



NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Action Memo

File Number:BYC 15-021

Agenda Date12/7/2015

Agenda Number:C4

Dan Hull, Chairman
Chris Oliver, Executive Director

SUBJECT:
GOA Chinook Salmon PSC Reapportionment - Final Action

STAFF CONTACT: Sam Cunningham

ACTION REQUIRED:
Initial Review/Final Action

BACKGROUND:

In October 2015 the Council reviewed a set of alternatives that could provide NMFS inseason managers the authority to reapportion existing annual Chinook salmon prohibited species catch (PSC) limits between the various GOA trawl sectors for which a limit is currently defined. The Council did not select a preliminary preferred alternative at that time, since the document had not yet been reviewed by the SSC. With the benefit of such a review at this meeting, the Council could select a preferred alternative if it finds that the analysis is sufficient and that action on this item is warranted. Taking final action at this meeting would increase the likelihood that any new regulations could be implemented in time for a necessary reapportionment to be made during the 2016 fishing year.

The Council's original motivation for this action stemmed from the PSC limit closure to the catcher vessel sector of the GOA non-pollock/non-Rockfish Program catcher vessel sector that occurred on May 3, 2015. That sector was allowed to reopen later in 2015 under an Emergency Rule; however, an emergency action would not likely be an available response tool in 2016.

The action alternative under consideration would allow reapportionments to or from some combination of the following trawl sector or area Chinook salmon PSC limits, depending on which option(s) are selected: Western GOA pollock, Central GOA pollock, Rockfish Program catcher vessel sector, non-pollock/non-Rockfish Program catcher vessels sector, and non-pollock CP sector. The action alternative would not increase the maximum amount of Chinook salmon PSC that can be taken in a single year, which is currently set at 32,500 (combined total for the pollock and non-pollock trawl fisheries). Similarly, the alternatives would not change the annual PSC limits that were established under GOA Groundfish FMP Amendments 93 and 97. Those limits include the directed pollock fishery (25,000 Chinook salmon per year, divided between the Western and Central GOA), non-pollock trawl catcher/processors (3,600 Chinook salmon per year), Rockfish Program catcher vessels (1,200 Chinook salmon per year), and non-pollock/non-Rockfish Program catcher vessels (2,700 Chinook salmon per year). Existing apportionment procedures for Rockfish Program Chinook salmon PSC and halibut PSC would not be modified by this action.

Options under the action alternative would limit Chinook salmon PSC apportionments. Option 1 would not allow reapportionment of the Rockfish Program catcher vessel sector Chinook salmon PSC limit (aside from the existing rollover provisions established under Amendment 97), nor would it allow reapportionments to or

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from the CP sector. Option 2 would cap the proportion of a sector's initial annual PSC apportionment that could be shifted to another sector during the course of a year. Option 3 would prohibit Chinook salmon PSC reapportionment from flowing to the CP sector. Option 4 would provide NMFS inseason managers with flexibility as to when the Rockfish Program rollover would occur (currently October 1), and in what amount. Option 5 would limit the amount of additional Chinook salmon PSC that any eligible sector could receive in a single year, capping that amount to a proportion of the sector's initial annual PSC limit.