CV	7,317	69	n/a	8	6,191	1,065	Feb 23	35
Trawl C/P	238	0	Jan 20	0	201	0	Jan 20	18
Total	16,255	3,901		45	13,753	5,371		64

### Pacific cod Central GOA

In 2015, all sectors have higher catch relative to 2014.

Sector	2015				2014			
	A season allocation	Catch Jan 24	A season closed	# of Vessels Jan 24	A season allocation	Catch Jan 25	A season closed	# of vessels Jan 25
Hook-and-line C/P	1,851	73	n/a	< 3	1,603	0	Apr 4	0
Hook-and-line CV <50 ft	4,199	768	n/a	32	3,636	695	Mar 11	33
Hook-and-line CV >=50 ft	2,528	207	n/a	23	2,189	212	Mar 15	5
Jig	552	34	n/a	10	478	15	n/a	9
Pot CV/CP	8,036	4,133	n/a	42	6,959	2,246	Feb 13	25
Trawl CV	9,526	497	n/a	18	8,249	98	Apr 1	12
Trawl C/P	903	0	Jan 20	0	782	0	Mar 14	0
Total	27,594	5,712		125	23,896	3,266		84

### GOA Pollock

Effort in the pollock fisheries is low with most vessels targeting Pacific cod.

2015 Allocations	610	620	630	640
A season allocation	3,632	30,503	11,316	4,719 (annual)
A season catch	19	223	402	0

**Attachment 1: Status of Actions**

<b>FMP Amendment Status</b>	<b>Lead Council and SF Staff</b>	<b>Date of Council Final Action</b>	<b>Start Regional Review</b>	<b>Received by GCAK</b>	<b>Transmittal Date of Action to NMFS HQ for Review</b>	<b>Proposed FMP Amendment Notice of Availability Published in Federal Register</b>	<b>Proposed Rule Published in Federal Register</b>	<b>Final Rule or Notice of Approval Published in Federal Register</b>
Amendment 31 (KTC) – C – Share Active Participation and IFQ/IPQ application deadline modification <b>Decision Date: March 13, 2015</b>	Fina Palmigiano	April 2008	PR: 08/22/11	PR: 09/13/11	<b>PR: 12/09/14</b>	<b>December 15, 2014 79 FR 74058 EOC: 02/13/15</b>	<b>December 24, 2014 79 FR 77427 EOC: 01/23/15</b>	
Amendment 44 (KTC) BSAI Crab ROFR	Marrinan Palmigiano	October 2014	<b>PR: 01/05/15</b>	<b>PR: 01/08/15</b>				
Amendment 45 (KTC) GOA Pacific Cod non-AFA crab sideboards FLL <b>Decision Date: May 1, 2015</b>	McCracken Kelly	June 2013	PR: 05/23/14	PR: 05/29/14	<b>PR: 01/27/15</b>	<b>February 2, 2015 80 FR 5499 EOC: 04/03/15</b>		
Amendments 100 (BSAI) and 91 (GOA) Management of Grenadiers Approved: August 04, 2014	DiCosimo Harrington	February 2014	PR: 04/01/14 FR: 11/13/14	PR: 04/01/14 FR: 11/14/14	PR: 04/29/14	May 5, 2014 79 FR 25558 EOC: 07/07/14	May 14, 2014 79 FR 27557 EOC: 06/13/14	
Amendment 104 (BSAI) HAPC skate sites – FMP only	Witherell Olson/Kelly	February 2013	FMP: 07/28/14	FMP: 07/29/14	FMP: 10/01/14	October 8, 2014 79 FR 60802 EOC: 12/08/14	N/A	<b>January 9, 2015 80 FR 1378 Approved: January 5, 2015</b>
Amendment 107 (BSAI) Establishing transit areas through walrus protection areas (Round Island) <b>Approved: December 19, 2014</b>	MacLean Eich	April 2014	PR: 07/15/14 <b>FR: 12/01/14</b>	PR: 07/21/14 <b>FR: 12/02/14</b>	PR: 09/18/14 <b>FR: 12/16/14</b>	September 24, 2014 79 FR 57041 EOC: 11/24/14	October 3, 2014 79 FR 58222 EOC: 11/03/14	<b>January 5, 2015 80 FR 194 Effective: 02/04/15</b>
Amendment 108 (BSAI) 100 (GOA) 46 (KTC) LLP Exemption Correction -- FMP Only	Marrinan Kelly	December 2014	<b>PR: 01/12/15</b>	<b>PR: 01/14/15</b>			N/A	



<b>Regulatory Amendment Status</b>	<b>Lead Council and SF Staff</b>	<b>Date of Council Final Action</b>	<b>Start Regional Review</b>	<b>Received by GCAK</b>	<b>Transmittal Date of Action to NMFS HQ for Review</b>	<b>Proposed Rule Published in Federal Register</b>	<b>Final Rule Published in Federal Register</b>
Cost recovery for AFA, Amendment 80, AI pollock, and CDQ program	Brannan Palmigiano	NMFS initiated -MSA Mandate-	PR: 08/22/14	PR: 08/29/14	<b>PR: 12/09/14</b>	<b>January 7, 2015 80 FR 936 EOC: 02/06/15</b>	
Halibut IFQ – Establish new minimum vessel ownership criteria for using hired skipper of 12 months and 20% interest	DiCosimo McKeen	December 2007	PR: 01/20/12 FR: 05/14/13	PR: 02/03/12 FR: 05/16/13	PR: 10/12/12 FR: 01/29/14	October 31, 2012 77 FR 65843 EOC: 11/30/12	February 24, 2014 79 FR 99958 Effective: 03/23/15
Revise definition of sport fishing guide services	DiCosimo Scheurer	February 2014	PR: 08/15/14	PR: 09/02/14	PR: 11/13/14	December 3, 2014 79 FR 71729 EOC: 01/02/15	
BSAI 2015-2016 harvest specifications	Stram Whitney	October 2014	PR: 10/23/14 <b>FR: 01/05/15</b>	PR: 10/29/14 <b>FR: 01/06/15</b>	PR: 11/20/14	December 8, 2014 79 FR 72571 EOC: 01/07/15	
GOA 2014-2015 harvest specifications	Armstrong Davis	October 2014	PR: 10/22/14 <b>FR: 01/08/15</b>	PR: 10/23/14 <b>FR: 01/12/15</b>	PR: 11/17/14	December 8, 2014 79 FR 72593 EOC: 01/07/15	
Revise Skate MRAs for GOA Groundfish	MacLean Murphy	December 2014					
2015 Annual Halibut Management Measures	Scheurer	January 2015 (IPHC)					