

Annual Report
of the
Mothership Fleet Cooperative
2015

Presented to the
North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Introduction

In 2015 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 catcher 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 2015. The mothership sector is assigned 10% of the BSAI directed pollock quota as per Section 206 (b) of the American Fisheries Act (AFA).

As in previous years, the MFC is a signatory to the 2015 Intercooperative Agreement, the Cod Allocation Agreement, and the Salmon Bycatch Management Agreement. Chinook salmon is managed under the NMFS approved Mothership Salmon Savings 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. 679.61(f) (American Fisheries Act Management Measures.)

Mothership Fleet Cooperative Shares

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

TOTAL

100%

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 catcher vessels delivering to a particular mothership (intra-fleet) must be reported to that mothership at the time of delivery. Both intra- and inter-fleet transfers occurred in 2015.

Catch Monitoring

The MFC has contracted with Sea State, Inc. to process the catch data provided by the NMFS 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 sideboards. 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 pro-rated 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 2015. Vessels were given guidelines to help reduce bycatch.

Vessels in the Mothership Fleet Cooperative participated in the BSAI P. Cod sideboarded fishery only. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, dual qualified vessels (inshore and Mothership) were managed under their inshore cooperative for all sideboarded fisheries other than the BSAI P. Cod fishery.

None of the sideboard caps were exceeded by the Mothership Fleet Cooperative in 2015. All Pollock was delivered to motherships operating in federal waters of the U.S. EEZ adjacent to the State of Alaska.

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 \$800 per metric ton for pollock harvested in excess of a vessel's allocation. The penalty for overages in the non-pollock fisheries include \$1500 per metric ton of cod harvest in excess of an allocation, \$300 per metric ton for over-harvests of all other flatfish fisheries.

The cooperative established penalties for exceeding assigned PSC caps as well, \$1,000 X the PSC rate X the amount of excess PSC.

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative assessed no penalties in 2015.

2015 Directed Pollock Fishery Results

Table 2. 2015 Mothership Fleet Co-op Pollock Allocations and Harvest - MT

Catcher	Co-op %	Co-op MT	Actual MT	Actual %
Aleutian Challenger	4.93%	5,637.27	3,891.70	3.40%
Alyeska	2.27%	2,600.05	5,341.84	4.67%
American Beauty	6.00%	6,866.34	5,633.80	4.92%
California Horizon	3.79%	4,332.66	0.00	0.00%
Mar-Gun	6.25%	7,153.58	0.00	0.00%
Margaret Lyn	5.64%	6,457.79	5,574.31	4.87%
Mark I	6.25%	7,153.58	10,257.07	8.96%
Misty Dawn	3.57%	4,084.33	12,331.36	10.78%
Morning Star	3.60%	4,120.95	0.00	0.00%
Nordic Fury	6.18%	7,068.90	644.87	0.56%
Ocean Leader	6.00%	6,866.34	10,622.80	9.28%
Oceanic	7.04%	8,054.22	9,504.45	8.31%
Pacific Challenger	9.67%	11,067.40	7,600.91	6.64%
Pacific Fury	5.89%	6,739.31	13,921.22	12.16%
Papado II	2.95%	3,379.38	0.00	0.00%
Traveler	4.27%	4,888.83	8,261.17	7.22%
Vanguard	5.35%	6,122.49	6,040.15	5.28%
Vesteraalen	6.20%	7,096.36	9,368.04	8.19%
Western Dawn	4.15%	4,749.22	5,399.81	4.72%
Total Harvest	100.00%	114,439.00	114,393.51	99.96%
Unharvested			45.49	0.04%

Table 3. PSC Bycatch in 2015 Mothership Fleet Co-op Directed Pollock Fishery by Vessel

Catcher	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	0.11	0.37	0	0	0	0	34	0	1,144
Alyeska	0.06	0.64	0	0	0	98	0	8	0
American Beauty	0.07	0.10	0	0	0	2	43	3	1,446
California Horizon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Margaret Lyn	0	0	0	3	3	0	26	0	688
Mar-Gun	0.14	0.28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mark I	0.04	1.25	0	0	0	96	33	26	1,059
Misty Dawn	0.02	0.51	0	0	2	58	56	42	1,109
Morning Star	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nordic Fury	0	0.27	0	0	0	0	0	0	24
Ocean Leader	0.32	5.34	0	0	6	110	5	6	541
Oceanic	0.15	1.32	0	6	0	79	37	35	783
Pacific Challenger	0.72	0.30	0	6	0	0	76	0	2,745
Pacific Fury	0.16	0.51	0	3	43	82	100	51	1,353
Papado II	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Traveler	0.06	1.56	0	0	4	59	47	31	805
Vanguard	0.03	0.04	0	0	8	14	6	5	634
Vesteraalen	0.26	0.63	0	10	0	77	42	46	737
Western Dawn	0.03	0.37	0	0	0	14	54	3	706
TOTAL	2.18	13.49	0	28	66	689	559	256	13,774

Table 4. Groundfish Bycatch in 2015 Mothership Fleet Co-op Directed Pollock Fishery by Vessel

Catcher	P.Cod	Yellowfin Sole	Rock Sole	Flathead Sole	Alaska Plaice	Arrowtooth	POP	Squid	All Other
Aleutian Challenger	21.23		0.32	1.11		0.39	0.69	3.17	64.40
Alyeska	41.65	2.08	4.25	6.21	0.04	0.27	0.00	0.00	289.59
American Beauty	29.84	0.14	1.86	3.21	-	0.49	10.79	0.24	12.00
California Horizon							0.00	0.00	-
Margaret Lyn							0.00	0.00	-
Mar-Gun	21.35	0.05	0.03	1.93	0.00	1.27	0.18	0.52	23.35
Mark I	35.32	2.14	5.61	5.62	0.00	0.35	0.02	0.40	77.55
Misty Dawn	57.68	1.66	6.79	13.95	0.05	0.56	0.46	1.75	64.81
Morning Star							0.00	0.00	-
Nordic Fury	4.57	0.00	0.01	0.11		0.03	0.07	0.72	0.70
Ocean Leader	94.83	5.00	5.73	10.32	0.10	0.41	33.84	9.46	147.21
Oceanic	61.02	11.79	5.89	14.60	0.15	0.65	2.70	0.27	46.43
Pacific Challenger	46.74		0.76	4.17		1.82	38.38	13.70	160.05
Pacific Fury	79.43	4.99	4.07	14.43	0.15	2.31	0.03	0.20	74.73
Papado II							0.00	0.00	-
Traveler	31.01	0.79	4.44	4.84	0.00	0.49	0.01	0.00	62.15
Vanguard	41.95	0.12	1.48	1.86	-	0.09	41.53	2.40	21.87
Vesteraalen	57.90	1.28	7.79	12.38	0.04	1.39	0.00	0.01	70.27
Western Dawn	28.11	1.57	2.34	4.34	0.02	0.56	0.24	0.80	20.18
TOTAL	652.63	31.60	51.38	99.07	0.55	11.07	128.94	33.64	1,135.28

Non-Pollock Groundfish Fisheries

In 2015 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.

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.

PSC mothership cooperative catch and bycatch in sideboarded 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 5. Mothership Fleet Cooperative 2015 BSAI Pacific Cod Sideboard Amounts and directed catch

Vessel	% of Mothership Sideboard	Transfers Inter co-op	Transfers Intra co-op	Cod Sideboard MT	Landed Cod RWE*
Aleutian Challenger	3.40%	235.00	0	391.43	504.03
Alyeska	1.13%			51.99	
American Beauty	3.37%			155.05	79.15
California Horizon	4.42%			203.36	
Mar-Gun	6.62%			304.59	
Margaret Lyn	4.15%		667.61	858.55	1506.24
Mark I	14.51%		(667.61)	0.00	
Misty Dawn	0.00%			0.00	
Nordic Fury	8.56%		364.77	758.61	228.67
Ocean leader	3.79%			179.99	
Oceanic	12.97%		(255.62)	341.13	
Morning Star/Pacific Alliance	0.25%			11.50	
Pacific Challenger	10.27%		255.62	728.14	1554.58
Pacific Fury	7.95%		(364.77)	1.01	
Papado II	0.97%			44.63	
Traveler	1.99%			91.56	
Vanguard	0.98%			45.09	43.06
Vesteraalen	8.09%			372.22	
Western Dawn	6.59%			203.21	150.16
Total	100%	235.00	0	4742.06	4065.89

*Please note that these numbers are based on data available from NMFS based on observer data. Landings based on fish tickets and weights at certified scales vary significantly.

Table 6. Mothership Fleet Cooperative Halibut Bycatch Mortality and PSC Bycatch in the 2015 Directed BSAI Pacific Cod Fishery*.

Vessel	Actual Halibut Mortality (MT)	Chinook	Other salmon	King Crab	Bairdi	Other Tanner	Herring (MT)
Aleutian Challenger	0.51	0	0	0	0	0	0
Alyeska	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Beauty	2.28	1	2	0	162	57	0
California Horizon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mar-Gun	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Margaret Lyn	7.51	45	2	0	2314	231	0
Mark I	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Misty Dawn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nordic Fury	1.95	0	0	0	394	0	0
Ocean leader	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Oceanic	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Morning Star	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Pacific Challenger	12.39	19	1	1	314	22	0
Pacific Fury	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Papado II	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Traveler	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vanguard	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vesteraalen	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Western Dawn	0.65	0	0	0	1	0	0
Total	25.29	65	5	0	3185	310	0

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 continued use of an intra-fleet salmon bycatch reporting program for the 2015 “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, by species, 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. In addition to these daily reports, deliveries with high salmon bycatch were reported as an alarm.

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.

Intercooperative Salmon Avoidance Program

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 2015 is included in Tables 3 and 6. The number of times each vessel appeared on the dirty 20 lists is included in Table 8. Estimates of the number of chum salmon avoided and the results of the third party compliance audit will be included in the Amendment 84 Intercooperative Salmon Avoidance Program Annual Report. No MFC vessels were found to be in violation of the 2015 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	# weeks Chum DTL
Aleutian Challenger	1
Alyeska	0
American Beauty	3
California Horizon	0
Margaret Lyn	1
Mar-Gun	0
Mark I	1
Misty Dawn	2
Morning Star	0
Nordic Fury	0
Ocean Leader	3
Oceanic	0
Pacific Challenger	4
Pacific Fury	2
Papado II	0
Traveler	1
Vanguard	4
Vesteraalen	1
Western Dawn	2
Total	25

Mothership Salmon Savings Incentive Plan

Under Amendment 91, the Mothership Fleet Cooperative manages its Chinook salmon bycatch through an Incentive Plan Agreement approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service. 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.

As in previous years, in 2015, the Mothership Fleet Cooperative operated under the MSSIP. There is a separate report on results and catch under the Mothership Salmon Savings Incentive Program. No vessels were found to be in violation of any terms of the MSSIP.

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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