

Pollock Conservation Cooperative
and
High Seas Catchers' Cooperative
Joint Annual Report 2015



North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Pollock Conservation Cooperative Annual Report

Introduction

In 1998, the owners of the catcher-processors and catcher-vessels that deliver to catcher-processors in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) pollock fishery formed separate fishing cooperatives to coordinate pollock harvesting under the American Fisheries Act. The Pollock Conservation Cooperative (PCC) is the catcher-processor cooperative, and the High Seas Catchers' Cooperative (HSCC) is the catcher-vessel cooperative. On January 21, 1999, the PCC and HSCC completed an inter-cooperative agreement to facilitate efficient management and accurate accounting between the two cooperatives. The agreement, "Cooperative Agreement Between Offshore Pollock Catchers' Cooperative and Pollock Conservation Cooperative" remains in force, has not been changed, and is available upon request from the NPFMC.

Purpose of Report

This report is intended to disclose all information required or identified in the American Fisheries Act (AFA), per the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) October 1999 recommendation to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce, and in further guidance provided by the NPFMC in letters dated October 21, 1999 and November 1, 1999. The tables and figures in this report are largely self-explanatory, although some notes have been included to provide detail. The catch data in this report was provided by SeaState, Inc., and was obtained from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program.¹

Reporting Requirements

Fishing cooperatives formed under the AFA are subject to certain annual reporting requirements. Section 210(a)(1)(B) of the AFA requires the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council and the US Secretary of Commerce to "make available to the public in such a manner as the North Pacific Council and Secretary deem appropriate, catch information for all species (including bycatch) in the directed pollock fishery on a vessel-by-vessel basis." In doing so, however, the NPFMC and Secretary must take into account "the interest of the parties to [a fishing cooperative] in protecting the confidentiality of proprietary information."

In October 1999, the NPFMC took action to implement section 210(a)(1)(B) of the AFA by requiring that cooperatives annually prepare a report containing: (1) the allocation of pollock and sideboard species to a cooperative; (2) any sub-allocations of pollock and sideboard species on a vessel-by-vessel basis; (3) retained and discarded catch on an area-by-area and vessel-by-vessel basis; (4) the methods used to monitor fisheries in which cooperative vessels participated; (5) any actions taken by cooperatives to enforce vessel or aggregate catches that exceed allowed catch and bycatch in the pollock and sideboard fisheries; (6) the total weight of pollock landed outside the State of Alaska on a vessel-by-vessel basis; (7) the number of salmon taken by species and season; and (8) the number of times each vessel appears on the weekly 'dirty 20' lists for non-Chinook salmon.

¹ The NMFS catch database for the 2015 fishing year is still subject to revision as catch data and other information from the fishery is finalized. To the extent that information in this report is based on NMFS data, it is still subject to revision. At this point, however, neither the PCC nor the HSCC are aware of any data discrepancies that would materially alter the substantive elements of this report.

Cooperative Members and Allocations

The Pollock Conservation Cooperative was formed in December 1998 in order to promote the rational and orderly harvest of pollock by the catcher-processor (CP) sector of the BSAI pollock trawl fishery. The PCC is made up of the companies that today operate 19 CPs eligible to harvest and process pollock in the BSAI directed pollock fishery under section 208(e)(1)-(20) of the AFA. In September 2005 the PCC companies adopted an amended and restated membership agreement.

According to the PCC harvest schedule, each member is allocated a percentage of the directed fishery specified under Section 206(b) of the AFA. The percentage of the catcher-processor directed pollock fishery allocated to each PCC member by the amended membership agreement is shown below².

Company	Directed Pollock Fishery Share (%)	PCC Share (%)
C/P Northern Hawk, L.L.C.	1.000	2.73
Starbound, L.L.C.	1.585	4.33
Arctic Fjord, Inc.	1.792	4.90
Arctic Storm, Inc.	1.841	5.03
Glacier Fish Company, L.L.C.	6.222	17.00
Trident Seafoods Corp.	6.824	18.64
American Seafoods, L.L.C.	17.336	47.37
Total:	36.600	100.00

Inter-Cooperative Agreement Between PCC and HSCC

Under the inter-cooperative agreement, the PCC and HSCC established a joint harvest schedule and agreed to retain the same independent quota monitoring service. The inter-cooperative agreement governs the harvest and processing of the HSCC members' share of the BSAI directed pollock fishery and the transfer of pollock allocations between members of the two cooperatives. Table 1 shows PCC and HSCC pollock allocations and catch for 2015 by company and vessel, and Table 2 shows PCC and HSCC pollock directed fishing catch and prohibited species bycatch (PSC) for 2015.

² Under sections 205(4) (definitions) and 206 (allocations) of the AFA, the BSAI directed pollock fishery (DPF) is the amount of the total allowable catch remaining after 10 percent has been deducted for the western Alaska Community Development Quota program and an additional amount has been deducted for the incidental catch of pollock in other groundfish fisheries. Section 206(b)(2) of the American Fisheries Act allocates a total of 40 percent of the DPF to catcher-processors and the catcher vessels that deliver to catcher-processors, and section 210(c) allocates 8.5 percent of this amount (3.4 percent of the DPF) to catcher vessels that deliver to catcher processors. Subsequently, the AFA was amended by the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2004, which reallocated the AI DPF to the Aleut Corporation for the purpose of economic development of Adak, Alaska.

Table 1. PCC and HSCC Pollock Allocations and Catch.

2015	Company	Vessel	Cooperative Shares (mt)			Catch (mt)		
			Harvest Schedule	Transfers	Final Allocation	Vessel Harvest	Company Total	Amount Remaining
PCC	American Seafoods	American Dynasty	198,392	709	199,102	41,522	199,091	11
		American Triumph				39,336		
		Northern Eagle				39,672		
		Northern Jaeger				38,059		
		Ocean Rover				40,501		
	Arctic Fjord Ltd.	Arctic Fjord	20,508	7,940	28,448	28,448	28,448	0
	Arctic Storm Ltd.	Arctic Storm	21,068	9,117	30,185	30,176	30,176	9
	C/P Northern Hawk Ltd.	Northern Hawk	11,444	10,912	22,356	22,352	22,352	4
Glacier Fish Co.	Alaska Ocean Pacific Glacier	71,204	3,347	74,551	41,780	74,541	10	
					32,761			
	Starbound Ltd.	Starbound	18,139	6,884	25,022	25,006	25,006	17
	Trident Seafoods	Island Enterprise Kodiak Enterprise Seattle Enterprise	78,093		78,093	27,600	78,035	59
						24,626		
						25,809		
HSCC		Forum Star	8,105	(8,105)	-			
		American Chall.	3,604	(3,604)	-			
		Ocean Harvester	4,950	(4,950)	-			
		Neahkanie	7,643	(7,643)	-			
		Sea Storm	9,414	(9,414)	-			
		Muir Milach	5,193	(5,193)	-			
Totals			457,758		457,758	457,648	457,648	110

Table 2. PCC and HSCC Pollock Directed Fishing Catch and Bycatch.

2015	Vessel	Pollock (mt)	Other Groundfish (mt)	Halibut Mortality (mt)	Herring (mt)	Red King Crab (N)	<i>Bairdi</i> Crab (N)	<i>Opilio</i> Crab (N)	Chinook Salmon A (N)	Chinook Salmon B (N)	Other Salmon A (N)	Other Salmon B (N)
PCC	Alaska Ocean	41,780	986	13	68	0	43	143	213	244	102	2,107
	American Dynasty	41,522	951	7	27	0	25	98	311	176	106	2,763
	American Triumph	39,336	883	9	1	0	9	6	412	220	119	2,540
	Arctic Fjord	28,448	437	3	2	0	25	159	161	113	74	1,793
	Arctic Storm	30,176	448	2	2	0	31	162	74	66	54	1,332
	Island Enterprise	27,600	300	3	1	0	27	403	222	399	69	6,284
	Kodiak Enterprise	24,626	469	3	0	0	81	563	155	105	54	2,355
	Northern Eagle	39,672	730	6	171	0	9	53	151	180	51	1,639
	Northern Hawk	22,352	281	4	60	0	9	67	212	91	88	989
	Northern Jaeger	38,059	599	4	1	0	18	194	193	101	63	2,100
	Ocean Rover	40,501	965	9	27	0	0	61	287	131	82	3,049
	Pacific Glacier	32,761	410	2	1	0	0	9	206	182	67	4,005
	Seattle Enterprise	25,809	352	3	1	0	11	34	152	284	71	6,462
	Starbound	25,006	590	4	1	0	92	295	291	82	136	2,633

	Vessel	Pollock (mt)	Other Groundfish (mt)	Halibut Mortality (mt)	Herring (mt)	Red King Crab (N)	<i>Bairdi</i> Crab (N)	<i>Opilio</i> Crab (N)	Chinook Salmon A (N)	Chinook Salmon B (N)	Other Salmon A (N)	Other Salmon B (N)
HSCC	Forum Star	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	American Challenger	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Ocean Harvester	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Neahkanie	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Sea Storm	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Muir Milach	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Totals*	457,648	8,401	74	364	0	380	2,247	3,040	2,374	1,136	40,051
Catch Rate (species catch/ total groundfish)		0.982	0.018	0.000	0.001	0	0.001	0.005	0.007	0.005	0.002	0.086

*Of the 466,049 tons of total groundfish catch (pollock and other non-pollock groundfish), 2,125 tons were discarded. Thus, over 99.5 percent of all groundfish harvested by PCC vessels in the directed-pollock fishery was retained and used to make a marketable product.

Yellowfin Sole, Atka Mackerel, and Pacific Cod Fisheries

Seven PCC vessels participated in the directed fishery for BSAI yellowfin sole in 2015. Groundfish catch and PSC bycatch for PCC yellowfin sole directed fishing is shown in Table 3. Catch rates are provided to assess target catch and PSC bycatch per ton of total groundfish catch. For example, in 2015, average halibut mortality was four kilograms per ton of groundfish in the yellowfin sole directed fishery, and yellowfin sole catches were on average about 68 percent of the total groundfish catch. To interpret catch rates of PSC collected as number of individuals (N): In 2015, 2.7 *Opilio* crabs were caught per ton of groundfish in the yellowfin sole directed fishery. Table 4 shows similar information for the catch of the F/T Northern Glacier in the 2015 Central Aleutian Islands Atka mackerel fishery and the catch of the F/T Katie Ann in the 2015 directed Pacific cod fishery.

Table 3. PCC Yellowfin Sole Directed Fishing Catch and Bycatch

Vessel	Yellowfin Sole (mt)	Total Groundfish (mt)	Halibut Mortality (mt)	Herring (mt)	Red King Crab (N)	<i>Bairdi</i> Crab (N)	<i>Opilio</i> Crab (N)	Chinook Salmon (N)	Other Salmon (N)
American Dynasty	374	533	4	0	0	1,888	356	0	0
Arctic Storm	600	699	3	0	0	455	742	0	0
Katie Ann	2,832	4,273	14	0	0	8,019	13,715	0	0
Northern Eagle	585	752	3	0	0	4,368	3,036	0	0
Northern Glacier	4,037	5,972	18	3	371	7,451	16,334	109	0
Northern Jaeger	307	541	7	0	0	1,734	1,483	0	0
Ocean Rover	572	929	9	0	0	3,466	1,334	0	0
2015 Totals	9,307	13,699	57	3	371	27,381	37,000	109	0
Catch Rate	0.679	1.000	0.004	0.000	0.027	1.999	2.701	0.008	0

Table 4. PCC Atka Mackerel and Pacific Cod Directed Fishing Catch and Bycatch.

Vessel	Atka Mackerel CAI (mt)	Total Groundfish (mt)	Halibut Mortality (mt)	Herring (mt)	Red King Crab (N)	<i>Bairdi</i> Crab (N)	<i>Opilio</i> Crab (N)	Chinook Salmon (N)	Other Salmon (N)
Northern Glacier	751	1,011	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015 Totals	751	1,011	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Catch Rate	0.743	1.000	0.001	0	0	0	0	0	0

Vessel	Pacific Cod (mt)	Total Groundfish (mt)	Halibut Mortality (mt)	Herring (mt)	Red King Crab (N)	<i>Bairdi</i> Crab (N)	<i>Opilio</i> Crab (N)	Chinook Salmon (N)	Other Salmon (N)
Katie Ann	143	167	4	0	0	30	0	80	0
2015 Totals	143	167	4	0	0	30	0	80	0
Catch Rate	0.856	1.000	0.024	0	0	0.179	0	0.479	0

AFA Sideboard Limits and Total Groundfish Catch

PCC vessels are all AFA C/Ps. The 2015 AFA C/P sideboard limits and catches of sideboard-limited groundfish and PSC species are shown in Table 5. The groundfish sideboard limits control PCC directed fishing for each species listed. For some groundfish species catch is greater than the sideboard limit, but in every case this catch occurred as bycatch in the pollock, yellowfin sole, Atka mackerel and Pacific cod fisheries, and not as directed fishing on these sideboard species. Note yellowfin sole was not sideboard limited in 2015. The PSC limits cap bycatch of these species in the non-pollock fisheries, therefore the PSC bycatch amounts in Table 5 reflect total PCC bycatch of PSC species in the yellowfin sole, Atka mackerel, and Pacific cod fisheries only. Table 6 shows PCC catches of all groundfish and PSC species by vessel from the pollock, yellowfin sole, Atka mackerel, and Pacific cod fisheries combined. Note the difference between the pollock catch given in Table 1 and that in Table 6 is because Table 6 includes all pollock catches from PCC vessels, including incidental pollock catch in the yellowfin sole, Atka mackerel, and Pacific cod fisheries, while Table 1 includes only directed pollock fishing catch.

Table 5. PCC Species Sideboard Limits and Catch.

Groundfish Species	2015 Catch	2015 Limit	Over (Under) Limit*
Alaska plaice - BSAI (mt)	577	16	561
Arrowtooth flounder - BSAI (mt)	366	37	329
Atka mackerel - BS + EAI (mt)	63	0	63
Atka mackerel - CAI (mt)	751	1,746	(995)
Atka mackerel - WAI (mt)	0	1,876	(1,876)
Flathead sole - BSAI (mt)	1,839	780	1,059
Greenland turbot - BS (mt)	27	15	12
Greenland turbot - AI (mt)	1	1	0
Kamchatka flounder - BSAI (mt)	76	11	65
Northern rockfish - BSAI (mt)	172	19	153
Octopus - BSAI (mt)	4	3	1
Other flatfish - BSAI (mt)	108	178	(70)
Other Rockfish - BS (mt)	16	9	7
Other Rockfish - AI (mt)	4	15	(11)
Pacific Ocean perch - BS (mt)	1,282	14	1,268
Pacific Ocean perch - EAI (mt)	0	143	(143)
Pacific Ocean perch - CAI (mt)	58	6	52
Pacific Ocean perch - WAI (mt)	0	32	(32)
Rock sole -BSAI (mt)	1,863	2,288	(425)
Rougheye rockfish - EBS+EAI (mt)	0	3	(3)
Rougheye rockfish - CAI+WAI (mt)	0	4	(4)
Sablefish - BS (mt)	0	9	(9)
Sablefish - AI (mt)	0	0	0
Sculpins - BSAI (mt)	188	32	156
Sharks - BSAI (mt)	27	1	26
Shortraker rockfish - BSAI (mt)	5	5	0
Skates - BSAI (mt)	542	175	367
Squid - BSAI (mt)	169	7	162
Prohibited Species	2015 Catch	2015 Limit	Over (Under) Limit
Halibut mortality - BSAI (mt)	136	286	(150)
Red king crab - Zone 1 (N)	0	606	(606)
<i>C. opilio</i> crab - COBLZ (N)	18,115	1,528,317	(1,486,440)
<i>C. bairdi</i> crab - Zone 1 (N)	12,096	122,520	(110,424)
<i>C. bairdi</i> crab - Zone 2 (N)	12,245	132,611	(120,366)

* For some groundfish species catch is greater than the sideboard limit, but in every case this catch occurred as bycatch in the pollock, yellowfin sole, and Atka mackerel fisheries, and not as directed fishing on these sideboard species.

Table 6. All 2015 PCC Catches by Vessel.

Vessel	Pollock (mt)	Atka Mackerel (mt)	Yellowfin Sole (mt)	Pacific Cod (mt)	Sablefish (mt)	Alaska Plaice (mt)	Arrowtooth Flounder (mt)	Flathead Sole (mt)
Alaska Ocean	41,780	0.0	58	342	0.00	6	35	185
American Dynasty	41,572	10.8	408	387	0.01	12	38	168
American Triumph	39,336	0.1	133	191	0.00	4	19	168
Arctic Fjord	28,448	0.1	13	193	0.00	1	17	58
Arctic Storm	30,196	0.0	612	210	0.00	6	9	116
Island Enterprise	27,600	0.0	13	117	0.00	0	7	78
Katie Ann	751	0.0	2,832	327	0.02	151	66	132
Kodiak Enterprise	24,626	0.7	9	130	0.00	0	12	74
Northern Eagle	39,723	0.2	600	228	0.00	10	13	146
Northern Glacier	667	751.0	4,037	349	0.01	366	54	67
Northern Hawk	22,352	0.0	47	93	0.00	1	13	51
Northern Jaeger	38,157	24.7	321	264	0.00	7	22	117
Ocean Rover	40,667	26.0	612	349	0.00	13	38	219
Pacific Glacier	32,761	0.1	28	125	0.00	1	7	103
Seattle Enterprise	25,809	0.1	9	92	0.00	0	6	64
Starbound	25,006	0.3	17	192	0.00	0	11	94
TOTAL	459,452	814.1	9,749	3,588	0.1	577	366	1,839

Table 6. Continued

Vessel	Greenland Turbot (mt)	Kamchatka Flounder (mt)	Rock Sole (mt)	Other Flatfishes (mt)	Northern Rockfish (mt)	Rougheye Rockfish (mt)	Shortraker Rockfish (mt)	Pacific Ocean Perch (mt)
Alaska Ocean	2.3	5	215	2	0	0.0	0.0	38
American Dynasty	2.6	8	166	2	26	0.1	0.0	147
American Triumph	2.0	6	164	1	3	0.0	0.5	106
Arctic Fjord	1.0	2	42	1	11	0.0	0.0	47
Arctic Storm	2.1	2	66	2	0	0.0	0.0	8
Island Enterprise	1.2	1	43	3	0	0.0	0.1	3
Katie Ann	0.3	15	143	1	0	0.0	0.0	0
Kodiak Enterprise	0.7	4	45	1	1	0.0	0.0	143
Northern Eagle	4.0	2	40	1	5	0.1	3.7	305
Northern Glacier	2.2	13	384	82	89	0.0	0.0	58
Northern Hawk	0.6	2	24	0	2	0.0	0.2	20
Northern Jaeger	3.4	4	80	1	23	0.0	0.0	103
Ocean Rover	3.6	7	263	5	5	0.0	0.0	112
Pacific Glacier	0.8	2	85	2	2	0.0	0.0	20
Seattle Enterprise	0.8	1	33	3	3	0.0	0.0	94
Starbound	0.4	2	69	2	3	0.0	0.0	137
TOTAL	28.2	76	1,863	108	172	0.3	4.6	1,340

Table 6. Continued

Vessel	Other Rockfishes (mt)	All sculpins (mt)	All sharks (mt)	All skates (mt)	All octopi (mt)	All squids (mt)
Alaska Ocean	0.1	22	1	72	0.3	2.0
American Dynasty	2.5	10	2	39	0.4	6.7
American Triumph	0.4	7	3	46	0.2	29.0
Arctic Fjord	1.0	12	1	35	0.2	1.6
Arctic Storm	0.0	12	3	76	0.2	1.8
Island Enterprise	0.1	5	2	17	0.0	12.0
Katie Ann	0.1	16	0	5	1.3	0.0
Kodiak Enterprise	0.0	6	2	21	0.2	18.1
Northern Eagle	0.2	9	2	37	0.1	26.6
Northern Glacier	3.8	49	0	11	0.0	0.1
Northern Hawk	0.0	5	2	17	0.1	4.8
Northern Jaeger	2.2	6	2	43	0.3	19.6
Ocean Rover	7.5	9	1	52	0.8	6.5
Pacific Glacier	0.2	6	4	21	0.2	4.6
Seattle Enterprise	0.2	5	2	12	0.0	27.5
Starbound	1.2	9	2	41	0.1	8.6
TOTAL	19.3	188	27	542	4.4	169.5

Table 6. Continued

Vessel	Halibut Mortality (mt)	Pacific Herring (mt)	Red King Crab (N)	Tanner Crab, <i>Bairdi</i> (N)	Snow Crab, <i>Opilio</i> (N)	Chinook Salmon (N)	Other Salmon (N)
Alaska Ocean	13	68.2	0	43	143	457	2,209
American Dynasty	11	26.8	0	1,913	454	487	2,869
American Triumph	9	0.6	0	9	6	632	2,659
Arctic Fjord	3	1.6	0	25	159	274	1,867
Arctic Storm	5	2.3	0	486	904	140	1,386
Island Enterprise	3	1.3	0	27	403	621	6,353
Katie Ann	18	0.0	0	8,049	13,716	80	0
Kodiak Enterprise	3	0.5	0	81	563	260	2,409
Northern Eagle	10	170.9	0	4,377	3,089	331	1,690
Northern Glacier	19	2.7	371	7,451	16,334	109	0
Northern Hawk	4	60.5	0	9	67	303	1,077
Northern Jaeger	11	1.3	0	1,752	1,677	294	2,163
Ocean Rover	18	27.4	0	3,466	1,395	418	3,131
Pacific Glacier	2	0.9	0	0	9	388	4,072
Seattle Enterprise	3	0.7	0	11	34	436	6,533
Starbound	4	0.8	0	92	295	373	2,769
TOTAL	136	367	371	27,791	39,248	5,603	41,187

Pollock Fishery Discards

Groundfish bycatch amounts and total amounts of other (non-pollock) groundfish¹ in the pollock target fishery are reported in Table 2 by vessel. These groundfish bycatch amounts include catches of all of the species groups listed on the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands “TAC sheet.” In contrast to groundfish bycatch, groundfish discards include all groundfish catches, including pollock, from which no edible, saleable product was produced. An estimate of the total groundfish discard amount is provided as a footnote to Table 2. Table 7 provides additional pollock-fishery bycatch and discards detail, including in particular the bycatch and discard of forage and non-specified species. These discard estimates are made by the North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program. The non-specified category includes species that occur infrequently in the BSAI, or have little or no economic value, and so are neither targeted by the commercial fisheries nor managed by the National Marine Fisheries Service. In 2015, jellyfish accounted for 97 percent of the non-specified species bycatch in the pollock fishery. Table 8 shows pollock discards by vessel in the pollock fishery for 2015.

Table 7. PCC Pollock Fishery Discards.

Species Category	2015 Discard Amount (mt)	Year	Groundfish Bycatch Ratio (mt/mt) **	Groundfish Discard Ratio (mt/mt) ***
Pollock	231	2002	0.011	0.004
Other Roundfish	637	2003	0.010	0.004
Flatfish	823	2004	0.012	0.005
Skates	308	2005	0.005	0.004
Squid and Octopi	100	2006	0.007	0.004
Sharks	26	2007	0.007	0.005
Total Groundfish	2,125	2008	0.025	0.008
		2009	0.040	0.010
		2010	0.030	0.009
Forage	0	2011	0.038	0.010
Non-specified	1,837	2012	0.034	0.014
		2013	0.031	0.007
Total discards*	3,962	2014	0.020	0.006
		2015	0.018	0.005

* Does not include the prohibited species amounts listed in Table 2. By regulation, all prohibited crab species, halibut, and herring must be discarded, while salmon may be discarded or donated to food banks.

** Groundfish bycatch ratio is groundfish bycatch divided by total groundfish catch.

*** Groundfish discard ratio is groundfish discards divided by total groundfish catch.

¹ In this report the term “bycatch” includes all non-target groundfish species that are taken incidental to directed fishing for pollock, yellowfin sole, Pacific cod and Atka mackerel, whether such catch is retained and sold or discarded. This is different from the definition of “bycatch” in Section 3(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act 16 USC 1802, which defines bycatch as non-retained (discarded) catch.

Table 8. Pollock Discards by Vessel

Vessel	Amount (mt)
Alaska Ocean	0
American Dynasty	1
American Triumph	0
Arctic Fjord	0
Arctic Storm	2
Island Enterprise	0
Kodiak Enterprise	61
Northern Eagle	0
Northern Hawk	0
Northern Jaeger	0
Ocean Rover	0
Pacific Glacier	11
Seattle Enterprise	0
Starbound	156
2015 Total	231

Pollock Landed Outside of Alaska

No pollock was landed outside the state of Alaska in 2015.

Chinook and Chum Salmon Bycatch Avoidance***Chinook***

Amendment 91 to the BSAI FMP limits Chinook salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. Regulations implementing the Amendment 91 program came into force in 2011. The program is an innovative approach to managing Chinook salmon bycatch that combines overall, sector-specific limits on the amount of Chinook salmon bycatch with a voluntary incentive plan agreement (IPA) and performance standard requirement designed to minimize Chinook bycatch by each individual vessel. These vessel-level incentives are created through contracts among the IPA participants.

The PCC member companies participate in a Chinook Salmon Bycatch Reduction Incentive Plan and Agreement. The agreement was first implemented in 2011 and is designed to provide the incentives necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of Amendment 91. The plan builds on experience gained in the development and refinement of time-and-area-based salmon “hot-spot” (bycatch avoidance-area) programs. The plan creates incentives to avoid Chinook bycatch by restricting the pollock fishing opportunities of vessels with poor bycatch performance while allowing vessels with good bycatch performance less restricted access to fishing grounds. Losing access to good fishing grounds increases vessel operating costs and reduces product values; avoiding these costs and producing more high-value products increases vessel profitability.

The plan is designed to work in concert with the annual Chinook bycatch limits specified in Amendment 91. Primary plan components include: (1) data gathering, monitoring, reporting, and information sharing; (2) identification of bycatch avoidance areas; and (3) pollock fishing prohibitions for vessels with poor bycatch performance. The plan also includes an A-season closure area (Chinook Salmon Conservation Area). This 735 square-mile area is on the northwestern flank of the Bering Canyon, and remains closed to pollock fishing for the entire A-season. An analysis of A-season data from 1995-2007 showed that in some years nearly 20 percent of the Chinook salmon bycatch occurred in this area along with only 2-3 percent of the pollock catch. Additional program features and performance results are provided in an annual CP IPA report available from the NPFMC.

Chum

All BSAI pollock cooperatives participated in an inter-cooperative chum salmon bycatch avoidance (hot-spot closure) program. The PCC first began participating in this program in 2001, and since then has worked to improve the program. The program became a regulated component of the Bering Sea pollock fishery in 2006 (Amendment 84 to the BSAI Fishery Management Plan). As with the Chinook bycatch management program, the chum bycatch avoidance program is implemented via contracts among the program participants.

Table 9. PCC Vessel Weeks on the Chum Dirty-20 List.

Vessel	Weeks on D-20
American Dynasty	0
American Triumph	1
Northern Eagle	0
Northern Jaeger	3
Ocean Rover	0
Arctic Fjord	2
Arctic Storm	1
Northern Hawk	0
Alaska Ocean	1
Pacific Glacier	2
Starbound	2
Island Enterprise	4
Kodiak Enterprise	4
Seattle Enterprise	6
Average all PCC vessels	1.85
Maximum all ICA vessels	8
Average all ICA vessels	1.94
Median all ICA vessels	1

Before the 2012 B-season, in an effort to further reduce bycatch of western-Alaska origin chum salmon, the Amendment 84 inter-cooperative agreement (ICA) was modified to limit the increase in the benchmark used to evaluate chum bycatch performance by the pollock cooperatives to not more than 20 percent per week. This modification made it more difficult for cooperative vessels to fish on grounds with high chum abundance during periods when chum abundance was generally increasing grounds-wide. In addition, the initial bycatch benchmarks used to determine whether a cooperative is allowed to fish in an area of relatively high chum abundance were adjusted such that only vessels with at least two fishing weeks of very low chum bycatch were allowed to fish for pollock in chum bycatch avoidance areas. These modifications of the Amendment 84 program were renewed for 2015 and remained in effect until the end of August 2015.

The chum bycatch of PCC vessels in the 2015 B-season was 39,948 chum salmon. Table 9 shows the season-weeks that PCC vessels were on the Amendment 84 D-20 list during the pollock B-season. This is a list of vessels that are prohibited from fishing in chum bycatch avoidance areas during any given week due to poor chum bycatch performance. The maximum,

average and median are shown to allow comparison of PCC vessels with all ICA vessels. The 2015 ICA report (available from the NPFMC) includes an analysis of the estimated number of chum salmon bycatch avoided by the hot-spot program.

Monitoring and Enforcement

All data used in monitoring pollock and non-pollock fishing activities was obtained from the North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program. Aboard each vessel, the catch is weighed using motion-compensated flow scales. The species composition of the catch is determined from observer sampling. Since two observers are required on AFA catcher-processors, the number of unsampled hauls is very low. In 2015, virtually 100 percent of pollock hauls were sampled. For the rare hauls that were not sampled, species composition data from the next nearest haul (in time and area) within the same vessel and gear type is applied to the unsampled catch. Priority in this imputation process is given to a sampled haul that occurs on the same day, but prior to the non-sampled haul.

Information concerning the catch and bycatch of individual vessels is available from a NMFS data server 24 hours a day, and is generally accessible 20 minutes after transmission from the vessels. SeaState, Inc., a company that provides catch accounting services, is authorized by the PCC and HSCC companies to receive and process this data and report on the status of the harvest. Observer data are downloaded one or two times per day, processed to generate catch and bycatch information, and then sent to a SeaState web site where company representatives may verify catch and bycatch data for their vessel(s). Typically, either an operations manager or

vessel operator checks into the site each day to make sure recorded harvest amounts for his vessel(s) are consistent with vessel tallies.

Companies with several vessels often set initial vessel allocations, and then manage vessel harvests independently until late in the season. Typically, inter- and intra-company transfers of pollock occur near the end of the season to promote quota usage. No enforcement actions were taken by the PCC against any members during 2015.

High Seas Catchers' Cooperative Annual Report

Introduction

The High Seas Catchers Coop is a fisheries cooperative of all vessels eligible to fish for BSAI pollock under section 208(b) of the American Fisheries Act (AFA). The HSCC is party to an inter-cooperative agreement with the PCC for purposes of pollock harvest management, and a participant in an AFA catcher-vessel inter-cooperative agreement for purposes of sideboard species harvest management.

Cooperative Members and Allocations

The member vessels of HSCC include the F/Vs American Challenger, Forum Star, Muir Milach, Neahkahnie, Ocean Harvester, and Sea Storm. The HSCC Membership agreement was amended in 2015 to replace the Tracy Anne with the vessel Forum Star and is available from the NPFMC.

Allocations of pollock to members of HSCC were established within the HSCC membership agreement, as well as within the Cooperative Agreement with the PCC. Allocations of the BSAI Pacific cod sideboard amounts available for 2015 in the "Intercoop BSAI Cod Sideboard Allocation Agreement" were made by the HSCC Board of Directors through a roll over of the "Consent of Directors" document included as an appendix to the HSCC 2000 Annual Report. Other sideboard species were allocated by action of the HSCC Board of Directors. Prior to participation in any sideboard fishery, members were required to provide notice to the HSCC Executive Director, and-or the Manager of the Catcher Vessel Inter-Cooperative Agreement (CVICA). There is additional information about the flow of information between the vessels, the HSCC, SeaState, the CVICA Manager, and NMFS in the Catcher Vessel Inter-Cooperative Agreement (available from the NPFMC).

The 2015 distribution in metric tons to the HSCC vessels based on 206(b)(2) allocation of the directed pollock fishery to catcher-processors and catcher vessels, including releases from the pollock incidental catch allowance and rollovers from the Aleutian Islands fishery, is as follows:

Vessel	Allocation (mt)
Forum Star	8,105
American Challenger	3,604
Ocean Harvester	4,950
Neahkahnie	7,643
Sea Storm	9,414
Muir Milach	5,193
Total	38,909

Inter-Cooperative Agreement Between HSCC and PCC

The members of PCC and HSCC are allocated pollock under section 206(b)(2) of the AFA. As noted, HSCC is a party to the “Cooperative Agreement Between Offshore Pollock Catchers’ Cooperative and Pollock Conservation Cooperative” for purposes of pollock management, and this agreement is available from the NPFMC.

Catcher Vessel Inter-Cooperative Agreement

HSCC is also a party to the Catcher Vessel Inter-Cooperative Agreement (CVICA) for purposes of groundfish sideboard harvest management. Compliance with both agreements is based upon monitoring of catch and bycatch by SeaState, Inc. Information concerning CVICA allocations and rules as well as inter-cooperative transfer arrangements is contained in an annual report submitted to the NPFMC by the CVICA Manager. Among other things, the CVICA contains specific provisions on management of halibut prohibited-species catches (PSC) in the BSAI Pacific cod fishery, in which some HSCC vessels participate (see below). Prohibited species bycatch (PSC) by HSCC vessels is provided in Table 10.

Bering Sea Pollock Transfers and Directed Pollock Fishing

Based upon the January 1999 “Cooperative Agreement Between Offshore Pollock Catchers’ Cooperative and Pollock Conservation Cooperative,” individual members of HSCC have made transfers of pollock to individual members of PCC. These transfers are reported in Table 1 while catch and bycatch information for the directed Bering Sea pollock fishery is provided in Table 2.

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Shellfish Fisheries

The BSAI crab rationalization program was implemented in August 2005. As part of that program, the AFA crab sideboard limits were eliminated. The HSCC vessel Forum Star leased all of its scallop catch history and so did not catch any scallops in 2015.

AFA Sideboard Limits

The NMFS publishes in the Federal Register the sideboard limits for all AFA catcher vessels as well as a set of information tables which provide historic catches of sideboard species by cooperative for those species for which directed fishing is allowed. The regulations allow two or more cooperatives to enter into an inter-cooperative agreement where vessel catches are limited by the combined cooperative sideboard limits.

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Sideboard Fisheries

Three non-sideboard-exempt vessels participated in the Pacific cod fishery in 2015 and caught 3,142 metric tons of cod. Table 10 shows target, bycatch, and prohibited species catch by vessel for this fishery. Catch rates are provided to assess target catch and PSC use. Total groundfish catch by species is shown in Table 11.

Table 10. HSCC BSAI Pacific Cod Directed Fishing Catch and Bycatch by Vessel.

Vessel	Total Groundfish (mt)	Cod (mt)	Halibut mortality (mt)	King crab (N)	<i>Bairdi</i> (N)	<i>Opilio</i> (N)	Herring (mt)	Chinook (N)	Other salmon (N)
Muir Milach	558	536	3.55	0	92	0	0	0	0
Ocean Harvester	1,363	1,292	3.36	0	454	46	0	0	0
Sea Storm	1,378	1,314	9.44	1	374	29	0	6	4
2015 Totals	3,299	3,142	16.35	1	920	75	0	6	4
Catch Rate	1.000	0.952	0.005	0.000	0.279	0.023	0	0.002	0.001

Table 11. HSCC Catch of BSAI Groundfish.

Species	Catch (mt)
Pacific Cod	3,142
Pollock BS	64
Pollock AI	0.07
Atka Mackerel	0.02
Alaska Plaice	0.04
Arrowtooth Flounder	8.04
Flathead Sole	7.79
Kamchatka Flounder	0.59
Rock Sole	32.95
Sablefish BS	0.02
Yellowfin Sole	0.27
Other Flatfish	4.52
Pacific Ocean Perch	0.03
Northern Rockfish	1.67
Rougheye Rockfish	0
Shortraker Rockfish	0
Other Rockfish BS	0.03
Other Rockfish AI	0.49
Octopus	0.19
Sculpins	19.11
Skates	16.38
Squid	0
2015 Total	3,299

Gulf of Alaska Sideboard Fisheries

No HSCC vessels participated in the Western GOA pollock sideboard fishery in 2015.

Monitoring and Enforcement

All data used in monitoring HSCC pollock and non-pollock fishing for delivery to offshore processors was obtained from the NMFS North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program. Information is available on the NMFS password-protected web site 24 hours a day, and is generally accessible 20 minutes after transmission from the vessel. Sea State, Inc. is authorized by the HSCC and its members to receive and process this observer data and report back to the members on the status of the harvest. The methods are the same as those described above under PCC Monitoring and Enforcement.

For deliveries to shore-side processors, each company submitted copies of its Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) fish tickets to SeaState, Inc. for tabulation through the NMFS Electronic Fish Ticket Program. In addition, HSCC member companies provided confidentiality waiver requests to ADFG for release of the data directly to SeaState to verify the completeness and accuracy of data submitted by HSCC members. This information was then made available to all HSCC members on the SeaState web site.

Penalty Structures within the HSCC and Between Cooperatives

The Cooperative Agreement between HSCC and PCC provides for inter-cooperative enforcement of penalties in the event of over-harvest of pollock. The CVICA also contains penalty provisions for over-harvest of sideboard species. No enforcement actions were taken by HSCC members in either its pollock or sideboard fisheries in 2015; members complied with the provisions of the membership agreement.