

Final Report
of the
Mothership Fleet Cooperative
2012

Presented to the
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
April 1, 2013

Introduction

In 2012 the mothership sector (as defined in Section 208 (c) and (d) of the American Fisheries Act) managed its Bering Sea pollock allocation under the provisions of a cooperative agreement. All nineteen of the vessels qualified to participate in the mothership sector are members of the “Mothership Fleet Cooperative” (MFC) and are bound by the terms of that cooperative’s membership agreement. Only fifteen of the nineteen vessels belonging to the MFC participated in Alaska groundfish fisheries in 2012. The mothership sector is assigned 10% of the BSAI directed pollock quota as per Section 206 (b) of the American Fisheries Act (AFA).

In addition to the membership agreement mentioned above, the MFC is a signatory to the 2012 Intercooperative Agreement, the Cod Allocation Agreement, and the Salmon Bycatch Management Agreement. These contracts establish the global rules by which all of the cooperatives jointly manage pollock harvest limits and non-pollock groundfish sideboards, prohibited species sideboards, and salmon bycatch avoidance measures. Chinook salmon is managed under the NMFS-approved Mothership Salmon Incentive Program (MSSIP.)

Reporting Requirements

This report is intended to fully disclose all information required and identified for inclusion in an annual report to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council pursuant to Section 210 (a)(1) A and B of the American Fisheries Act and 50 C.F.R. § 679.60 (American Fisheries Act Management Measures), Section (d).

Mothership Fleet Cooperative Shares

It is important to note that the AFA requires a “cooperative of the whole” rather than separate and distinct cooperatives oriented to each processor within the sector, as is the case in the inshore sector. The AFA also provides an exemption to the Sherman Anti-Trust Act for the three AFA-qualified mothership processors (EXCELLENCE, GOLDEN ALASKA, OCEAN PHOENIX), allowing them to participate as members of the cooperative if at least eighty percent of the eligible catcher vessels are members of the co-op. Despite this allowance, the three mothership processors are not currently members of the MFC.

Neither the language in the AFA nor the Mothership Fleet Cooperative Membership Agreement binds catcher vessels delivering to motherships to a particular processor within a fishing year or season.

Membership in the MFC consists of all 19 eligible catcher vessels. Each vessel has a cooperative share representing its percentage share of the directed pollock quota allocation by the AFA to the mothership sector. Vessel names, owners, and their cooperative shares are listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Mothership Fleet Cooperative Share Percentages

Co-op Member(s)	Vessel(s)	Cooperative Share
Alakanuk Beauty L.L.C.	American Beauty	6.000%
Pacific Dawn	Pacific Challenger	9.671%
Fury Group, Inc.	Nordic Fury	6.177%
	Pacific Fury	5.889%
Great West Seafoods, Ltd.	Margaret Lyn	5.643%
Katahdin, Inc.	Misty Dawn	3.569%
King and Winge, Inc.	Vanguard	5.350%
Futura Fisheries, Inc.		
Kydaka Corporation	California Horizon	3.786%
Langesater Fisheries, Inc.	Oceanic	7.038%
Reiten Enterprises, Inc.		
Arruela Fisheries, Inc.		
MarGun Fisheries, Inc.	Mar-Gun	6.251%
Mark 1, Inc.	Mark 1	6.251%
Meddar Corporation	Aleutian Challenger	4.926%
Emmonak Leader L.L.P.	Ocean Leader	6.000%
Ocean Thunder, Inc.	Papado II	2.953%
Phoenix Processor L.P.	Morning Star	3.601%
Traveler Fisheries L.L.C.	Traveler	4.272%
Vesteraalen L.L.C.	Vesteraalen	6.201%
Wa'atch, Inc.	Alyeska	2.272%
Western Dawn L.L.C.	Western Dawn	4.150%

TOTAL

100%

Term of the Mothership Fleet Cooperative Membership Agreement

In 2002, the MFC Membership Agreement was amended to remove a five-year sunset. Under the amendment language, the MFC can be terminated if and when eighty percent of the MFC members vote in favor of terminating the agreement.

Transfer of Shares Between Catcher Vessels

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative Membership Agreement allows members of the coop to transfer cooperative shares among themselves. Transfers of quota made within a fleet of catchers delivering to a particular mothership (intra-fleet) must be reported to that mothership at the time of delivery. Transfers of allocations between vessels fishing in different mothership fleets (inter-fleet) must be reported to the monitoring agent within seven days prior to the transfer and, in any case, prior to the harvest of the transferred amount. Both intra- and inter-fleet transfers occurred in 2012.

Catch Monitoring

All in-season data used for individual vessel and fleet-wide catch monitoring and management within the mothership sector was obtained from the National Marine Fisheries Service Observer Program. The MFC has contracted with Sea State, Inc. to process the catch data provided by the observer program and to provide in-season management support.

Sea State regularly provides catch reports to each mothership fleet. These reports include cumulative fleet-wide and vessel-level catch data as well as a tow-by-tow summary. Fleet managers are able to reconcile the tow-by-tow catch information provided by Sea State against their own catch records to identify possible data errors and insure accurate catch accounting throughout the fishing season.

Catch and Bycatch of Groundfish and Prohibited Species

The harvest and bycatch of non-pollock and prohibited species (PSC) in the Bering Sea, Aleutian Islands, and Gulf of Alaska is limited by groundfish and PSC sideboards as recommended by the Council and implemented through regulation. Pollock harvest by AFA catcher vessels is limited in the Gulf of Alaska as well. The intent of the sideboards is to limit the catch and bycatch of these species by AFA vessels to “traditional harvest levels”. The Mothership Fleet Cooperative Membership Agreement authorized the cooperative board to allocate sideboard amounts available for directed harvest to each catcher vessel in the cooperative in amounts prorated to each boat’s catch history.

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative Membership Agreement provides that PSC sideboard apportionments may be administered as aggregate caps within the mothership sector. Where necessary and appropriate, the cooperative board is authorized to allocate PSC apportionments to individual vessels. The board is further authorized to order a vessel to stop fishing if that vessel exceeds an assigned apportionment or rate, and to obtain an injunction restraining the activity of any vessel that fails to heed such an order. PSC was not assigned to individual vessels in 2012.

None of the sideboard caps were exceeded by the Mothership Fleet Cooperative in 2012.

Penalties

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative Agreement includes provisions allowing penalties to be assessed against vessels that exceed their agreed harvest share of pollock and non-pollock species. The Agreement includes a penalty of \$500 per metric ton for pollock harvested in excess of a vessel’s allocation. The penalty for overages in the non-pollock fisheries include \$1000 per metric ton of cod harvest in excess of an allocation, \$300 per metric ton for over-harvests of all other BSAI and GOA directed groundfish fisheries. The cooperative established penalties for exceeding assigned PSC caps as well.

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative assessed no penalties in 2012.

2012 Directed Pollock Fishery Results

Table 2. 2012 Mothership Fleet Co-op Pollock Allocations and Harvest - MT

Catcher	Co-op %	Co-op MT	Actual MT	Actual %
Aleutian Challenger	4.93%	5,212.20	5,239	4.95%
Alyeska	2.27%	2,404.00		0.00%
American Beauty	6.00%	6,348.60	3,105	2.93%
California Horizon	3.79%	4,005.97	6,405	6.05%
Margaret Lyn	5.64%	6,614.18		0.00%
Mar-Gun	6.25%	5,970.86	3,588	3.39%
Mark 1	6.25%	6,614.18	10,031	9.48%
Misty Dawn	3.57%	3,776.36	6,670	6.30%
Morning Star	3.60%	3,810.22		0.00%
Nordic Fury	6.18%	6,535.88	6,365	6.02%
Ocean Leader	6.00%	6,348.60	9,577	9.05%
Oceanic	7.04%	7,446.91	8,398	7.94%
Pacific Challenger	9.67%	10,232.89	11,007	10.40%
Pacific Fury	5.89%	6,231.15	8,202	7.75%
Papado II	2.95%	3,124.57		0.00%
Traveler	4.27%	4,520.20	7,454	7.04%
Vanguard	5.35%	5,660.84	6,905	6.53%
Vesteraalen	6.20%	6,561.28	6,665	6.30%
Western Dawn	4.15%	4,391.12	5,774	5.46%
Total Harvest	100.00%	105,810	105,384	99.60%
Unharvested			426,484	0.40%

Table 3. PSC Bycatch in 2012 Mothership Fleet Co-op Directed Pollock Fishery by Vessel

Catcher	Non-pollock groundfish (mt)	Halibut mortality (mt)	Herring (mt)	Red king crab	C bairdi (N)	C opilio (N)	Chinook A (N)	Chinook B (N)	Other salmon A (N)	Other salmon B (N)
Aleutian Challenger	144.47	0.27	9.17	0	0	0	18	4	0	58
Alyeska	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Beauty	45.53	0.39	49.48	0	5	59	26	5	1	15
California Horizon	115.40	0.67	0.20	0	0	0	11		0	21
Margaret Lyn	11.08	0	0.51	0	0	0		3	0	17
Mar-Gun	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mark I	69.24	0.15	0.39	0	0	0	30	5	0	120
Misty Dawn	174.99	0.16	0.32	0	0	3	4	1	0	11
Morning Star	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nordic Fury	70.41	0.25	0.31	0	5	0	10	1	0	30
Ocean Leader	298.42	1.98	54.92	0	0	0	87	2	0	197
Oceanic	98.68	0.54	0.11	0	9	0	22	8	0	59
Pacific Challenger	277.09	4.45	0.19	0	0	0	28	5	0	185
Pacific Fury	131.12	0.64	0.09	0	0	0	9	2	0	54
Popado II	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Traveler	94.88	0.93	0.50	0	0	0	19	1	0	41
Vanguard	172.04	3.91	0.09	0	133	0	8	12	0	120
Vesteraalen	152.48	0.35	0.35	0	4	0	27	0	0	8
Western Dawn	58.48	0.07	0.77	0	0	0	13	0	0	41
TOTAL	1914.32	14.76	117.40	0	160	62	312	49	1	977

Non-Pollock Groundfish Fisheries

In 2012, mothership catcher vessels participated in fisheries other than in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands directed pollock fishery. These fisheries included the BSAI Pacific cod fishery and the several directed fisheries in the Gulf of Alaska.

When developing recommendations for AFA groundfish harvesting sideboards, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council provided an annual exemption to mothership sector catcher vessels from sideboard limitations on harvests of BSAI Pacific cod after March 1.

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative is a signatory to the inter-cooperative agreements and was actively involved in the development of measures and protocols by which the catcher vessels insure compliance with the groundfish and PSC sideboard provisions.

Some of the catcher vessels qualified to participate in the Mothership Fleet Cooperative also participate in an inshore cooperative. Regardless of inshore eligibility, however, all catcher vessels qualified to participate in the mothership sector fish under the mothership sector groundfish and PSC sideboards in the directed BSAI cod fishery. Any of the mothership catcher vessels that are “dual qualified” fish under the inshore cooperative sideboards in any groundfish fisheries other than BSAI pollock and cod.

Groundfish and PSC mothership cooperative catch and bycatch in non-pollock BSAI groundfish fishery information is contained in the tables below. As detailed in these report tables, none of the mothership sector groundfish or PSC sideboard caps was exceeded. There were no GOA groundfish landings by non-dual qualified MFC vessels.

Table 4. Mothership Fleet Cooperative 2012 BSAI Pacific Cod Sideboard Amounts and Actual Landings by Vessel in the Directed Fishery pre exemption on March 1, 2012.

Vessel	% of Mothership Sideboard	Cod Sideboard MT	Landed Cod RWE
Aleutian Challenger	3.40%	162.15	186.05
Alyeska	1.13%	53.89	0
American Beauty	3.37%	160.72	0
California Horizon	4.42%	210.79	0
Mar-Gun	6.62%	315.71	0
Margaret Lyn	4.15%	197.92	745.87
Mark I	14.51%	691.99	0
Misty Dawn	0.00%	0.00	0
Nordic Fury	8.56%	408.23	0
Ocean leader	3.79%	180.75	0
Oceanic	12.97%	618.55	0
Morning Star	0.25%	11.92	0
Pacific Challenger	10.27%	392.49	510.23
Pacific Fury	7.95%	379.14	0
Popado II	0.97%	46.26	0
Traveler	1.99%	94.90	394.23
Vanguard	0.98%	46.74	42.67
Vesteraalen	8.09%	385.82	0
Western Dawn	6.59%	314.28	0
Total	100%	4769.55	1,879.04

Table 5. Mothership Fleet Cooperative Halibut Bycatch Mortality Sector Allocation and Actual PSC Bycatch Mortality in the 2012 Directed BSAI Pacific Cod Fishery.

Vessel	Halibut Mortality Allocation (MT)	Actual Halibut Mortality (MT)	Chinook	Other salmon	King Crab	Bairdi	Other Tanner	Herring (MT)
Aleutian Challenger	1.8	3.85	0	0	0	0	63	0
Alyeska	0.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Beauty	1.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
California Horizon	2.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mar-Gun	3.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Margaret Lyn	2.2	4.03	0	0	0	57	10	0
Mark I	7.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Misty Dawn	0.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nordic Fury	4.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ocean leader	2.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oceanic	7.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morning Star	0.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pacific Challenger	5.5	3.89	0	0	0	129	22	0
Pacific Fury	4.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Papado II	0.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Traveler	1.1	4.26	0	0	0	145	129	0
Vanguard	0.5	1.66	0	0	0	20	3	0
Vesteraalen	4.4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Western Dawn	3.6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	54.0	17.69	0	0	0	350	227	0.0

Table 6. Aggregate Groundfish Catch in 2012 Mothership Fleet Cooperative Directed BSAI Fisheries.

Species	Weight (mt)
Alaska Plaice BSAI	2.00
Arrowtooth BSAI	36.65
Flathead BSAI	288.95
Forage BSAI	0.04
Halibut BSAI	51.21
Herring BSAI	117.40
Kamchatka BSAI	2.34
Mackerel BS/541	1.17
Mackerel BS/541 -A	0.17
Northern rockfish BSAI	0.82
Octopus BSAI	0.36
Other flatfish BSAI	18.32
Other Rockfish AI	0.91
Other Rockfish BS	1.79
Other species BSAI	478.54
Pacific cod BSAI	3769.49
Pollock AI	0.20
Pollock BS	105,729.34
POP 541	0.06
POP BS	7.17
Rocksole BSAI	670.84
Rougheye BSAI	0.07
Sculpins BSAI	50.06
Sharks BSAI	5.11
Shortraker BSAI	0.12
Skates BSAI	247.89
Squid BSAI	26.32
Turbot BS	1.65
Yellowfin BSAI	75.18

Salmon Bycatch Avoidance Reporting

As described above, the Mothership Fleet Cooperative is a signatory to the Intercooperative Salmon Bycatch Management Agreements. In an effort to maximize the incentive to avoid salmon bycatch within the mothership fleet, the MFC created an intra-fleet salmon bycatch reporting program for the 2012 “A” and “B” seasons. This program consists of a daily report from each mothership to the other two motherships and their fleet managers. This report, sent via e-mail, includes the amount of groundfish delivered during the previous day, the number of salmon (Chinook during “A” season and both Chinook and other salmon during “B” season) in the delivered catch, the salmon bycatch rate for that day, and more specific information regarding any tows with a bycatch rate in excess of a pre-determined threshold.

These reports are an efficient way to monitor “real-time” bycatch performance within the mothership fleet and an effective vehicle for “peer pressure”-motivated bycatch reduction.

Pollock cooperatives participating in the Amendment 84 rolling hot-spot closure program are required to include in their annual report the number of salmon taken by species and season, an estimate of the number of salmon avoided as demonstrated by the movement of fishing effort away from salmon savings areas, the results of the compliance audit, and the number of times that each vessel in the cooperative appeared on the weekly dirty 20 list.

The number of salmon taken in 2012 is included in Tables 3 and 5. The number of times each vessel appeared on the dirty 20 lists is included in Table 7. Estimates of the number of salmon avoided and the results of the third party compliance audit will be included in the Intercooperative Annual Report. No MFC vessels were found to be in violation of the 2012 Intercooperative Salmon Avoidance Program closures.

Table 7. Number of Instances in which MFC Catcher Vessel Appeared on the Dirty 20 Chum List While Engaged in the MFC Directed Pollock Fishery

Catcher Vessel	Chum B Season
Aleutian Challenger	1
Alyeska	0
American Beauty	0
California Horizon	0
Margaret Lyn	0
Mar-Gun	0
Mark 1	0
Misty Dawn	0
Morning Star	0
Nordic Fury	0
Ocean Leader	3
Oceanic	1
Pacific Challenger	3
Pacific Fury	0
Papado II	0
Traveler	0
Vanguard	1
Vesteraalen	0
Western Dawn	0
Total	9

Mothership Salmon Savings Incentive Plan

On November 5, 2010, the National Marine Fisheries Service approved the Mothership Salmon Savings Incentive Plan Agreement. The Mothership Salmon Savings Incentive Plan (MSSIP) consists of two basic elements that are designed to result in Chinook avoidance at all levels of encounters. First, the MSSIP requires that mothership processor fleets “earn” savings credits, which in future years may provide the ability to exceed their share of the Annual Threshold, by

keeping Chinook bycatch considerably below the threshold in most years. Second, a Rolling Hotspot Closure (RHC) program insures that MSSIP participants avoid areas with relatively higher bycatch rates even when actual bycatch encounters are low on the whole and when the Annual Threshold is not likely to be an influence on behavior.

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative operated under an MSSIP Pilot Program in 2010 and under amendment 91, was approved for and participated under an Incentive Program beginning in 2011. As in previous years, the Mothership Fleet Cooperative operated under the MSSIP in 2012. There is a separate report on results and catch under the Mothership Salmon Savings Incentive Program.

Summary

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative succeeded in fully harvesting its pollock allocations while staying within its groundfish and prohibited species sideboards. Thanks to fleet-wide use of salmon excluders and effective avoidance measures, the MFC maintained relatively low Chinook bycatch rates throughout the year and generated some Chinook Savings Credits as allowed under the MSSIP program rules.

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