

Annual Report  
of the  
Mothership Fleet Cooperative  
2023

Presented to the  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
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## Introduction

In 2023 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 eleven of the nineteen vessels belonging to the MFC participated in Alaska groundfish fisheries in 2023. 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 2023 Intercooperative Agreement, the Cod Allocation Agreement, and the Bering Sea Salmon Bycatch Data Sharing 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**

<b>Co-op Member</b>	<b>Vessel(s)</b>	<b>Cooperative Share</b>
Alakanuk Beauty LLC	American Beauty	6.000%
Emmonak Leader LLC	Ocean Leader	6.459%
GAS Western Dawn LLC	Western Dawn	4.150%
Nordic Fury LLC	Nordic Fury	6.177%
Fury Group, Inc.	Pacific Fury	5.889%
Vanguard Fisheries LLC	Vanguard	5.350%
Great West Seafoods, L.P.	Margaret Lyn	5.643%
F/V Misty Dawn LLC	Misty Dawn	3.569%
Kydaka Corporation	California Horizon	3.786%
MarGun Enterprises, LLC	Mar-Gun	6.251%
Mark I, Inc.	Mark I	6.251%
Nunam Iqua Harvester LLC	Aleutian Challenger	4.926%
Ocean Thunder, Inc.	Papado II	2.953%
Oceanic Fisheries, LLC	Oceanic	7.038%
Kotlik Challenger 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	1.813%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100%</b>

## 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 2023.

## 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 2023. Vessels were given guidelines to help reduce bycatch.

Vessels in the Mothership Fleet Cooperative participated in the BSAI P. Cod sideboarded fishery and the Yellowfin Sole TLAS fishery. 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.

The 2023 BSAI Pacific Cod Fishery was also managed as part of the voluntary Catch Share Program. This was done to allow for full utilization of the fishery and to facilitate a stand down provision designed to reduce Halibut bycatch in that fishery. None of the sideboard caps were exceeded by the Mothership Fleet Cooperative in 2023.

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. In 2023 penalties were set at \$800 per metric ton for pollock harvested in excess of a vessel's allocation. The penalty for overages in the non-pollock fisheries includes \$1500 per metric ton of cod harvest in excess of an allocation, \$300 per metric ton for over-harvests of all other flatfish fisheries. Penalties were also established for exceeding assigned PSC caps as follows: Upon the Mothership Fleet Cooperative (MFC) receiving notice from the Monitoring Agent that it does not have an adequate PSC Limit, Halibut Allowance or Crab Allowance allocation to support further fishing

activity by its members' vessels, the MFC shall immediately cause its members' vessels to cease fishing in the relevant directed fisheries. The MFC hereby adopt as a uniform penalty for each landing following such notice that includes a PSC species harvested in excess of a Coop's PSC Limit or Allowance allocation an amount equal to \$1,000 per metric ton of all commercially harvestable species delivered in such landing. Coop catch data produced by the Monitoring Agent in conformance with NMFS catch accounting and bycatch estimation procedures will be presumed accurate for this calculation.

The Mothership Fleet Cooperative assessed no penalties in 2023.

## 2023 Directed Pollock Fishery Results

**Table 2. 2023 Mothership Fleet Co-op Pollock Allocations and Harvest - MT**

	Co-op %	Co-op MT	Actual MT	Actual %
Aleutian Challenger	4.926%	5,579.19	4,517.44	3.989%
Alyeska	1.813%	2,053.41	-	-
American Beauty	6.000%	6,795.60	1,310.84	1.157%
California Horizon	3.786%	4,288.03	-	-
Mar-Gun	6.251%	7,079.88	-	-
Margaret Lyn	5.643%	6,391.26	-	-
Mark 1	6.251%	7,079.88	14,508.44	12.810%
Misty Dawn	3.569%	4,042.25	-	-
Morning Star	3.601%	4,078.49	-	-
Nordic Fury	6.177%	6,996.07	5,625.03	4.966%
Ocean Leader	6.459%	7,315.46	16,253.55	14.262%
Oceanic	7.038%	7,971.24	9,231.43	8.151%
Pacific Challenger	9.671%	10,953.37	12,389.67	10.939%
Pacific Fury	5.889%	6,669.88	15,940.07	14.074%
Papado II	2.953%	3,344.57	-	-
Traveler	4.272%	4838.47	12,873.84	11.367%
Vanguard	5.350%	6,059.41	7,326.54	6.469%
Vesteraalen	6.201%	7,023.25	12,817.34	11.317%
Western Dawn	4.150%	4,700.29	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.000</b>	<b>113,260.00</b>	<b>112,694.20</b>	<b>99.500%</b>
		UNHARVESTED	565.80	0.500%

**Table 3. PSC Bycatch in 2023 Mothership Fleet Co-op Directed Pollock Fishery by Vessel**

	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	0.000	110.156	-	-	-	0	13	0	1,894
Alyeska	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
American Beauty	0.025	0.000	-	-	-	4	0	0	0
California Horizon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mar-Gun	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Margaret Lyn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mark 1	0.123	60.236	-	-	-	66	24	3	2,621
Misty Dawn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Morning Star	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nordic Fury	0.030	46.330	-	-	-	11	26	0	2,303
Ocean Leader	0.394	125.905	-	-	-	121	17	2	1,364
Oceanic	0.267	77.117	-	-	-	72	5	2	843
Pacific Challenger	0.916	138.682	-	-	-	96	4	4	132
Pacific Fury	0.030	27.969	-	-	-	106	21	5	2,883
Papado II	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Traveler	0.267	42.997	-	-	-	84	36	4	3,720
Vanguard	0.053	110.239	-	-	-	70	1	0	119
Vesteraalen	0.241	42.900	-	-	-	105	36	3	3,224
Western Dawn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2.506</b>	<b>782.531</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19,103</b>

**Table 4. Groundfish Bycatch in 2023 Mothership Fleet Co-op Directed Pollock Fishery by Vessel**

<b>Catcher</b>	<b>P. Cod</b>	<b>Sablefish</b>	<b>Yellowfin Sole</b>	<b>Rock Sole</b>	<b>Flathead Sole</b>	<b>Alaska Plaice</b>	<b>Arrowtooth</b>	<b>POP</b>	<b>Squid</b>	<b>All Other</b>
Aleutian Challenger	6.80	6.34	0.00	0.18	1.24	0.00	0.70	10.22	261.13	14.65
Alyeska	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
American Beauty	6.85	-	0.02	1.04	0.53	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.00	11.68
California Horizon	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mar-Gun	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Margaret Lyn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mark I	35.04	3.08	0.33	1.44	9.18	0.00	1.60	10.32	8.60	85.30
Misty Dawn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Morning Star	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Nordic Fury	10.83	0.00	0.08	0.46	3.33	0.00	0.74	1.12	2.12	13.57
Ocean Leader	38.71	23.54	0.14	3.09	8.43	0.01	1.87	41.32	677.41	134.29
Oceanic	36.91	32.02	0.21	3.68	5.47	0.01	1.65	8.03	57.12	59.12
Pacific Challenger	33.58	94.35	0.14	3.22	11.69	0.04	1.67	29.59	519.91	96.26
Pacific Fury	48.12	4.52	0.18	2.27	10.57	0.00	1.49	10.22	5.34	90.97
Papado II	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Traveler	26.46	0.23	0.26	1.51	7.57	0.01	1.08	2.78	2.17	63.13
Vanguard	20.17	6.70	0.03	0.54	1.51	0.00	0.44	28.08	190.69	47.84
Vesteraalen	24.29	9.40	0.36	2.25	7.13	0.02	1.36	5.46	4.04	77.33
Western Dawn	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>287.72</b>	<b>180.17</b>	<b>1.68</b>	<b>19.71</b>	<b>66.64</b>	<b>0.10</b>	<b>12.67</b>	<b>147.15</b>	<b>1,728.00</b>	<b>694.14</b>



## Non-Pollock Groundfish Fisheries

In 2023 mothership catcher vessels participated in sideboarded BSAI Pacific cod fishery, and in the TLAS Yellowfin Sole fishery. The following tables reflect catch, bycatch and PSC in those fisheries. 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.

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 ensure 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, all catcher vessels qualified to participate in the mothership sector operate in the BSAI directed P. Cod fishery under the mothership sector groundfish and PSC sideboards. Other than the directed BSAI P. Cod sideboarded fishery, all “dual qualified” member vessels operated under the sideboard limitations of their prospective inshore cooperative.

**Table 5. Mothership Fleet Cooperative 2023 BSAI Pacific Cod Sideboard Amounts and directed catch**

Vessel	% of Mothership	Transfers Inter co-op	Transfers Intra co-op	Cod Sideboard MT	Landed Cod RWE*
Aleutian Challenger	3.40%			87.04	588.78
Alyeska	1.13%			28.93	0.00
American Beauty	3.37%		265.73	352.00	305.76
California Horizon	4.42%			113.15	0
Mar-Gun	6.62%			169.47	0
Margaret Lyn	4.15%			106.24	0
Mark I	14.51%			371.45	0
Misty Dawn	0.00%			0	0
Nordic Fury	8.56%		203.52	422.66	373.24
Ocean leader	3.79%		(97.02)	0	0
Oceanic	12.97%			332.03	0
Morning Star/Pacific Alliance	0.25%			6.40	0
Pacific Challenger	10.27%			262.91	417.98
Pacific Fury	7.95%		(203.52)	0.00	0
Papado II	0.97%			24.83	0
Traveler	1.99%			50.94	0
Vanguard	0.98%	350.00		375.09	347.62
Vesteraalen	8.09%			207.10	0.00
Western Dawn	6.59%		(168.71)	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>350.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,910.24</b>	<b>2,033.38</b>

\*Please note that these numbers are based on the best data available from shoreside and offshore landings with fish tickets. Landed Cod RWE also includes fish harvested after the March 1<sup>st</sup> exemption.

**Table 6. Mothership Fleet Cooperative Halibut Bycatch Mortality and PSC Bycatch in the 2023 Directed BSAI Pacific Cod Fishery\*.**

Vessel	Halibut Mortality (MT)	Chinook	Other salmon	King Crab	Bairdi	Opilio	Herring (MT)
Aleutian Challenger	4.04	3	0	0	0	0	0
Alyeska	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Beauty	1.82	0	0	0	0	0	0
California Horizon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mar-Gun	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Margaret Lyn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mark I	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Misty Dawn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Nordic Fury	1.50	0	0	0	0	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	1.77	0	0	0	0	0	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	3.54	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vesteraalen	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Western Dawn	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>12.67</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

\*Please note that groundfish and Halibut mortality numbers are based on data available from fish tickets and NMFS - they are based on extrapolated data.

**Table 7. Mothership Fleet Cooperative 2023 BSAI TLAS Yellowfin Sole bycatch**

Chum Salmon	Chinook Salmon	Red King Crab	Bairdi	Opilio	Pacific Halibut	Pacific Herring
0	0	0	933	38	0.22	-

### Salmon Bycatch Avoidance Reporting

As described above, the Mothership Fleet Cooperative is a signatory to the Bering Sea Salmon Bycatch Data Sharing Agreement and Mothership Salmon Savings Incentive Plan. 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 2023 “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.

### Salmon Avoidance Program

The number of salmon taken in 2023 is included in Tables 3 and 7. Amendment 110 superseded Amendment 84 such that chum salmon bycatch is managed under an Incentive Plan Agreement.

### Mothership Salmon Savings Incentive Plan

Under Amendment 91 and 110, the Mothership Fleet Cooperative manages its Chinook and Chum salmon bycatch through an Incentive Plan Agreement approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service. The Mothership Salmon Savings Incentive Plan (MSSIP) consists of three key incentive measures: the ability to earn Salmon Savings Credits for use in later years, a Rolling Hotspot Closure (“RHC”) program that restricts access to fishing grounds where bycatch is unacceptably high, and a set of Best Management Practices that establish rules that participants agree upon as a condition of participation in the MSSIP.

As in previous years, in 2023, 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 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. Through a coordinated industry effort, the MFC participated in the P. Cod directed fishery in a manner that resulted in full utilization and reduced bycatch.

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