

North Pacific Fishery Management Council
C-3(b) GOA Chinook salmon bycatch motion
April 2, 2011

The Council adopts the preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) and changes to alternatives and options described below. The Council requests staff revise the analysis and address SSC minutes, as practicable, and release the document for public review. Options that comprise the PPA are in bold.

Problem statement:

Magnuson-Stevens Act National Standards require balancing optimum yield with minimizing bycatch and minimizing adverse impacts to fishery dependent communities. Chinook salmon bycatch 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 considering management tools for the GOA pollock fishery, including a hard cap with improved monitoring and sampling opportunities to achieve Chinook salmon prohibited species catch (PSC) reductions. Management measures are necessary to provide immediate incentive for the GOA pollock fleet to be responsive to the Council's objective to reduce Chinook salmon PSC.

Alternatives:

Alternative 1: Status quo.

Alternative 2: Chinook salmon PSC limit and increased monitoring.

Component 1: PSC limit: 15,000, **22,500**, or 30,000 Chinook salmon PSC limit.

Option: The PSC limit may be exceeded by up to 25 percent one out of three consecutive years. If the PSC limit is exceeded in one year, it may not be exceeded for the next two consecutive years.

Apportionment limit between Central and Western GOA

- a) proportional to the historical pollock TAC (2006-2010 or **2001-2010 average**).
- b) proportional to historical average bycatch number of Chinook salmon (2006-2010 or **2001-2010 average**).

Option: **drop 2007 and 2010 from both regulatory time series.**

- c) **as a combination of options (a) and (b) at a ratio of a:b equal to**

Suboption i: 25:75

Suboption ii: 50:50

Suboption iii: 75:25

Central and Western GOA PSC limits and the 25 percent buffer would be managed by area (measures to prevent or respond to an overage would be applied at the area level, not

Gulfwide). A 25 percent buffer would not apply in the first year of the program if a PSC limit is implemented midyear.

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:	7,710 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.

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-3(b) Motion Attachment

Preliminary preferred alternative Chinook salmon annual PSC limit:

Central GOA: 15,816

Western GOA: 6,684

Preliminary preferred alternative for a Chinook salmon PSC limit for a midyear implementation:

The preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) PSC limits for the first year under a midyear implementation are the result of the PPA 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 PPA 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: $(15,816 \times 0.39) \times 1.25 = 7,710$

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

(Council motion reformatted to isolate the preliminary preferred alternative)

Preliminary preferred alternative: Chinook salmon PSC limit and increased monitoring

Component 1: 22,500 Chinook salmon PSC limit

Apportion limit between Central and Western GOA - annual PSC limits:

Central GOA: 15,816 Chinook salmon

Western GOA: 6,684 Chinook salmon

PSC limits are derived as a combination of options (a) and (b) at a ratio of a:b equal to 50:50

a) proportional to the historical pollock TAC (2001-2010 average, drop 2007 and 2010).

b) proportional to historical average bycatch number of Chinook salmon (2001-2010 average, drop 2007 and 2010).

Central and Western GOA PSC limits would be managed by area (measures to prevent or respond to an overage would be applied at the area level, not Gulf-wide). 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: 7,710 Chinook salmon

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Midyear PSC limit calculation:

Central GOA: $(15,816 \times 0.39) \times 1.25 = 7,710$ Chinook salmon

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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.

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.

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