



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
REPORT TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

Fisheries managed by the State of Alaska since the last Council report include crab and groundfish.

Bering Sea/ Aleutian Islands crab. During the 2018/19 season, fisheries opened for Aleutian Islands golden king crab, Bristol Bay red king crab, Western Bering Sea Tanner crab, and Bering Sea snow (*opilio*) crab. Ten percent of each TAC is allocated to the Community Development Quota (CDQ) fisheries; ten percent of the western Aleutian Islands golden king crab TAC is allocated to the Adak Community Allocation (ACA) fishery.

Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab

The 2018/19 Aleutian Islands commercial golden king crab fishery opened August 1, 2018. The total allowable catch (TAC) was set at 6.35 million pounds and is apportioned east and west of 174° W longitude; the eastern TAC is 3.856 million pounds (17% increase from 2017/18) and the western TAC is 2.5 million pounds (12% increase from 2017/18). Ten percent of each TAC is allocated to the CDQ (eastern) and Adak Community Allocation (western) fisheries. Three vessels have harvested 100% of the Eastern area of the TAC and three vessels have harvested 100% of the Western area TAC. This fishery has concluded.

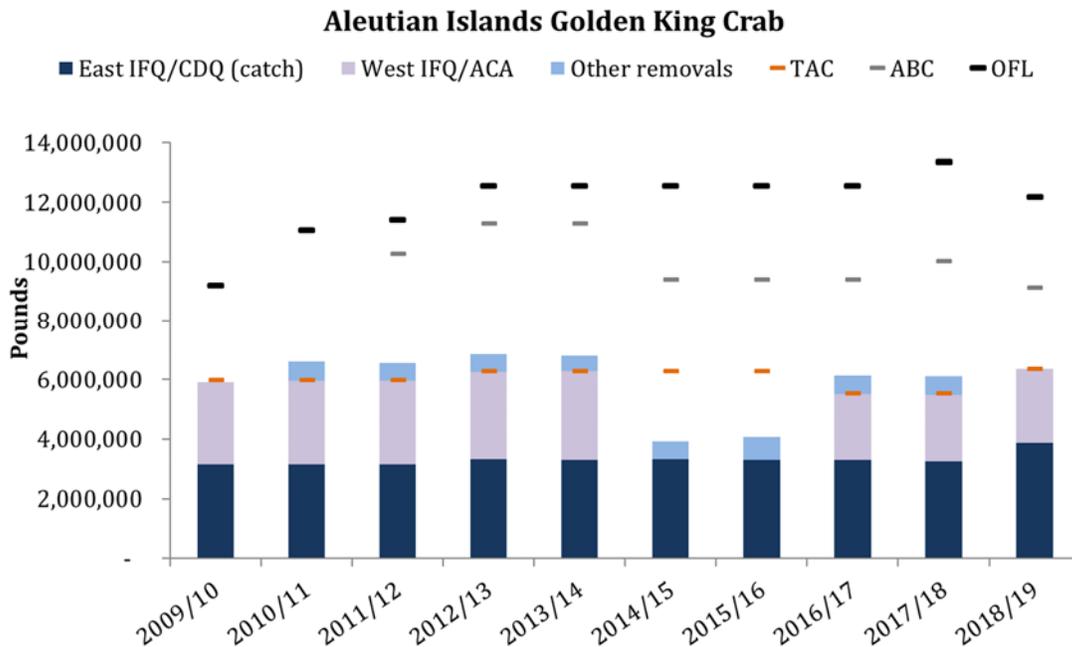


Figure 1. Aleutian Islands golden king crab harvest by area, TAC, OFL, and ABC, 2009/10 – 2018/19.

Bering Sea Snow Crab

The Bering Sea snow crab fishery opened on October 15, 2018 and could remain open through May 15, 2019 in the Eastern Subdistrict (between 166° W longitude and 173° W longitude) and through May 31, 2019 in the Western Subdistrict (west of 173° W longitude). The 2018/19 snow crab TAC is 27.581 million pounds (a 45% increase from 2017/18). A total of 61 vessels have harvested 96% of the TAC (26.41 million pounds) to date; there are 10 vessels currently registered in the fishery. The CPUE is 185 crab per pot and the average weight of crab is 1.23 pounds.

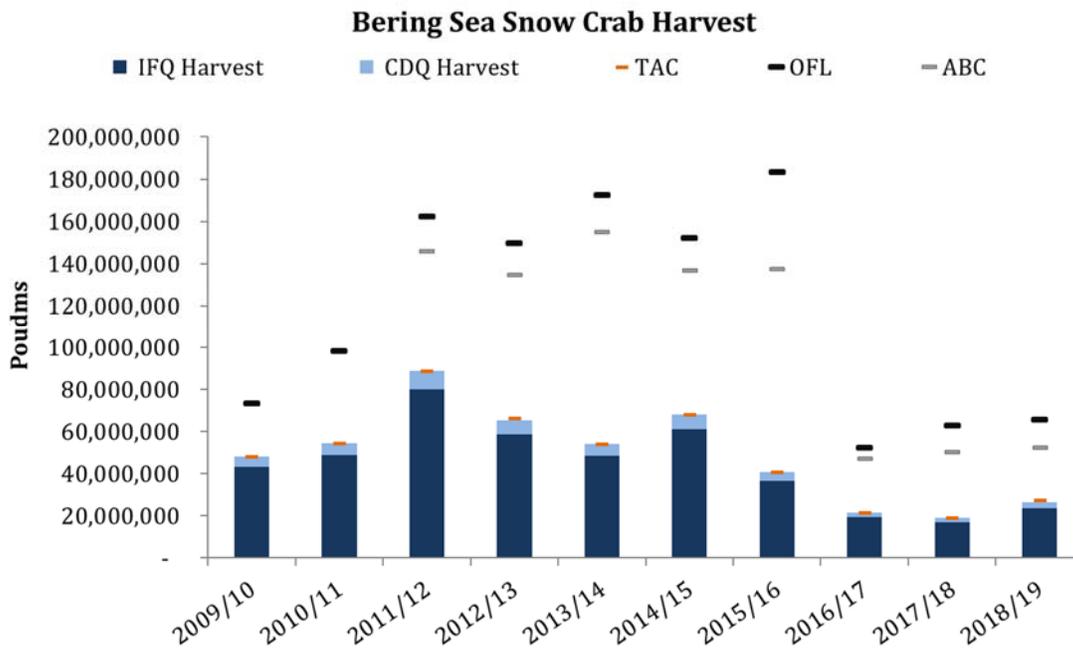


Figure 2. Bering Sea snow crab harvest, TAC level, OFL, and ABC; 2009/10 – 2018/19 seasons.

Western Bering Sea Tanner Crab

The Western Bering Sea tanner crab fishery opened October 15, 2018 with a TAC of 2.439 million pounds. As of March 22, total catch was 2.231 million pounds with an average catch rate of 43 crabs per pot and 3 vessels registered. The fishery closed by regulation on March 31, 2019.

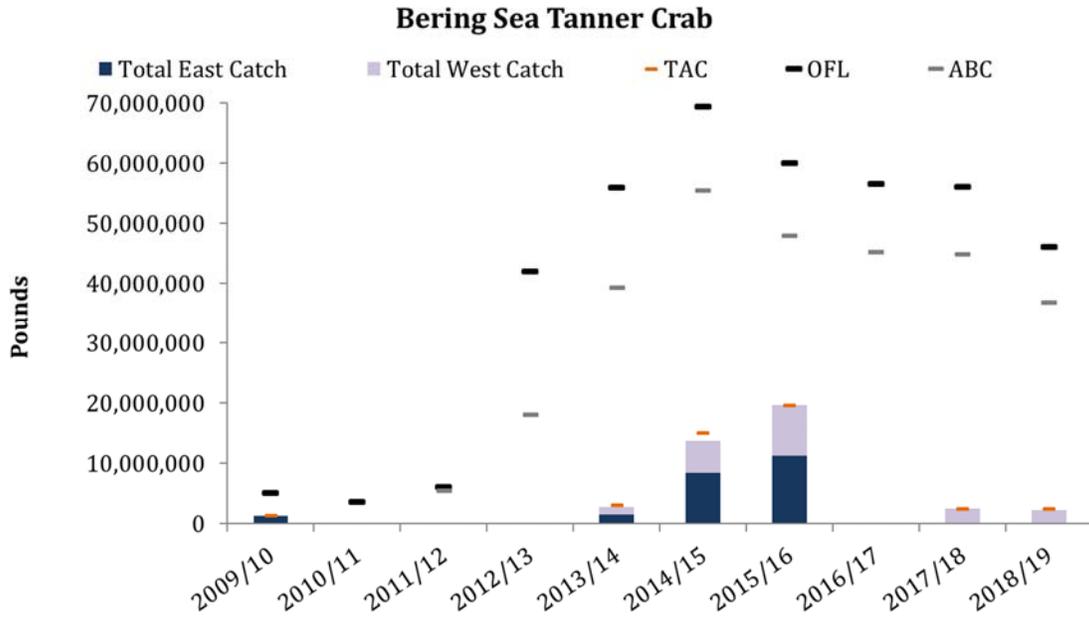


Figure 3. Bering Sea Tanner crab harvest, TAC level, OFL, and ABC; 2009/10 – 2018/19 seasons.

Norton Sound Red King Crab. The overall Norton Sound red king crab GHLL is 150,600 pounds and is allocated 92% to the summer season (138,552 pounds) and 8% (12,048 pounds) to the winter season. 7.5% of the total GHLL (11,295 pounds) is allocated to a CDQ fishery, available for harvest during the winter or summer season. To date, 550 pounds have been harvested by 17 permit holders in the winter fishery. Winter harvest is down this year because stable ice begins 13 miles east of Nome or 15 miles west of Nome. Nome permit holders are the only harvesters making deliveries because shorefast ice is lacking throughout almost all of Norton Sound. The 2019 winter commercial fishery closes on April 30 by regulation. The Norton Sound red king crab summer fishery opens by emergency order on or after June 15.

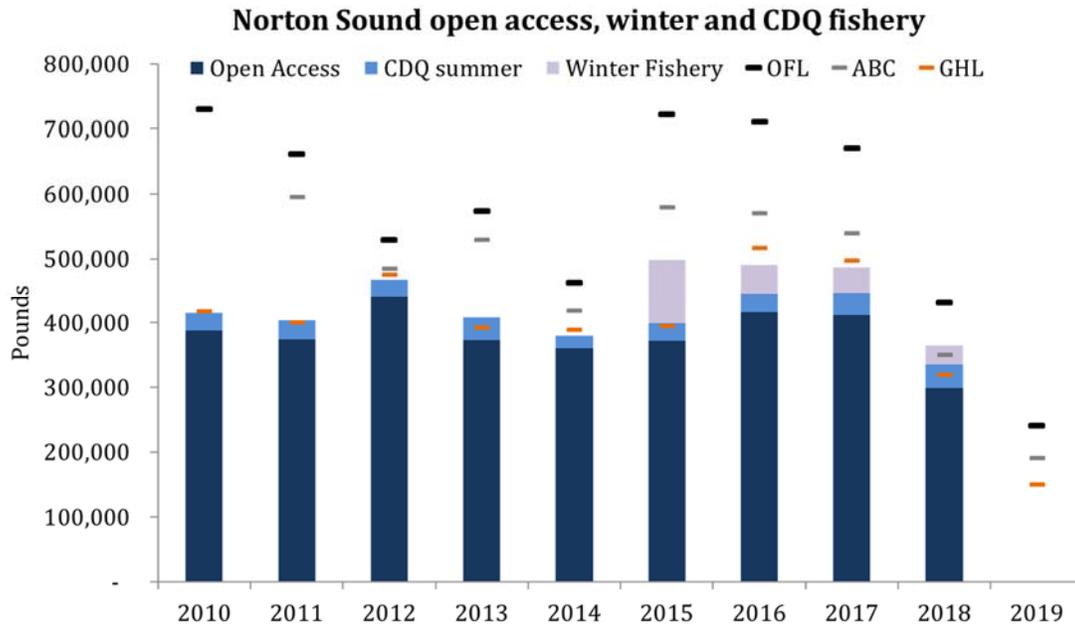


Figure 4. Norton Sound red king crab harvest, GHL, OFL, and ABC; 2010 – 2019 seasons.

Pacific Cod. State-water Pacific cod fisheries are established in the Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Chignik, South Alaska Peninsula, and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Management Areas. Guideline Harvest Levels (GHLs) are calculated as a percentage of area ABCs as follows:

State Management Area	Pacific cod ABC	GHL as % of ABC	2019 GHL (mt)
Prince William Sound	EGOA	25%	425
Chignik	CGOA	8.75%	671
Kodiak		25%	958
Cook Inlet		3.75%	288
South Alaska Peninsula	WGOA	30%	2,290
Dutch Harbor Subdistrict	BS	8%	14,480
Aleutian Islands Subdistrict	AI	31%	6,386

Central Region Pacific Cod

Prince William Sound: The state-waters pot season opened on February 7, 24-hours after the closure of the CGOA federal A-season pot fishery and remains open. No vessels have registered to fish with pot gear. The Prince William Sound Pacific cod fishery either opens seven days after closure of the federal less than 50-foot hook and line sector or concurrent with IFQ halibut whichever occurs later. The state-waters longline season opened March 15, concurrent with the IFQ halibut fishery. There are 12 vessels registered in the longline fishery and have harvested 77,631 pounds. The state-waters jig season opens 24 hours after the initial federal jig season closes.

Cook Inlet: The state-waters pot season opened January 28, 24-hours after the closure of the CGOA A-season pot fishery. A total of 8 vessels have harvested 570,424 pounds and the season fishery closed on February 8 for pot vessels over 58 ft and on March 9 for pot vessels less than or equal to 58 ft. The state-waters jig season in Cook Inlet opens 24 hours after the initial federal jig season closes.

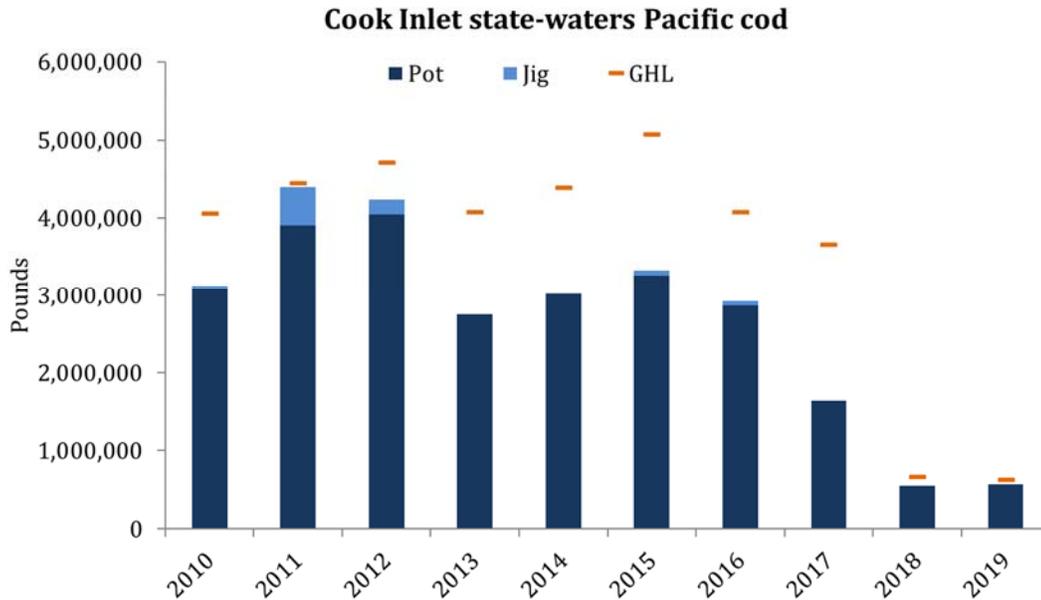


Figure 5. Cook Inlet state-waters Pacific cod harvest and GHL, 2010 - 2019.

Westward Region Pacific Cod

Kodiak. The 2019 state-waters GHL for the Kodiak Area is 2.11 million pounds which is allocated 50 percent to mechanical jig and hand troll gears and 50 percent to pot gear, or 1.056 million pounds each. The state-waters pot fishery opened on February 3, 2019, seven days after the CGOA federal A-season pot fishery closure and closed February 15, 2019. Total harvest by fourteen pot vessels was 1.15 million pounds (55% of the GHL and 109% of the pot allocation). Harvest by pot vessels greater than 58 feet in length is restricted to 50 percent of the overall pot allocation, or 0.53 million pounds; this limit was achieved on February 11. The state-waters jig fishery opened on March 12, 2019. Twelve vessels have harvested 67,202 pounds (6%) of the jig fishery allocation.

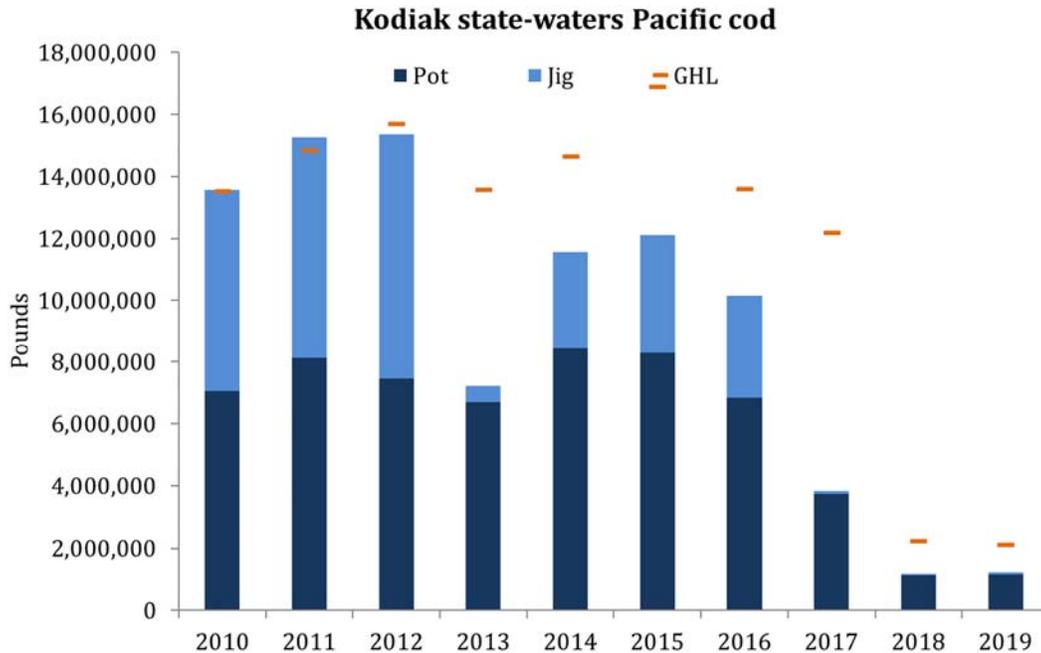


Figure 6. Kodiak state-waters Pacific cod harvest and GHL, 2010 - 2019.

Chignik: The state-waters pot season opened by regulation on March 1, 2019 with a total GHL of 1.48 million pounds. Ninety percent of the GHL in the Chignik Area is allocated to pot gear and vessels may not exceed 58 feet in overall length. Five vessels harvested 1.38 million pounds (100% of the pot allocation) and the pot fishery closed March 13, 2019. The state-waters jig fishery opened by regulation on March 15; however, no vessels have participated in this fishery yet.

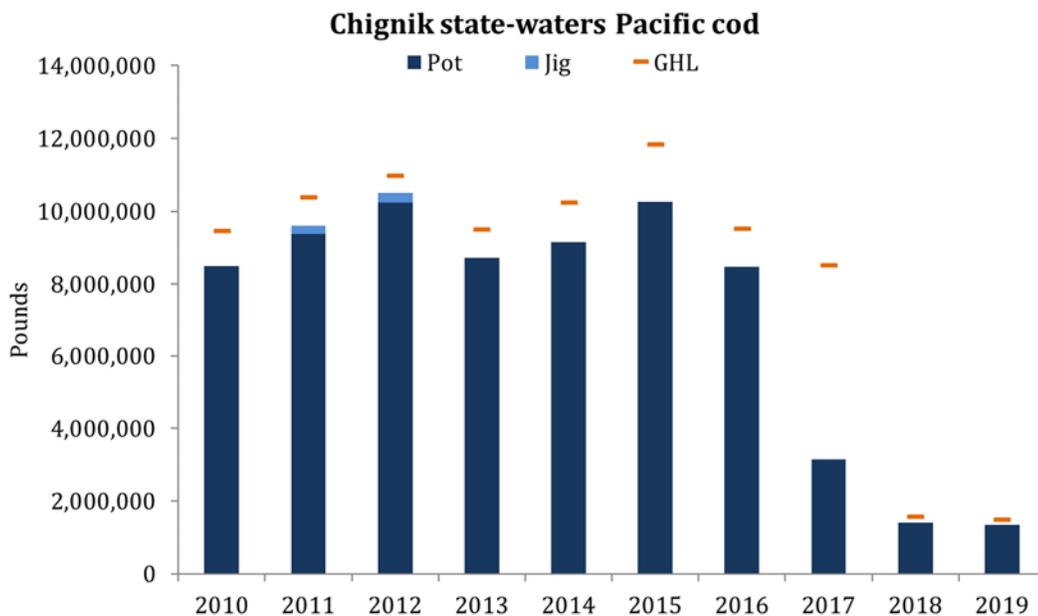


Figure 7. Chignik state-waters Pacific cod harvest and GHL, 2010 - 2019.

South Alaska Peninsula: The state-waters pot season opened by regulation on March 7, 2019 with a GHL of 5.05 million pounds. Eighty-five percent of the GHL in the South Alaska Peninsula (SAP) Area is allocated to pot gear and vessels may not exceed 58 feet in overall length. A total of 24 vessels harvested 4.72 million pounds and the fishery closed March 17, 2019. The SAP state-waters jig fishery opened on March 13, 2019. Nine jig vessels have harvested 3,514 pounds (less than 1% of the GHL) but there have been further landings that are confidential.

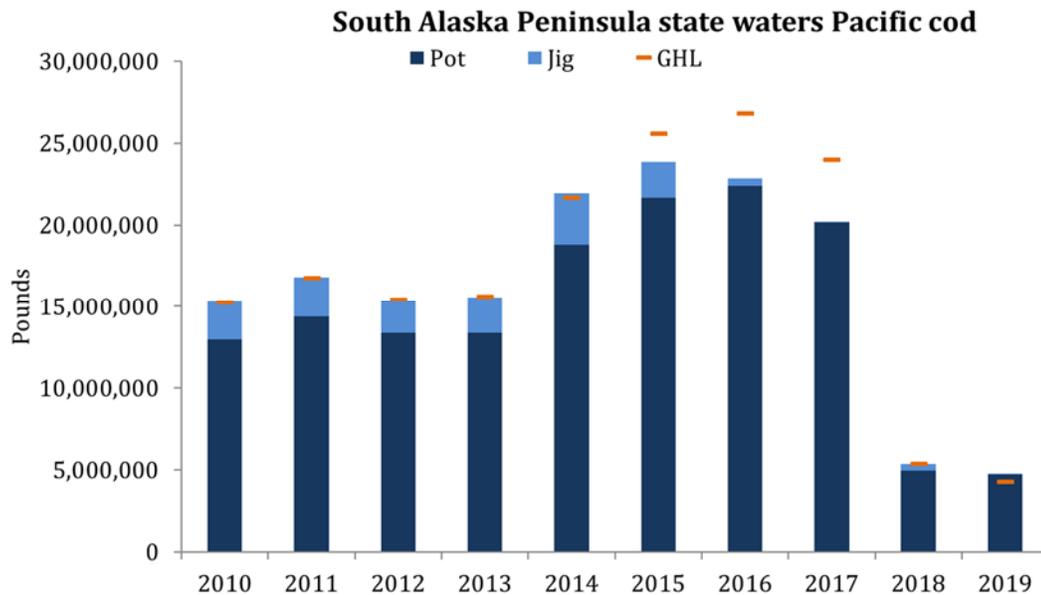


Figure 8. South Alaska Peninsula state-waters Pacific cod harvest and GHL, 2010 – 2019.

Aleutian Island Subdistrict. The 2019 GHL for the entire AI Subdistrict was 14.08 million pounds. The Adak section opened on January 1 for vessels 60 feet or less using pot, trawl, and jig gear and no more than 58 feet for longline gear. The entire subdistrict opened on March 15 to vessels 125 feet or less using pot gear, 100 feet or less using nonpelagic trawl gear, and vessels 58 or less using longline or jig gear. The entire subdistrict closed on March 17 with a total harvest of 13.66 million pounds. A total of 18 vessels made 155 landings. Between 2006 – 2015, the GHL was 3% of the BSAI ABC; 27% of the AI ABC between 2016-2018; and increased to 31% of the AI ABC for 2019.

Dutch Harbor Subdistrict. The state-water pot cod fishery opened on January 19 to pot vessels 58 feet or less with a GHL of 31.92 million pounds. The entire subdistrict closed on February 24. A total of 37 vessels made 431 landings for a total harvest of 32.35 million pounds. Between 2014 – 2015, the GHL was 3% of the BSAI ABC; 6.4% of the BS ABC between 2016-2018; and increased to 8% of the BS ABC for 2019.

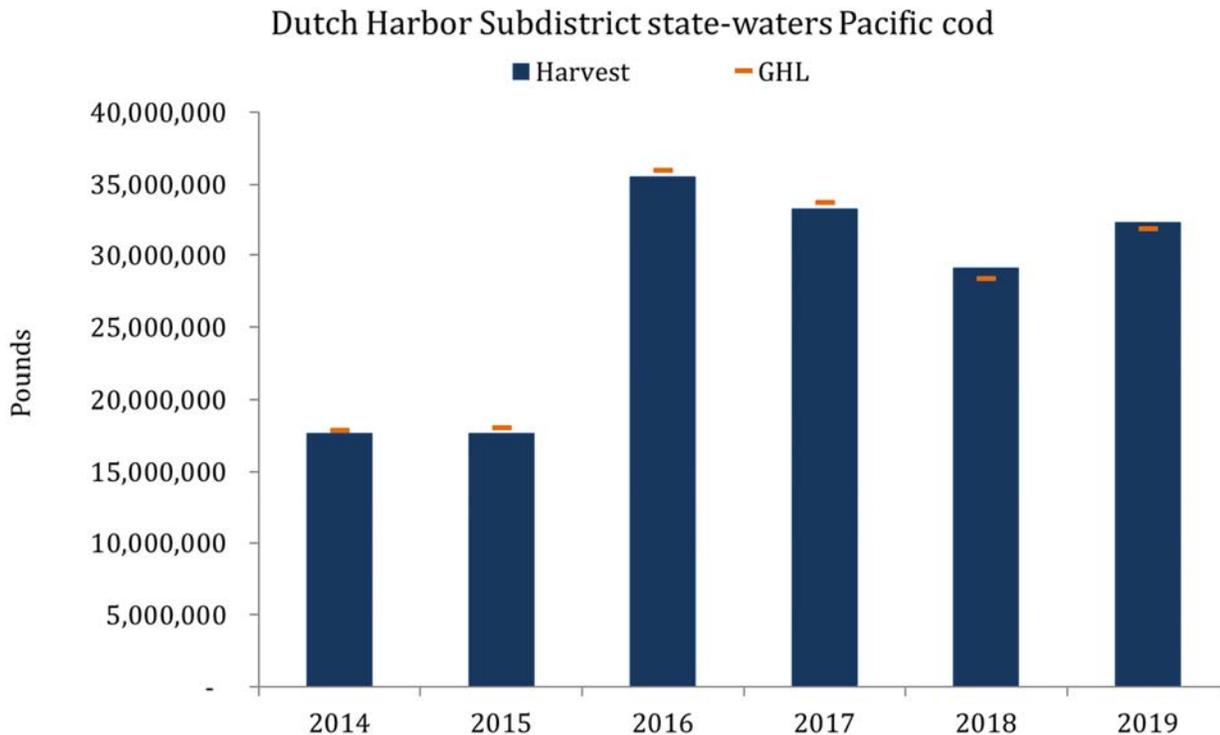


Figure 9. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod harvest and Guideline Harvest Level, 2014 – 2019.

Alaska Board of Fisheries

The Alaska Peninsula / Aleutian Island / Chignik finfish meeting was February 21 – 26 in Anchorage. There was a hatchery committee meeting on March 8 and the statewide finfish meeting was March 9-12.

The Board is accepting proposals for Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish, Kodiak Finfish, and Statewide (except Southeast and Yakutat) King and Tanner crab until April 10, 2019. The next work session is October 23 – 24, 2019.

ALASKA PENINSULA/CHIGNIK/BERING SEA – ALEUTIAN ISLANDS FINFISH PROPOSALS OF INTEREST:

- Sablefish pots may now be longlined in Western Districts.

STATEWIDE FINFISH SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES PROPOSALS OF INTEREST:

- The Board adopted the proposed harvest strategy to use the annual assessment results for AIGKC in the State TAC setting process.
- The Board allowed for a Tanner crab fishery under the authority of a Commissioners permit for males five and half inch carapace width or greater. This action was an amendment of the Registration Area O red king crab and Tanner crab size, sex, and season fishery west of 170° W. longitude.
- Beginning January 1, 2020, a person sport fishing from a vessel when releasing a rockfish shall immediately use a deep-water release mechanism to return the fish to the depth it was

hooked or to a depth of at least 100 feet. A vessel must have at least one functional deep water release mechanism on board and readily available for use when sport fishing activities are taking place. Upon request, a deep water release mechanism must be presented to a local representative of the department, peace officer of the state or federal law enforcement officer charged with enforcing fish and game laws. For this regulation, "deep water release mechanism" means a device designed to return a rockfish to near the bottom where it was hooked, or to a specified depth, and to assist the fish in recompression and to improve the fish's chance of survival.