

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

STAFF COMMENTS ON PACIFIC COD REGULATORY PROPOSALS COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE—GROUPS 1–3, FOR

CHIGNIK, SOUTH ALASKA PENINSULA and BERING SEA—ALEUTIAN ISLANDS

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES MEETING ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

November 30–December 1, 2015



Regional Information Report 4K15-04

The following staff comments were prepared by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for use at the Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) meeting, November 30–December 1, 2015 in Anchorage, Alaska. The comments are forwarded to assist the public and board. The comments contained herein should be considered preliminary and subject to change, as new information becomes available. Final department positions will be formulated after review of written and oral public testimony presented to the board.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

The following acronyms and abbreviations, and others approved for the *Système International d'Unités* (SI), are used without definition in the following reports by the Divisions of Commercial Fisheries, Sport Fish, and Subsistence: All others, including deviations from definitions listed below, are noted in the text at first mention, as well as in the titles or footnotes of tables, and in figure or figure captions.

Weights and measures (metric)

centimeter	cm
deciliter	dL
gram	g
hectare	ha
kilogram	kg
kilometer	km
liter	L
meter	m
milliliter	mL
millimeter	mm

Weights and measures (English)

cubic feet per second	ft ³ /s
foot	ft
gallon	gal
inch	in
mile	mi
nautical mile	nmi
ounce	oz
pound	lb
quart	qt
yard	yd

Time and temperature

day	d
degrees Celsius	°C
degrees Fahrenheit	°F
degrees kelvin	K
hour	h
minute	min
second	s

Physics and chemistry

all atomic symbols	
alternating current	AC
ampere	A
calorie	cal
direct current	DC
hertz	Hz
horsepower	hp
hydrogen ion activity (negative log of)	pH
parts per million	ppm
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰
volts	V
watts	W

General

Alaska Administrative Code	AAC
all commonly accepted abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.
all commonly accepted professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.
at	@
compass directions:	
east	E
north	N
south	S
west	W
copyright	©
corporate suffixes:	
Company	Co.
Corporation	Corp.
Incorporated	Inc.
Limited	Ltd.
District of Columbia	D.C.
et alii (and others)	et al.
et cetera (and so forth)	etc.
exempli gratia (for example)	e.g.
Federal Information Code	FIC
id est (that is)	i.e.
latitude or longitude	lat. or long.
monetary symbols (U.S.)	\$, ¢
months (tables and figures): first three letters	Jan,...,Dec
registered trademark	®
trademark	™
United States (adjective)	U.S.
United States of America (noun)	USA
U.S.C.	United States Code
U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations (e.g., AK, WA)

Acronyms

Acceptable Biological Catch	ABC
Aleutian Islands District	AID
Alaska Board of Fisheries	board
Alaska Department of Fish and Game	department
Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands	BSAI
Catch Per Unit Effort	CPUE
Community Development Quota	CDQ
Central Gulf of Alaska	CGOA
Dutch Harbor Subdistrict	DHS
Emergency Order	EO
Endangered Species Act	ESA
Guideline Harvest Level	GHL
National Marine Fisheries Service	NMFS
North Pacific Fishery Management Council	NPFMC
Overall Length	OAL
Steller Sea Lion	SSL
Total Allowable Catch	TAC
Vessel Monitoring System	VMS
Western Gulf of Alaska	WGOA

REGIONAL INFORMATION REPORT 4K15-04

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**ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES MEETING
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA**

November 30–December 1, 2015

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Commercial Fisheries
333 Raspberry Road
Anchorage, AK 99518-1565

November 2015

ABSTRACT

This document contains Alaska Department of Fish and Game staff comments on commercial regulatory proposals for the Chignik, South Alaska Peninsula and Bering Sea–Aleutian Islands Pacific cod meeting. These comments were prepared by the department for use at the Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting, November 30–December 1, 2015 in Anchorage, Alaska. The comments are forwarded to assist the public and board. The comments contained herein should be considered preliminary and subject to change, as new information becomes available. Final department positions will be formulated after review of written and oral public testimony presented to the board.

Key words: Alaska Board of Fisheries (board), Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department), staff comments, regulatory proposals, fisheries, commercial, groundfish, Pacific cod

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Summary of department positions on regulatory proposals for Chignik, South Alaska Peninsula and Bering Sea–Aleutian Islands Pacific cod – Anchorage, November 30 – December 1, 2015.	ii
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE–GROUP 1 (9 proposals)	1
Chignik Pacific Cod: 1–9.....	1
PROPOSAL 1 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	1
PROPOSAL 2 – 5 AAC 28.540. Possession requirements for Chignik Area.....	4
PROPOSAL 3 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	7
PROPOSAL 4 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	12
PROPOSAL 5 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	15
PROPOSAL 6 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	17
PROPOSAL 7 – 5 AAC 28.532. Groundfish Pot Storage Requirements for Chignik Area; and 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.	19
PROPOSAL 8 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	21
PROPOSAL 9 – 5 AAC 28.087. Management measures in parallel groundfish fisheries for protection of Steller sea lions.	24
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE–GROUP 2 (4 proposals)	28
South Alaska Peninsula Pacific Cod: 10–13.....	28
PROPOSALS 10 and 11 – 5 AAC 28.577. South Alaska Peninsula Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	28
PROPOSAL 12 – 5 AAC 28.577. South Alaska Peninsula Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	32
PROPOSED BY: Kenneth Mack.....	32
PROPOSAL 13 – 5 AAC 28.571. Groundfish Pot Storage Requirements for South Alaska Peninsula; and 5 AAC 28.577. South Alaska Peninsula Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.	37
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE–GROUP 3 (8 proposals)	39
Bering Sea–Aleutian Islands Pacific Cod: 14–21	39
PROPOSAL 14 – 5 AAC 28.647. Aleutian Islands District Pacific Cod Management Plan; and 5 AAC 28.648. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	39
PROPOSAL 15 – 5 AAC 28.648. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	41
PROPOSAL 16 – 5 AAC 28.648. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	46
PROPOSAL 17 – 5 AAC 28.648. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	49
PROPOSAL 18 – 5 AAC 28.647. Aleutian Islands District Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	52
PROPOSAL 19 – 5 AAC 28.647. Aleutian Islands District Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	55
PROPOSAL 20 – 5 AAC 28.647. Aleutian Islands District Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	57
PROPOSAL 21 – 5 AAC 28.647. Aleutian Islands District Pacific Cod Management Plan; and 5 AAC 28.648. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan.....	58

Summary of department positions on regulatory proposals for Chignik, South Alaska Peninsula and Bering Sea–Aleutian Islands Pacific cod – Anchorage, November 30–December 1, 2015

Proposal no.	Department position	Issue
1	N	Allow purse seine vessel operators with 5-years' experience in the Chignik Area, and a secured market, to target Pacific cod during the state-waters Pacific cod fishery from May 1 to June 1.
2	N	Allow purse seine vessels participating in the Chignik Area salmon fishery to retain an unspecified bycatch percentage of Pacific cod.
3	N	Restrict Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery pot gear vessels that are greater than 46 feet in length to 85 percent of the total pot gear GHL.
4	N	Establish a 12-hour daily fishing period from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery.
5	N	Moves the date when the department could remove the pot and jig gear limits during the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery from October 30 to August 14.
6	N	Change the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery from a superexclusive registration area to a nonexclusive registration area after October 30.
7	S/N	Clarify groundfish pot storage regulations for the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery.
8	N	Establish a 60 pot gear limit for the Chignik Area parallel Pacific cod fishery.
9	N	Open SSL haulout no fishing zones within the Chignik Area to pot gear vessels participating in the Chignik Area parallel Pacific cod fishery.
10	N	Increase the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL from 30 to 35 percent of the WGOA Pacific cod ABC.
11	N	Increase the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL from 30 percent to 40 percent of the total WGOA ABC.
12	N	Restrict South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery pot gear vessels greater than 50 feet OAL to 75 percent of the pot gear GHL.
13	S/N	Clarify groundfish pot storage regulations for the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery.
14	S	Base the AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery GHL on the federal Aleutian Islands subarea ABC. Similarly, this proposal would base the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery GHL on the federal Bering Sea subarea ABC.
15	N	Increase the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery GHL from 3% to 9% of the federal combined Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands subareas ABC and shift the western boundary of the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery from 167° W long to 170° W long, with state waters around Bogoslof Island and two SSL rookeries closed to fishing
16	N	Increase the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery GHL from 3% to 5% of the federal combined BSAI ABC. If the GHL set at 5% of the BSAI ABC is reached, the GHL would increase in the following year to 7% of the BSAI ABC.
17	N	Allow vessels up to 125 feet OAL to participate in the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery.
18	S	Open the AID state-waters Pacific cod A season in all waters west of 170° W long upon closure of the federal Aleutian Islands subarea non-CDQ Pacific cod fishery and remove subsequent season opening and closure triggers while providing flexibility to open and close the state-waters fishery.
19	N	Remove vessel size limits for vessels using longline gear in the AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery when the federal Aleutian Islands Pacific cod fishery is closed.
20	S	Define waters between 175° W long and 178° W long as the Adak Section in the AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery.
21	S	Update references to SSL protection measures in the AID and DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery management plans.

N = Neutral; S = Support; O = Oppose; NA = No Action, WS = Withdrawn Support

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE—GROUP 1 (9 PROPOSALS)

Chignik Pacific Cod: 1–9

PROPOSAL 1 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Chignik Fish and Game Advisory Committee.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Allow purse seine vessel operators with 5-years' experience in the Chignik Area, and a secured market, to target Pacific cod during the state-waters Pacific cod fishery from May 1 to June 1. Purse seine harvest would be restricted to harvesting no more than 75 percent of the of the Pacific cod jig gear GHL allocation. Waters of Chignik Lagoon would be closed to Pacific cod fishing with seine gear. Purse seine dimensions would be consistent with allowable purse seine gear for the Chignik Area salmon fishery (5 AAC 15.332), and a dipnet must be onboard to release salmon caught as bycatch. Vessels operators would be required to submit a department logbook after each landing.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The *Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan* allocates 90 percent of the Chignik Pacific cod GHL to pot gear and 10 percent to jig gear. There are no provisions in regulation that allow for retention of Pacific cod by vessels using purse seine gear. The state-waters jig season opens by regulation on March 15 and closes when the jig gear GHL allocation is harvested. If the jig gear GHL allocation has not been harvested by August 14, the department may close and reopen the season to both pot and jig gear to promote full harvest of the GHL prior to close of the regulatory season on December 31.

Vessels participating in the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery may not exceed 58 feet in OAL. Vessels registered for the Chignik Area superexclusive state-waters Pacific cod fishery may not be used in any other state-waters Pacific cod fishery in the same year.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? During some years this proposal may reduce opportunity for jig gear vessels, as well as pot gear vessels after August 14 if the jig gear GHL allocation remains unharvested. Purse seine gear is not a permissible gear type in federal, parallel, or state-waters Pacific cod fisheries in Alaska; therefore, estimates of expected Pacific cod harvest rates, gear selectivity, or bycatch of other species are unavailable. It is unknown if this proposal would affect management precision of the state-waters fishery.

BACKGROUND: Department staff have received anecdotal reports of Pacific cod bycatch during the Chignik Area salmon purse seine fishery. However, there are no records of Pacific cod harvest or discards in the department's fish ticket database. From 2000 to 2015, during years without confidential data, jig vessels harvested from 0 to 65 percent of the jig gear GHL allocation (Table 1-1).

Legal gear for the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific fishery has been limited to pot and jig gear since the fishery was implemented in 1997. The pot gear fishery opens March 1 or seven days

after closure of the CGOA federal/parallel Pacific cod A season, whichever is later. During most years the pot gear GHL allocation is fully harvested and the pot gear season closes prior to the proposed May 1 purse seine gear season opening date. The jig gear season opens by regulation on March 15. From 2011 to 2015, the state-waters jig gear GHL allocation averaged 1.0 million pounds annually (Table 1-1). Historically, the jig gear GHL allocation has not been fully harvested and the season has not closed prior to December 31. The lack of local Pacific cod markets during the jig season likely limits effort and harvest.

Provisions of the *Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan* provide additional opportunity for jig gear vessels if the full jig gear GHL allocation is fully harvested. If the jig GHL allocation is taken in a calendar year, the allocation will be increased by an additional five percent the following year. If the increased allocation is taken any year thereafter, the allocation will be increased by an additional five percent the following year until the jig gear allocation reaches 25 percent of the GHL. The pot gear GHL allocation will be reduced accordingly after each jig gear GHL allocation increase. The jig gear GHL allocation has not increased since pot and jig gear allocations were established in 2000.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Should this proposal be adopted, the board may want to consider addressing the intent of the jig gear GHL allocation step-up provision since harvest by purse seine and jig vessels would both accrue to the jig gear GHL allocation. The board may not have authority to adopt the fishing experience and market-related provisions of this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 1-1.–Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod jig gear vessel count, harvest, and GHL allocation, 2000–2015.

Year	Jig vessel count	Jig harvest (pounds)	Jig GHL (pounds)	Percent of jig GHL harvested
2000	5	38,453	1,008,119	4%
2001	13	277,411	894,691	31%
2002	14	324,199	733,346	44%
2003	16	433,067	671,308	65%
2004	14	141,697	1,035,897	14%
2005	9	136,948	638,842	21%
2006	2	CF	730,587	CF
2007	0	0	730,587	0%
2008	2	CF	731,127	CF
2009	1	CF	608,054	CF
2010	2	CF	946,042	CF
2011	10	224,400	1,038,135	22%
2012	6	266,638	1,098,398	24%
2013	0	0	950,788	0%
2014	2	CF	1,024,322	CF
2015*	2	CF	1,182,890	CF
2000–2015 avg.	6	184,281	876,446	21%
2011–2015 avg.	4	163,679	1,058,907	15%

*Through September 15, 2015; the last jig delivery was May 3, additional jig harvest is not anticipated.

CF = Confidential data.

PROPOSAL 2 – 5 AAC 28.540. Possession requirements for Chignik Area.

PROPOSED BY: Al Anderson.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would allow purse seine vessels participating in the Chignik Area salmon fishery to retain an unspecified bycatch percentage of Pacific cod. Pacific cod taken as bycatch would be deducted from Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL. Bycatch retention of Pacific cod by purse seine vessels would only be permissible when Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL is available. The proposal does not specify how to allocate Pacific cod taken as bycatch within the *Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan* (28.537).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL is allocated to pot and jig gear vessels. There is no regulation allowing for retention of Pacific cod by purse seine vessels in the Chignik Area salmon fishery. Within state-waters groundfish fisheries, Pacific cod bycatch limits are established by regulation or department EO. Unless otherwise specified by the department, a groundfish vessel may not have Pacific cod taken as bycatch in excess of 20 percent by weight of the target groundfish species onboard (5 AAC 28.070. *Groundfish Possession and Landing Requirements*).

Purse seine gear is the only allowable gear type during the Chignik Area salmon fishery.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Estimates of purse seine Pacific cod bycatch are unavailable because vessels are prohibited from retaining Pacific cod while salmon fishing. Depending on the amount of Pacific cod retained as bycatch during the salmon fishery, this proposal would reduce the amount of GHL available to jig and pot vessels. If the Chignik Area Pacific cod GHL is fully harvested prior to, or during the salmon season, retention of Pacific cod by salmon vessels would be prohibited unless the board allocates a portion of the total state-waters Pacific cod GHL to purse seine vessels independent of the current pot and jig gear GHL allocations. It is unknown if this proposal would affect management precision of the state-waters Pacific cod fishery.

BACKGROUND: Two Pacific cod fisheries occur in the Chignik Area, the state-waters fishery and parallel fishery. Parallel Pacific cod harvest is deducted from the federal CGOA Pacific cod TAC. The board does not have authority to allocate federal Pacific cod TAC to purse seine vessels. Therefore, purse seine vessels would only be able to retain Pacific cod taken as bycatch when the state-waters Pacific cod fishery is open for either pot or jig gear.

Legal gear during the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific fishery has been limited to pot and jig gear since the fishery was implemented in 1997. The *Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan* allocates 90 percent of the state-waters GHL to pot gear and 10 percent to jig gear. From 2011 to 2015, the state-waters pot gear GHL allocation averaged 9.5 million pounds annually while the jig gear GHL allocation averaged 1.0 million pounds annually (Table 2-1). The pot gear fishery opens March 1 or seven days after closure of the CGOA federal/parallel Pacific cod A season, whichever is later. During most years the pot gear GHL allocation is fully harvested (Table 2-1) and the pot gear season closes prior to the start of the salmon season. The state-

waters jig fishery opens by regulation on March 15. Historically, the jig gear GHL allocation has not been fully harvested (Table 2-1) and the fishery has remained open from the spring season opening date through December 31. The lack of local Pacific cod markets during the jig season likely limits effort and harvest. Unharvested jig gear GHL may be reallocated to both pot and jig gear vessels starting August 15 to facilitate full harvest of the GHL.

Department staff have received anecdotal reports of Pacific cod bycatch during the Chignik Area salmon purse seine fishery although there are no records of Pacific cod harvest or discards in the department's salmon fish ticket database. Consistent with current catch accounting practices, vessels participating in the Chignik salmon fishery would be required to report Pacific cod retained as bycatch on salmon fish tickets as all bycatch must be associated with the directed species onboard a vessel. However, catch accounting and data archival for groundfish and salmon fisheries are unique and reflect differences in management complexity and data needs. Groundfish catch reporting is complex and requires coordinated input from the department, NMFS, IPHC, and industry. Salmon fisheries are exclusively managed by the state and the corresponding catch accounting process is comparatively less involved. Currently, capabilities of the salmon and groundfish catch accounting programs are insufficient to account for groundfish bycatch during salmon fisheries.

From 2011 to 2015, Chignik Area salmon fishery purse seine vessel effort ranged from 64 to 76 vessels. Most salmon effort occurs June through August.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on the allocative aspects of this proposal. Should Proposal 2 be adopted, the department would need direction from the board on how Pacific cod bycatch in the salmon fishery would be allocated within the Pacific cod management plan.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery. Additional department funding would be necessary to modify catch accounting programs to accommodate Pacific cod bycatch reporting on salmon fish tickets.

Table 2-1.—Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod pot and jig gear vessel count, harvest, and GHL allocations, 2000–2015.

Year	Pot vessel count	Pot GHL (pounds)	Pot harvest (pounds)	Percent of pot GHL harvested	Jig vessel count	Jig GHL (pounds)	Jig harvest (pounds)	Percent of jig GHL harvested
2000	20	5,712,673	1,756,305	30.7%	5	1,008,119	38,453	4%
2001	15	5,069,916	2,371,243	46.8%	13	894,691	277,411	31%
2002	12	4,155,625	3,898,593	93.8%	14	733,346	324,199	44%
2003	15	3,804,076	4,034,504	106.1%	16	671,308	433,067	65%
2004	17	5,870,083	5,608,763	95.5%	14	1,035,897	141,697	14%
2005	15	5,749,576	5,650,595	98.3%	9	638,842	136,948	21%
2006	12	6,575,284	3,439,521	52.3%	2	730,587	CF	CF
2007	16	6,575,284	5,700,861	86.7%	0	730,587	0	0%
2008	23	6,580,145	6,741,090	102.4%	2	731,127	CF	CF
2009	11	5,472,488	5,679,676	103.8%	1	608,054	CF	CF
2010	16	8,514,379	8,491,185	99.7%	2	946,042	CF	CF
2011	23	9,343,213	9,370,870	100.3%	10	1,038,135	224,400	22%
2012	20	9,885,583	10,229,969	103.5%	6	1,098,398	266,638	24%
2013	19	8,557,088	8,712,190	101.8%	0	950,788	0	0%
2014	12	9,218,894	9,150,276	99.3%	2	1,024,322	CF	CF
2015*	17	10,646,012	10,248,382	96.3%	2	1,182,890	CF	CF
2000–2015 avg.	16	6,983,145	6,317,751	90.5%	6	876,446	184,281	21%
2011–2015 avg.	18	9,530,158	9,542,337	100.2%	4	1,058,907	163,679	15%

*Through September 15, 2015; the last pot gear delivery was March 24, and the last jig delivery was May 3, additional harvest is not anticipated.

CF = Confidential data.

PROPOSAL 3 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Tony Gregorio.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would restrict Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery pot gear vessels that are greater than 46 feet in length to 85 percent of the total pot gear GHL.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The *Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan* allocates 90 percent of the state-waters GHL to pot gear and 10 percent to jig gear (5 AAC 28.537(c)(1)(2)). State-waters Pacific cod vessels in the Chignik Area are restricted to maximum of 58 feet in overall length and limited to operating no more than 60 pots or five mechanical jigging machines (5 AAC 28.537(h)(2)(D); 5 AAC 28.537(h)(2)(A)and(B)).

The Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery is a superexclusive registration area fishery. The pot gear season opens March 1 or seven days after closure of the parallel Pacific cod season, whichever is later. The pot gear season closes when the pot GHL is taken; however, if the jig GHL is not taken by August 14, the state-waters season may close and immediately reopen to both pot and jig gear to facilitate full harvest of the annual GHL. If the remaining GHL has not been taken by October 30, the department may additionally remove gear and vessel length limits in an attempt to reach the GHL prior to the regulatory season closure date on December 31.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This would close the fishing season for pot gear vessels greater than 46 feet in length when those vessels take 85 percent of the annual state-waters Pacific cod pot gear GHL. The remaining pot gear GHL allocation would be available to pot gear vessels less than or equal to 46 feet in length, thereby increasing harvest opportunity for smaller vessels.

Based on recent vessel participation in the fishery, capping harvest for vessels greater than 46 feet would, on average, restrict harvest for approximately 89 percent of all state-waters Pacific cod fishery participants. If adopted, some vessels may opt out of the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery and participate in other Pacific cod fisheries without GHL allocations based on vessel length.

BACKGROUND: Most vessels that participate in the Chignik state-waters fishery are commercial salmon purse seine vessels that also target Pacific cod during winter fisheries. Since inception of the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery in 1997, an average of 15 vessels greater than 46 feet in length annually participated in the fishery (Table 3-1) and participation by vessels less than or equal to 46 feet in length averaged three vessels during the same time period. Since 1997, harvest by pot gear vessels greater than 46 feet in length averaged approximately 96 percent of the total pot gear harvest in the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery (Table 3-1).

Separate pot and jig GHL allocations were adopted into regulation prior to the start of the 2000 season. From 2000–2015, the pot gear season length averaged 103 days (Table 3-2). However, from 2011–2015, the average season length for pot gear decreased to 20 days. During that time,

total annual harvest by vessels less than or equal to 46 feet in length generally decreased while harvest by vessels greater than 46 feet in length generally increased (Figure 3-1). The average state-waters Pacific cod season length for pot gear was 26 days in the Kodiak Area and 18 days in the South Alaska Peninsula Area from 2011–2015.

If the proposed allocation had been in effect prior to the start of the 2015 Chignik state-waters Pacific cod pot gear season, pot vessels less than or equal to 46 feet would have been allocated approximately 1.6 million pounds valued at \$318,000. From 2011–2015, average annual harvest by pot vessels less than or equal to 46 feet in length was approximately 253,000 pounds (Table 3-1).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 3-1.—Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod effort and percent harvest by pot gear vessels greater than and less than or equal to 46 feet in length, by year, 1997–2015.

Year	Vessels greater than 46 feet			Vessels less than or equal to 46 feet		
	Vessel count	Harvest (pounds)	% of total harvest	Vessel count	Harvest (pounds)	% of total harvest
1997	4	716,977	79.7%	3	221,860	20.3%
1998	26	5,048,143	92.8%	6	392,653	7.2%
1999	26	5,614,450	91.2%	5	544,376	8.8%
2000	14	1,627,734	92.7%	6	128,571	7.3%
2001	12	2,272,292	95.8%	3	98,951	4.2%
2002	9	3,675,364	94.3%	3	223,229	5.7%
2003	12	3,843,842	95.3%	3	190,661	4.7%
2004	12	5,175,666	92.3%	5	433,097	7.7%
2005	12	5,449,603	96.4%	3	200,992	3.6%
2006	11	CF	CF	1	CF	CF
2007	14	CF	CF	2	CF	CF
2008	21	CF	CF	1	CF	CF
2009	11	5,679,676	100.0%	0	0	0.0%
2010	15	8,491,185	100.0%	0	0	0.0%
2011	20	8,928,542	95.6%	3	442,329	4.4%
2012	17	9,844,343	96.2%	3	385,626	3.8%
2013	16	8,527,240	97.9%	3	184,950	2.1%
2014	12	9,150,276	100.0%	0	0	0.0%
2015	15	CF	CF	2	CF	CF
1997–2015 avg. ^a	15	5,603,022	94.7%	3	229,820	5.3%
2011–2015 avg. ^a	16	9,112,600	97.4%	2	253,226	2.6%

Notes: CF = confidential data

^a Does not include confidential data.

Table 3-2.–Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear GHl allocation, effort, harvest, and season length, by year, 2000–2015.

Year	Pot vessel count	Landings	Pot GHl (pounds)	Pot harvest (pounds)	Percent of Pot GHl harvested	Season length (days)	Average pounds per day
2000	20	151	5,712,673	1,756,305	30.7%	261	6,729
2001	15	124	5,069,916	2,371,243	46.8%	296	8,011
2002	12	139	4,155,625	3,898,593	93.8%	306	12,741
2003	15	151	3,804,076	4,034,504	106.1%	42	96,060
2004	17	244	5,870,083	5,608,763	95.5%	74	75,794
2005	15	206	5,749,576	5,650,595	98.3%	71	79,586
2006	12	202	6,575,284	3,439,521	52.3%	185	18,592
2007	16	241	6,575,284	5,700,861	86.7%	185	30,815
2008	23	262	6,580,145	6,741,090	102.4%	48	140,439
2009	11	122	5,472,488	5,679,676	103.8%	39	145,633
2010	16	160	8,514,379	8,491,185	99.7%	37	229,491
2011	23	199	9,343,213	9,370,870	100.3%	17	551,228
2012	20	189	9,885,583	10,229,969	103.5%	21	487,141
2013	19	191	8,557,088	8,712,190	101.8%	22	396,009
2014	12	154	9,218,894	9,150,276	99.3%	18	508,349
2015	17	206	10,646,012	10,248,382	96.3%	22	465,836
2000–2015 avg.	16	184	6,983,145	6,317,751	90.5%	103	61,487
2011–2015 avg.	18	188	9,530,158	9,542,337	100.2%	20	477,117

Bold text indicates years when the pot gear GHl was not fully harvested.

Percent of GHl harvested is based on initial pot gear allocation and does not include GHl rollover from jig gear.

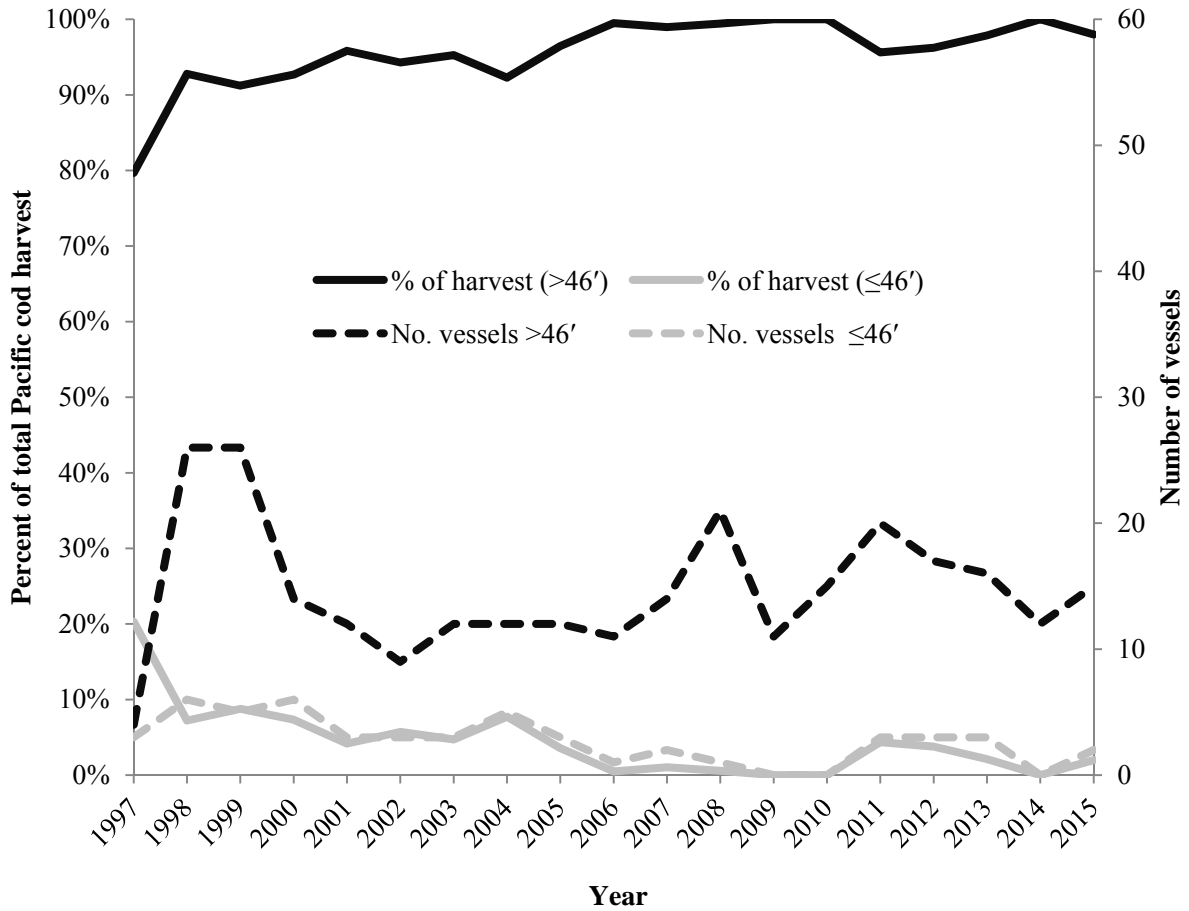


Figure 3-1.—Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod effort (dark dashed) and harvest (dark solid) by pot vessels greater than 46 feet compared to effort (light dashed) and harvest (light solid) by pot vessels less than or equal to 46 feet, by year, 1997–2015.

PROPOSAL 4 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Donald Bumpus.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would establish a 12-hour daily fishing period from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery is an open access, superexclusive registration area fishery. Vessels may not exceed 58 feet in OAL and are limited to operating no more than 60 pots or five mechanical jigging machines (5 AAC 28.537(h)(2)).

The Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL is based on 8.75 percent of the federal CGOA acceptable biological catch. Pot vessels are allocated 90 percent of the annual GHL, while mechanical jig and hand troll vessels are allocated 10 percent of the annual GHL.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This would restrict Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod participants from operating gear from 6:01 p.m. through 5:59 a.m. daily. Although not specified in the proposal, the department interprets that baited groundfish pots could remain in fishing condition during the closed fishing period and could only be lifted during the daily fishing period.

A 12-hour daily fishing period would likely result in lower daily harvest and longer fishing seasons. If the season was sufficiently protracted there could be foregone Pacific cod harvest when the season extends beyond the spring spawning period.

Some vessel operators may opt out of the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery and fish other Pacific cod fisheries that do not have daily fishing periods in an effort to maintain historical fishing practices. Smaller vessels may benefit from longer seasons and less competition, although displaced Chignik Area pot gear vessels would increase competition in other Pacific cod fisheries outside of the Chignik Area.

A 12-hour fishing period would be more costly and difficult to enforce than status quo.

BACKGROUND: On average from 2011–2015, pot gear harvest has exceeded the pot gear GHL allocation by less than one percent (Table 4-1). During this time, harvest rates were higher compared to previous years, resulting in shorter seasons. The 2015 Chignik Area state-waters pot gear season was open for a total of 22 days, which is similar to average state-waters Pacific cod season lengths in the adjacent Kodiak and South Alaska Peninsula areas.

Multiple factors, including weather, tides, fish distribution and abundance, vessel and crew capability, gear type, and processor and tender schedules influence Pacific cod harvest rates and fishing practices. During the 2013 to 2015 Chignik state-waters pot gear seasons, daily Pacific cod harvest often varied significantly based on these factors, ranging from 200,000 to 900,000 pounds per day (Figure 4-1). It is unknown what percentage of historical daily harvest occurs during the proposed 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily fishing period.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 4-1.–Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear GHL allocation, effort, harvest, and season length, by year, 2000–2015.

Year	Pot vessel count	Landings	Pot GHL (pounds)	Pot harvest (pounds)	Percent of Pot GHL harvested	Season length (days)	Average pounds per day
2000	20	151	5,712,673	1,756,305	30.7%	261	6,729
2001	15	124	5,069,916	2,371,243	46.8%	296	8,011
2002	12	139	4,155,625	3,898,593	93.8%	306	12,741
2003	15	151	3,804,076	4,034,504	106.1%	42	96,060
2004	17	244	5,870,083	5,608,763	95.5%	74	75,794
2005	15	206	5,749,576	5,650,595	98.3%	71	79,586
2006	12	202	6,575,284	3,439,521	52.3%	185	18,592
2007	16	241	6,575,284	5,700,861	86.7%	185	30,815
2008	23	262	6,580,145	6,741,090	102.4%	48	140,439
2009	11	122	5,472,488	5,679,676	103.8%	39	145,633
2010	16	160	8,514,379	8,491,185	99.7%	37	229,491
2011	23	199	9,343,213	9,370,870	100.3%	17	551,228
2012	20	189	9,885,583	10,229,969	103.5%	21	487,141
2013	19	191	8,557,088	8,712,190	101.8%	22	396,009
2014	12	154	9,218,894	9,150,276	99.3%	18	508,349
2015	17	206	10,646,012	10,248,382	96.3%	22	465,836
2000–2015 avg.	16	184	6,983,145	6,317,751	90.5%	103	61,487
2011–2015 avg.	18	188	9,530,158	9,542,337	100.2%	20	477,117

Bold text indicates years when the pot gear GHL was not fully harvested.

2015 pot gear harvest through September 15; additional pot gear harvest for 2015 is not anticipated.

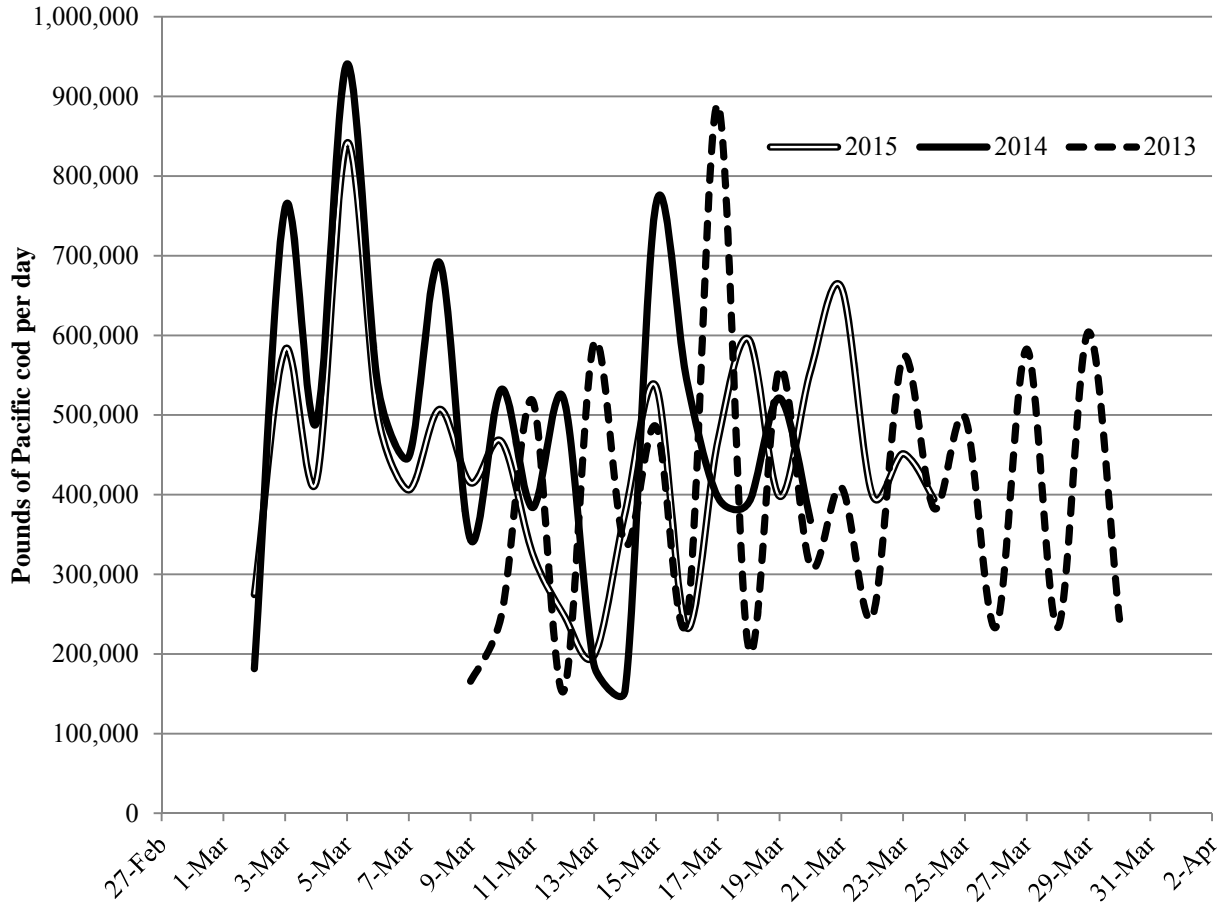


Figure 4-1.—Total daily Pacific cod harvest by pot vessels during the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery, 2013–2015.

PROPOSAL 5 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Ron Kavanaugh, Chris Arndt, Todd Hoppe.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This moves the date when the department could remove the pot and jig gear limits during the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery from October 30 to August 14. Removal of gear limits would be at the discretion of the department based on anticipated effort, harvest rate, and remaining GHL.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Pot gear vessels registered for the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery are restricted to operating a maximum of 60 pots while jig gear vessels are restricted to operating no more than five mechanical jigging machines. Pot and jig gear limits may be removed any time after October 30 if the full GHL is not expected to be achieved by December 31.

The Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL is allocated between vessels using pot gear (90 percent) and vessels using jig gear (10 percent). Since inception of gear specific GHL allocations in 2000, the jig allocation has not been fully harvested. If the jig gear allocation is not fully harvested by August 14, the state-waters season may reopen to both pot and jig gear.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This would provide pot and jig gear vessels earlier opportunity to operate gear in excess of the established limits. Rescinding the 60 pot limit after August 14 may promote additional pot gear effort and harvest during a time of year when harvest rates tend to be lower because Pacific cod are more dispersed compared to the spring fishing season. If adopted, this proposal would allow the department to remove gear limits on the same August 14 date unharvested jig gear GHL is made available to pot gear vessels.

BACKGROUND: Since 2000, pot vessels have capitalized on additional late season state-waters fishing opportunity during four seasons after unharvested jig gear GHL allocation was rolled over to pot gear vessels. Since the start of state-waters Pacific cod fishery in 1997, gear limits have been rescinded during eight seasons. Despite additional pot effort after the rollover date and removal of gear limits, the full Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL has only been achieved in two years (2003 and 2011; Table 5-1).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 5-1.–Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod effort, landings, guideline harvest level, and harvest, by year, 2000–2014.

Year	Vessels	Landings	GHL (pounds)	Harvest (pounds)	Percent of GHL harvested
2000	25	163	6,720,792	1,794,759	26.7%
2001	28	179	5,964,606	2,648,655	44.4%
2002	26	198	4,888,971	4,227,519	86.5%
2003	31	257	4,475,384	4,467,571	99.8%
2004	31	297	6,905,980	5,750,461	83.3%
2005	24	250	6,388,418	5,787,543	90.6%
2006	14	202	7,305,871	3,439,521	47.1%
2007	16	241	7,305,871	5,700,861	78.0%
2008	25	262	7,311,273	6,838,934	93.5%
2009	12	122	6,080,542	5,679,676	93.4%
2010	18	160	9,460,421	9,153,719	96.8%
2011	33	244	10,381,347	10,346,856	99.7%
2012	26	204	10,983,981	10,496,608	95.6%
2013	19	191	9,507,876	8,712,190	91.6%
2014	14	154	10,243,216	9,593,269	93.7%
2000–2014 avg.	23	208	7,594,970	6,309,209	83.1%
2010–2014 avg.	22	191	10,115,368	9,660,528	95.5%

PROPOSAL 6 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Ron Kavanaugh.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Change the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery from a superexclusive registration area to a nonexclusive registration area after October 30. The change in registration type would be at the discretion of the department based on anticipated effort, harvest rate, and remaining GHL.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery is a superexclusive registration area. A vessel registered for the superexclusive Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod season may not be used to take Pacific cod in any other state-waters Pacific cod registration area in the same calendar year. Conversely, a vessel registered to take Pacific cod in any other state-waters Pacific cod registration area may not be used to take Pacific cod during the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery in the same calendar year.

The *Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan* additionally provides the department with authority to remove gear limits and vessel size restrictions after October 30 if the guideline harvest level is not expected to be fully harvested before the regulatory closure date.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? If the Chignik Area was designated as a nonexclusive registration area after October 30, vessels that previously participated in a nonexclusive or one exclusive state-waters Pacific cod fishery could also participate in the Chignik Area state-waters fishery. Vessels registered for the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery could alternatively participate in a nonexclusive area or one other exclusive state-waters Pacific cod fishery in the same year. Relaxing late season exclusivity may increase the likelihood of achieving the Chignik Area state-waters GHL by allowing more vessels access to the fishery.

BACKGROUND: State-waters Pacific cod fisheries are open access fisheries, although each fishery is designated as superexclusive, exclusive, or nonexclusive registration area (Table 6-1). From 1997–1999, the Chignik state-waters Pacific cod fishery was an exclusive registration area fishery. The board designated the Chignik state-waters Pacific cod fishery as a superexclusive registration area in 2000 to promote local effort and slow the pace of the fishery.

The Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL is allocated between vessels using pot gear (90 percent) and vessels using jig gear (10 percent). Since inception of gear allocations in 2000, the jig allocation has not been fully harvested. If the jig gear GHL allocation is not fully harvested by August 14 the state-waters season may reopen to both pot and jig gear to facilitate full harvest of the GHL prior to the end of the regulatory season on December 31. Since 2000, pot vessels have capitalized on additional state-waters fishing opportunity after the allocation rollover during four seasons. Despite additional pot gear opportunity after the rollover date, the full Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL has only been achieved in two years (2003 and 2011; Table 6-2).

Notwithstanding regulations that promote late season opportunity, the lack of local processing for Chignik Pacific cod during fall months limits late season effort.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 6-1.—State-waters Pacific cod registration type, by area.

State-waters Pacific cod fishery	Area registration type
Eastern Gulf of Alaska	Nonexclusive
Prince William Sound (pot gear)	Exclusive
Prince William Sound (jig gear)	Nonexclusive
Cook Inlet	Exclusive
Kodiak	Exclusive
Chignik	Superexclusive
South Alaska Peninsula	Exclusive
Aleutian Islands District	Nonexclusive
Dutch Harbor Subdistrict	Exclusive

Table 6-2.—Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod effort, landings, guideline harvest level, and harvest, by year, 2000–2014.

Year	Vessels	Landings	GHL (pounds)	Harvest (pounds)	Percent of GHL harvested
2000	25	163	6,720,792	1,794,759	26.7%
2001	28	179	5,964,606	2,648,655	44.4%
2002	26	198	4,888,971	4,227,519	86.5%
2003	31	257	4,475,384	4,467,571	99.8%
2004	31	297	6,905,980	5,750,461	83.3%
2005	24	250	6,388,418	5,787,543	90.6%
2006	14	202	7,305,871	3,439,521	47.1%
2007	16	241	7,305,871	5,700,861	78.0%
2008	25	262	7,311,273	6,838,934	93.5%
2009	12	122	6,080,542	5,679,676	93.4%
2010	18	160	9,460,421	9,153,719	96.8%
2011	33	244	10,381,347	10,346,856	99.7%
2012	26	204	10,983,981	10,496,608	95.6%
2013	19	191	9,507,876	8,712,190	91.6%
2014	14	154	10,243,216	9,593,269	93.7%
2000–2014 avg.	23	208	7,594,970	6,309,209	83.1%
2010–2014 avg.	22	191	10,115,368	9,660,528	95.5%

PROPOSAL 7 – 5 AAC 28.532. Groundfish Pot Storage Requirements for Chignik Area; and 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would clarify groundfish pot storage regulations for the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Two regulations guide groundfish pot storage requirements in the Chignik Area: *Groundfish pot storage requirements for Chignik Area* (5 AAC 28.532) allows for shallow-water groundfish pot storage for an unlimited period of time while *Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan* (5 AAC 28.537(h)(2)(E)) allows for shallow-water groundfish pot storage in excess of the 60-pot limit for a maximum of 7 days following the start date of the state-waters Pacific cod pot gear season.

The Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod season for pot gear vessels opens March 1 or 7 days after closure of the CGOA federal/parallel Pacific cod A season for pot gear, whichever is later.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This provides the board and fishery stakeholders opportunity to resolve gear storage provisions for pots in excess of the pot limit during the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery, thereby potentially eliminating regulatory confusion and enforcement concerns.

BACKGROUND: The Chignik Area parallel Pacific cod fishery is prosecuted prior to the start of the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod season. There are no pot gear limits established for the parallel fishery. Vessels registered for the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery are restricted to operating no more than 60 groundfish pots and vessel operators are required to purchase and affix buoy tags to each pot when the pot limit is in effect to aid enforcement of the gear limit. For vessels that participate in both parallel and state-waters fisheries, the intent of 5 AAC 28.537(h)(2)(E) is to provide sufficient time after closure of the parallel Pacific cod season for fishery participants to remove pot gear in excess of the state-waters 60 pot limit.

The discrepancy in regulation has been recently highlighted by fishery participants who operate in remote areas during the state-waters Pacific cod pot gear season and have requested to store extra pots in shallow water or onboard the vessel to replace tagged pots that are lost or damaged during the season. It is unclear to department staff which groundfish storage regulation is applicable in this situation. From 2011 to 2015, the average season length for the Chignik Area state-waters pot gear fishery was 20 days. Allowing vessels to replace lost gear with excess pots stored in close proximity to the fishing grounds may increase efficiency for some vessels. Vessel operators would be required to obtain a replacement buoy tag from the department prior to operating excess gear. Replacement tags are available at most ports of landing. Alternatively, prohibiting excess gear storage may reduce gear conflicts and improve enforcement of the existing limit.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted this proposal and **SUPPORTS** development of clear and easily communicated regulations. The department is **NEUTRAL** on

which of the 2 established pot storage regulations is used to guide pot storage during the state-waters Pacific cod fishery. If the board elects to allow pot storage in excess of the 60-pot limit, the board may want to consider limiting the number of stored pots to avoid gear conflicts and aid enforcement.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 8 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Tony Gregorio.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Establish a 60 pot gear limit for the Chignik Area parallel Pacific cod fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The Chignik Area parallel Pacific cod fishery is managed by the state to coincide with the adjacent federal waters Pacific cod fishery. During parallel fisheries, the state adopts most federal regulations and management measures for consistency across state and federal waters. Harvests from both federal and parallel seasons are subtracted from the federal TAC. Vessels may operate an unlimited amount of pot gear during parallel and federal fisheries although vessel size is limited to a maximum of 58 feet during the Chignik Area parallel fishery. Vessels that participate in the separate Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod pot fishery are limited to operating a maximum of 60 pots per vessel.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The department does not actively manage parallel Pacific cod fisheries or collect data on the amount of gear used by participants. Therefore, the effects of this proposal on effort, fishery performance or Pacific cod abundance are unknown. Some participants may opt out of the Chignik Area parallel fishery and fish in adjacent management areas or target cod exclusively in federal waters in an effort to maintain historical fishing practices.

BACKGROUND: Three Pacific cod fisheries (federal, parallel, and state-waters) occur in the Chignik Management Area.

1. The federal season is managed exclusively by NMFS and prosecuted in federal waters (3 to 200 nmi offshore).
2. Concurrent to the federal fishery the state opens a parallel fishery inside waters under state jurisdiction (0 to 3 nmi). The state adopts most federal rules and management actions inside state waters by emergency order during the parallel fishery.
3. A separate state-waters Pacific cod season is also prosecuted from 0 to 3 nmi but is managed independent of federal and parallel fisheries exclusively by the state according to board regulations.

The federal/parallel Pacific cod pot gear fishery is divided into an A and B season. The A season opens January 1 and the B season opens September 1. The Chignik Area state-waters pot gear season opens March 1 or seven days after closure of the CGOA federal/parallel pot gear A season, whichever is later. From 2006 to 2015, vessel effort in the Chignik Area parallel pot gear fishery ranged from one to six vessels (Table 8-2). On average, 65 percent of all vessels fish in both parallel and federal waters within the Chignik Area during the same season. During years without confidential data, parallel harvest ranged from 240 thousand to 1.8 million pounds annually. On average, parallel harvest accounted for 50 percent of the total federal/parallel catch. Most vessels in the Chignik Area parallel pot gear fishery also participate in the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery. Few vessels participate in the parallel B season.

During the state-waters fishery vessel operators are required to purchase and affix buoy tags to each pot when the pot limit is in effect to aid enforcement of the gear limit. Currently, buoy tags are not required for the parallel Pacific cod pot gear fishery, but would be necessary if the board adopts this proposal.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal. Adopting this proposal may require additional enforcement presence in the Chignik area during parallel seasons to enforce the gear limit inside state waters.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal may result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery if vessel operators are required to purchase buoy tags to aid enforcement of the pot limit. Currently, the department issues buoy tags at a cost of \$1.50 per tag paid by fishery participants.

Table 8-1.—Number of vessels in Chignik Area parallel and federal waters Pacific cod fisheries and the number and percent of vessels that participate in both parallel and federal waters in the same season, 2006–2015.

Year	Parallel waters vessel count	Federal waters vessel count	Total vessel count	Count of vessels that participate in both parallel and federal waters in the same season	Percentage of vessels that participate in both parallel and federal waters in the same season
2006	1	1	1	1	100%
2007	2	1	2	1	50%
2008	1	2	2	1	50%
2009	3	3	3	3	100%
2010	3	3	4	3	75%
2011	3	2	3	2	67%
2012	1	1	1	1	100%
2013	3	3	5	1	20%
2014	4	6	7	3	43%
2015*	6	3	6	3	50%
Average	3	3	3	2	65%

*Through September 11, 2015; parallel pot season closed February 16, additional harvest is not anticipated.

Table 8-2.—Vessel count and harvest during Chignik Area parallel and federal Pacific cod pot gear fisheries, 2006–2015.

Year	Parallel Waters			Federal Waters			Total	
	Vessel count	Harvest (pounds)	Percent of total harvest	Vessel count	Harvest (pounds)	Percent of total harvest	Vessel count	Harvest (pounds)
2006	1	CF	CF	1	CF	CF	1	CF
2007	2	CF	CF	1	CF	CF	2	CF
2008	1	CF	CF	2	CF	CF	2	CF
2009	3	239,584	40%	3	359,419	60%	3	599,003
2010	3	564,567	59%	3	396,102	41%	4	960,669
2011	3	258,963	69%	2	116,167	31%	3	375,130
2012	1	CF	CF	1	CF	CF	1	CF
2013	3	395,052	40%	3	602,090	60%	5	997,142
2014	4	1,729,086	36%	6	3,107,579	64%	7	4,836,665
2015*	6	1,053,533	52%	3	987,543	48%	6	2,041,077
Average	3	706,798	49%	3	928,150	51%	3	1,634,948

CF = Confidential data.

*Through September 11, 2015; parallel pot season closed February 16, additional harvest is not anticipated.

PROPOSAL 9 – 5 AAC 28.087. Management measures in parallel groundfish fisheries for protection of Steller sea lions.

PROPOSED BY: Aaron Anderson.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Open SSL haulout no fishing zones within the Chignik Area to pot gear vessels participating in the Chignik Area parallel Pacific cod fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? SSL no fishing zones for haulouts applicable to the Chignik Area parallel Pacific cod pot gear fishery include state waters (0 to 3 nmi from shore) around Mitrofanina, Sutwik, and Chowiet Islands, and Lighthouse Rocks (Figure 9-1). All pot gear vessels participating during the parallel Pacific cod fishery are required to have onboard an activated VMS to aid enforcement of the closure areas. SSL no fishing zones and VMS requirements are not applicable to vessels using jig gear.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Expanding the area available to fishery participants may increase effort and harvest during the parallel fishery.

BACKGROUND: The Chignik Area parallel Pacific cod pot gear fishery is established by the state to coincide with the adjacent federal CGOA Pacific cod pot gear fishery. During the parallel fishery, the state adopts most federal fishing regulations including season dates, gear, area closures, bycatch limits, or other regulations reasonably necessary to accommodate federal fishery management measures in state waters. Federal area closures, including closures for SSL protection, are in effect during parallel fisheries. In 2001, the NPFMC established an array of no fishing zones around SSL haulouts and rookeries in federal waters in response to declining SSL populations and their listing as an endangered species under the ESA. The State of Alaska subsequently adopted most federal SSL closure areas for parallel Pacific cod, walleye pollock, and Atka mackerel fisheries under 5 AAC 28.087. *Management measures in parallel groundfish fisheries for protection of Steller sea lions.*

The Chignik Area parallel Pacific cod pot gear fishery is divided into two seasons. The A season opens January 1 and the B season opens September 1. Most parallel Pacific cod effort occurs during the A season prior to the start of the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod season. Effort during the Chignik parallel fishery is generally low. From 2006 to 2015, an average of three pot vessels harvested approximately 700,000 pounds of Pacific cod annually during the parallel season (Table 9-1).

The Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear season opens after closure of the parallel pot gear A season. With exception of the 3 nmi no transit zone on Chowiet Island, SSL no fishing zones applicable to the parallel pot gear fishery do not apply to the state-waters pot gear fishery (Figure 9-1). From 2006 to 2015, 88 percent of all vessels that participated in the state-waters pot gear fishery targeted Pacific cod in statistical areas fully or partially enclosed by SSL no fishing zones established for the parallel fishery (Table 9-2). On average, 90 percent of all Pacific cod harvested by pot gear vessels during the state-waters Pacific cod fishery were taken in statistical

areas fully or partially enclosed by SSL no fishing zones. The amount of state-waters Pacific cod vessel effort and harvest exclusively inside the SSL closure areas is unknown.

Opening waters in the parallel fishery that are currently closed to fishing for protection of SSL would require NMFS to reinitiate ESA consultation on the effects of the Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod fishery on the western population of SSL. During consultation, if NMFS determines that the effects of the proposed change are not insignificant or discountable, NMFS is required to reinitiate formal ESA section 7 consultation which results in the issuance of a biological opinion. The biological opinion would determine whether federal agencies have ensured that groundfish fisheries are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of SSL or adversely modify designated critical habitat. Depending on the outcome of the biological opinion there may or may not be further restrictions to existing federal fisheries and the participants who fish in both parallel and federal cod fisheries.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 9-1.–Chignik Area parallel Pacific cod fishery pot gear effort and harvest, 2006–2015.

Year	Vessel count	Harvest (pounds)
2006	1	CF
2007	2	CF
2008	1	CF
2009	3	239,584
2010	3	564,567
2011	3	258,963
2012	1	CF
2013	3	395,052
2014	4	1,729,086
2015*	6	1,053,533
Average	3	706,798

*Through September 15, 2015; parallel pot season closed February 16, additional harvest is not anticipated.

CF = Confidential data.

Table 9-2.—Chignik Area state-waters pot vessel effort and Pacific cod harvest, and the percentage of state-waters season pot vessel effort and Pacific cod harvest that occurred in statistical areas fully or partially enclosed by SSL no fishing zones applicable to the parallel Pacific cod pot gear season, 2006–2015.

Year	Total pot vessel count	Total pot harvest (pounds)	Pot vessel count in SSL no fishing zones	Pot harvest in SSL no fishing zones (pounds)	Percentage of pot vessels that fished in SSL no fishing zones	Percentage of total pot harvest taken in SSL no fishing zones
2006	12	3,439,521	10	2,634,835	83%	77%
2007	16	5,700,861	13	4,685,029	81%	82%
2008	23	6,741,090	22	6,449,355	96%	96%
2009	11	5,679,676	11	5,662,477	100%	100%
2010	16	8,491,185	14	8,341,940	88%	98%
2011	23	9,370,870	20	8,638,852	87%	92%
2012	20	10,229,969	16	8,985,749	80%	88%
2013	19	8,712,190	16	7,949,463	84%	91%
2014	12	9,150,276	10	8,236,911	83%	90%
2015*	17	10,248,382	16	8,443,605	94%	82%
Avg.	17	7,776,402	15	7,002,822	88%	90%

*Through September 15, 2015; additional harvest is not anticipated.

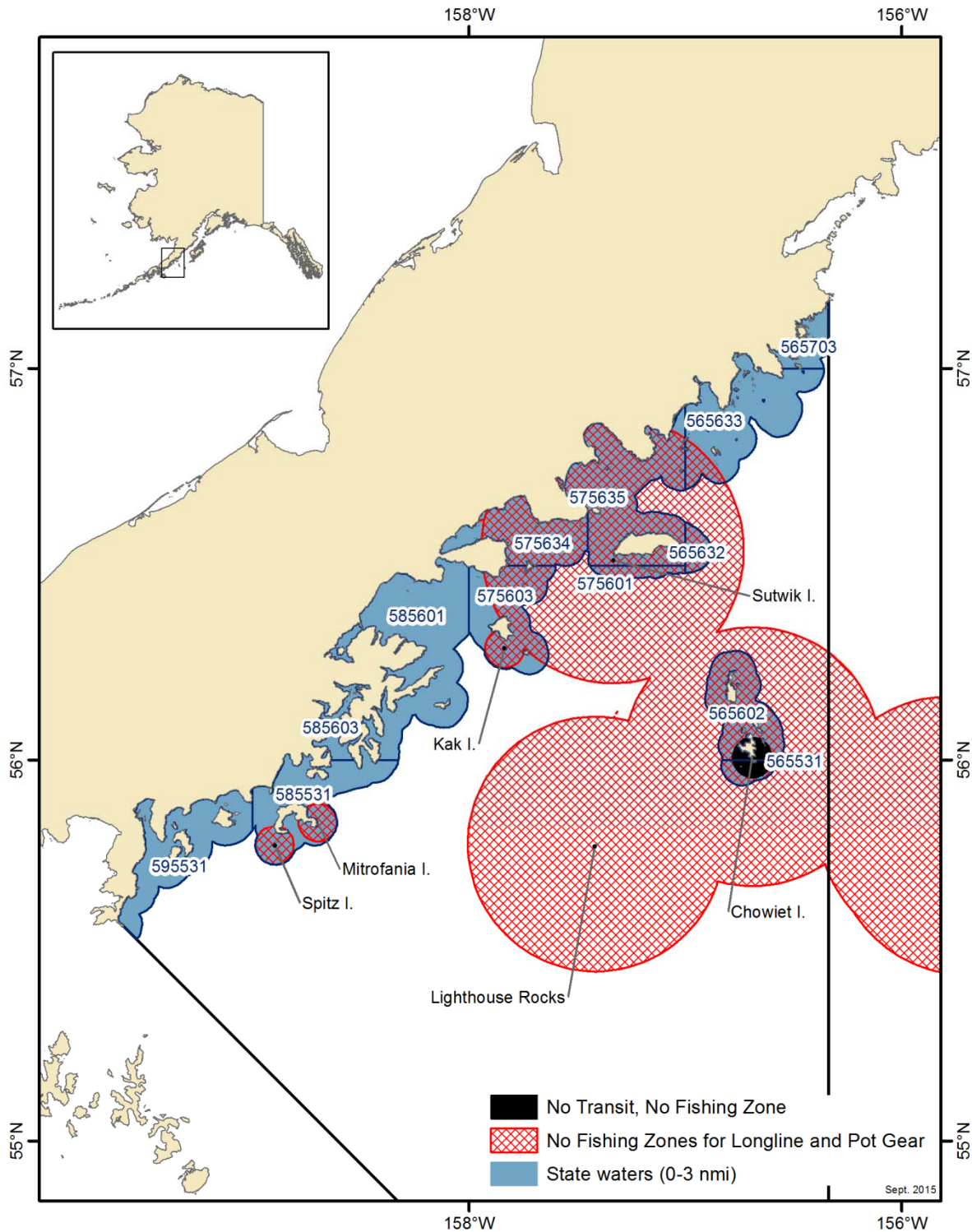


Figure 9-1.—Steller sea lion no fishing zones and groundfish statistical areas applicable to the Chignik Area parallel Pacific cod pot gear fishery.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE—GROUP 2 (4 PROPOSALS)

South Alaska Peninsula Pacific Cod: 10–13

PROPOSALS 10 and 11 – 5 AAC 28.577. South Alaska Peninsula Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: King Cove Fish and Game Advisory Committee (Proposal 10); False Pass Fish and Game Advisory Committee (Proposal 11).

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? Proposal 10 would increase the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL from 30 to 35 percent of the WGOA Pacific cod ABC. Proposal 11 would increase the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL from 30 percent to 40 percent of the total WGOA ABC.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery GHL is based on 30 percent of the estimated annual WGOA Pacific cod ABC (5 AAC 28.577(h)(1)).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSALS WERE ADOPTED? A redistribution of WGOA ABC would result in smaller harvests, shorter seasons, and increased competition among gear sectors that participate in the WGOA federal/parallel Pacific cod fishery. In contrast, additional GHL in the state-waters fishery would provide additional harvest opportunity for vessels using jig and pot gear eligible to participate in the state-waters fishery.

BACKGROUND: Three Pacific cod fisheries (federal, parallel, and state waters) occur in the South Alaska Peninsula Management Area.

1. The federal fishery is managed exclusively by the NMFS and prosecuted in federal waters (3–200 nmi offshore).
2. Concurrent to the federal fishery, the state opens a parallel fishery inside state waters under state jurisdiction (0–3 nmi). The state adopts most federal rules and management actions inside state waters by emergency order during the parallel fishery.
3. A separate state-waters Pacific cod season is also prosecuted from 0–3 nmi, but is managed exclusively by the state according to board regulations.

NPFMC annually adopts an ABC for Pacific cod in WGOA management area. The state GHL is subtracted from WGOA ABC to arrive at the federal TAC, which is the harvest limit during federal/parallel fisheries. The NPFMC sets the federal/parallel fishery TAC, while the board sets the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters fishery GHL.

In 1996, the board adopted state-waters Pacific cod management plans for fisheries in five management areas, including South Alaska Peninsula Area (5 AAC 28.081). The initial harvest level for South Alaska Peninsula Area was set at 15 percent of the WGOA ABC. The percentage of WGOA ABC allocated to South Alaska Peninsula Area was structured to increase over time such that if the 15 percent GHL was reached in any calendar year, the GHL would increase the next calendar year to 20 percent of the WGOA ABC. If the 20 percent GHL was reached in any calendar year after it had been implemented, the GHL would increase the next calendar year to

the maximum 25 percent of the WGOA ABC. The South Alaska Peninsula Area fishery achieved the final GHl step-up increment in 2000. Prior to the 2014 season, the board increased the GHl to 30 percent of the WGOA ABC. There are no provisions in regulation that lower the GHl if annual state-waters GHls are not achieved during a calendar year.

The federal/parallel WGOA Pacific cod TAC is subdivided across six gear and processing sectors. Since 2012, each federal/parallel gear sector receives a separate allocation of Pacific cod TAC (Table 10-2). Any increase in the state-waters GHl (pot and jig gear) would proportionally reduce the federal TAC available to the federal gear sectors (pot, jig, longline, and trawl). Prior to federal sector allocations, all gear types competed for federal/parallel Pacific cod during a derby-style fishery. The federal/parallel Pacific cod fishery is divided into an A and B season. The A season opens for most gear sectors on January 1 and the B season opens September 1 for most gear sectors.

From 2003–2012, harvest of Pacific cod during the parallel fishery ranged from a low of 8.0 million pounds to high of 19.1 million pounds (Table 10-4). On average, parallel harvest accounted for 21 percent of the total WGOA Pacific cod ABC from 2003–2012. During that time, the total state-waters harvest (combined state-waters and parallel catch) averaged 45 percent of the total WGOA Pacific cod ABC (Table 10-4).

The South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters season for pot vessels opens seven days following closure of the WGOA federal/parallel pot gear season or March 7, whichever is later. The state-waters season for jig vessels opens 48 hours after closure of the WGOA federal/parallel season for jig gear, or March 15, whichever is earlier. Currently, 85 percent of the South Alaska Peninsula Pacific cod GHl is allocated to pot gear, while 15 percent of the GHl is allocated to jig gear. The South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters GHl has been achieved most years since 2003 (Table 10-3). During years when the GHl was not fully harvested (2006–2008), jig vessels did not fully harvest the jig gear GHl allocation. From 2005–2014, the exvessel value of the state-waters fishery ranged from approximately \$2.9 million to over \$7.5 million (Table 10-3).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on these allocative proposals.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of these proposals is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 10-1.—Current Western Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod ABC apportionment and proposed state-waters allocations in pounds of Pacific cod, by year, 2006–2015.

Year	WGOA ABC	70% WGOA Federal TAC	30% state-waters GHLL	Proposed 35% state-waters GHLL	Proposed 40% state-waters GHLL
2006	59,205,140	41,443,598	17,761,542	20,721,799	23,682,056
2007	59,205,140	41,443,598	17,761,542	20,721,799	23,682,056
2008	57,170,274	40,019,192	17,151,082	20,009,596	22,868,110
2009	47,547,096	33,282,967	14,264,129	16,641,484	19,018,838
2010	61,034,977	42,724,484	18,310,493	21,362,242	24,413,991
2011	66,976,435	46,883,505	20,092,931	23,441,752	26,790,574
2012	61,799,981	43,259,987	18,539,994	21,629,993	24,719,992
2013	62,346,088	43,642,262	18,703,826	21,821,131	24,938,435
2014	72,189,627	50,532,739	21,656,888	25,266,369	28,875,851
2015	85,323,305	59,726,314	25,596,992	29,863,157	34,129,322

Table 10-2.—Western Gulf of Alaska federal Pacific cod gear sectors and 2015 TAC allocations.

WGOA federal Pacific cod gear sector	2015 TAC allocation (%)	2015 TAC (pounds)
Jig	3.5% ^a	2,089,982
Longline catcher processor	19.8%	11,411,127
Longline catcher vessel	1.4%	806,892
Trawl catcher vessel	38.0%	22,132,206
Trawl catcher processor	2.4%	1,382,298
Pot	38.4%	21,900,721
Total	100.0%	59,723,227

^a Jig allocation taken off the top of the TAC

Table 10-3.—South Alaska Peninsula state-waters Pacific cod effort, landings, GHLL, harvest, and exvessel value, by year, 2006–2014.

Year	Vessel count	Landings	GHLL (pounds)	Harvest (pounds)	Price per pound	Exvessel value
2005	74	529	11,527,972	11,436,857	\$0.26	\$2,973,583
2006	54	386	14,801,285	11,739,736	\$0.38	\$4,461,100
2007	60	465	14,801,285	12,678,151	\$0.47	\$5,958,731
2008	97	700	14,292,568	13,302,050	\$0.57	\$7,582,169
2009	72	514	11,886,774	11,594,124	\$0.25	\$2,898,531
2010	69	534	15,258,744	15,288,266	\$0.26	\$3,974,949
2011	82	551	16,744,109	16,806,305	\$0.31	\$5,209,955
2012	95	644	15,449,995	15,356,768	\$0.34	\$5,221,301
2013	74	529	15,586,682	15,583,345	\$0.27	\$4,207,503
2014	73	616	21,657,085	21,949,138	\$0.29	\$6,365,250
2005–2014 avg.	75	547	15,200,650	14,573,474	\$0.34	\$4,954,981

Table 10-4.–South Alaska Peninsula Area harvest of Pacific cod during state waters and parallel fisheries, in pounds, by all gear types as a percent of the ABC, by year, 2005–2014.

Year	WGOA ABC (pounds)	State waters (GHL)			Parallel (TAC)			State waters and parallel		
		Vessel count	Harvest (pounds)	Percent of ABC	Vessel count	Harvest (pounds)	Percent of ABC	Vessel count	Harvest (pounds)	Percent of ABC
2005	46,111,832	74	11,436,857	24.8%	108	9,675,002	21.0%	138	21,111,859	45.8%
2006	59,205,092	54	11,739,736	19.8%	96	15,883,274	26.8%	107	27,623,010	46.7%
2007	59,205,092	60	12,678,151	21.4%	103	9,459,491	16.0%	123	22,137,642	37.4%
2008	57,170,801	97	13,302,050	23.3%	103	7,974,231	13.9%	153	21,276,281	37.2%
2009	47,547,096	72	11,594,124	24.4%	106	11,428,188	24.0%	134	23,022,312	48.4%
2010	61,034,977	69	15,288,266	25.0%	120	17,285,512	28.3%	138	32,573,778	53.4%
2011	66,976,356	82	16,806,305	25.1%	116	19,126,729	28.6%	140	35,933,034	53.7%
2012	61,799,986	95	15,356,768	24.8%	114	9,408,026	15.2%	150	24,764,794	40.1%
2013	62,346,088	74	15,583,345	25.0%	77	9,570,914	15.4%	115	25,154,259	40.3%
2014	72,189,627	73	21,949,138	30.4%	83	11,791,334	16.3%	100	33,740,472	46.7%
Avg.	59,358,695	75	14,573,474	24.6%	103	12,160,270	20.5%	130	26,733,744	45.0%

PROPOSAL 12 – 5 AAC 28.577. South Alaska Peninsula Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Kenneth Mack.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would restrict South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery pot gear vessels greater than 50 feet OAL to 75 percent of the pot gear GHL.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The *South Alaska Peninsula Area Pacific Cod Management Plan* allocates 85 percent of the state-waters GHL to pot gear and 15 percent to jig gear (5 AAC 28.577(c)(1) and (2)). State-waters Pacific cod vessels in the South Alaska Peninsula Area are restricted to a maximum of 58 feet in overall length and limited to operating no more than 60 pots or five mechanical jigging machines.

If the jig GHL allocation is not taken by the conclusion of the federal WGOA pot gear B season, the state-waters season may close and immediately reopen to both pot and jig gear to facilitate full harvest of the GHL. If the remaining GHL has not been taken by October 30, the department may additionally designate South Alaska Peninsula Area a nonexclusive registration area and remove gear and vessel length limits in an attempt to reach the GHL prior to the regulatory closure of the season on December 31.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Allocating 25 percent of the pot gear GHL to vessels less than or equal to 50 feet in length would increase harvest opportunity for vessels of that size. During the 2015 South Alaska Peninsula state-waters Pacific cod pot gear season, the proposed GHL allocation for vessels less than or equal to 50 feet would have resulted in a 5.4 million pound GHL. From 2011–2015, average annual harvest by pot vessels less than or equal to 50 feet in length was approximately 2.0 million pounds (Table 12-1).

Based on recent vessel participation in the fishery, a 75 percent GHL allocation for vessels greater than 50 feet would, on average, restrict harvest for approximately 75 percent of all state-waters Pacific cod fishery pot gear participants. If adopted, some vessels may opt out of the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery and participate in other Pacific cod fisheries.

BACKGROUND: Most vessels that participate in the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery are commercial salmon purse seine vessels that target Pacific cod during winter fisheries. Since inception of the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery in 1997, an average of 37 vessels greater than 50 feet in length annually participated in the fishery (Table 12-1). Participation by vessels less than or equal to 50 feet in length averaged 10 vessels during the same time period. Since 1997, harvest by pot gear vessels greater than 50 feet in length averaged approximately 88 percent of the total pot gear harvest, while pot gear vessels less than or equal to 50 feet averaged approximately 12 percent of the total pot gear harvest in the South Alaska Peninsula Area Pacific state-waters Pacific cod fishery (Table 12-1).

Separate pot and jig gear GHl allocations were adopted into regulation prior to the start of the 1998 season. The South Alaska Peninsula pot gear allocation has been generally increasing since 1998 due to increasing Pacific cod abundance, and a 2014 regulatory change that increased the state-waters GHl from 25 percent to 30 percent of the WGOA ABC (Table 12-2). From 1998–2015, the proportion of annual harvest taken by vessels greater than 50 feet in length and vessels less than or equal to 50 feet in length has remained relatively unchanged (Table 12-1; Figure 12-1). From 2011–2015, the pot gear season length averaged 18 days (Table 12-2).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 12-1.—South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod effort and percent harvest by pot gear vessels greater than 50 feet in length and pot gear vessels less than or equal to 50 feet in length, by year, 1997–2015.

Year	Vessels greater than 50 feet			Vessels less than or equal to 50 feet		
	Vessel count	Harvest (pounds)	% of total harvest	Vessel count	Harvest (pounds)	% of total harvest
1997	34	7,193,657	79.1%	17	1,904,149	20.9%
1998	33	6,698,516	81.8%	16	1,494,288	18.2%
1999	40	10,289,243	93.7%	12	647,515	6.3%
2000	52	13,208,762	92.5%	13	1,077,389	7.5%
2001	45	9,200,012	88.3%	10	1,221,581	11.7%
2002	43	9,764,334	91.5%	6	905,238	8.5%
2003	34	7,044,702	88.9%	7	882,954	11.1%
2004	35	9,658,488	89.7%	8	1,112,493	10.3%
2005	31	8,473,952	83.0%	8	1,732,388	17.0%
2006	33	9,821,503	84.4%	10	1,818,680	15.6%
2007	38	11,114,774	89.5%	8	1,309,199	10.5%
2008	39	10,711,987	90.0%	9	1,189,052	10.0%
2009	39	9,611,877	91.5%	8	888,866	8.5%
2010	32	12,079,739	93.1%	6	893,447	6.9%
2011	36	12,842,797	89.4%	13	1,520,465	10.6%
2012	41	12,056,587	90.2%	12	1,310,297	9.8%
2013	27	11,391,479	85.1%	10	1,993,355	14.9%
2014	29	16,418,915	87.3%	9	2,387,079	12.7%
2015	33	19,035,171	87.9%	9	2,616,573	12.1%
1997–2015 avg.	37	10,874,552	88.5%	10	1,416,053	11.5%
2011–2015 avg.	33	14,348,990	88.0%	11	1,965,554	12.0%

The 2015 South Alaska Peninsula pot gear season closed March 31; additional harvest is not anticipated.

Table 12-2.–South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear vessel effort, landings, GHL, harvest, season length, and average pounds harvested per day, 1998–2015.

Year	Pot vessel count	Landings	Pot GHL (pounds)	Pot harvest (pounds)	Percent of GHL harvested	Season length (days)	Average pounds/day
1998	49	309	7,662,497	8,192,803	106.9%	38	215,600
1999	49	388	11,071,174	10,936,758	98.8%	28	390,599
2000	65	505	12,883,263	14,286,151	110.9%	29	492,626
2001	55	311	11,430,968	10,421,593	91.2%	39	267,220
2002	49	276	10,524,455	10,669,572	101.4%	20	533,479
2003	41	191	9,650,736	7,927,656	82.1%	16	495,478
2004	43	277	10,592,385	10,770,980	101.7%	23	468,303
2005	39	267	9,798,776	10,206,340	104.2%	22	463,925
2006	43	350	12,581,092	11,640,184	92.5%	25	465,607
2007	46	406	12,581,092	12,423,973	98.8%	34	365,411
2008	48	390	12,148,683	11,901,039	98.0%	26	457,732
2009	47	329	10,103,758	10,500,742	103.9%	32	328,148
2010	38	240	12,969,933	12,973,186	100.0%	19	682,799
2011	49	280	14,232,492	14,363,262	100.9%	15	957,551
2012	53	299	13,132,496	13,366,884	101.8%	16	835,430
2013	37	248	13,248,680	13,384,834	101.0%	14	956,060
2014	38	321	18,408,522	18,805,994	102.2%	18	1,044,777
2015	42	436	21,757,443	21,651,744	99.5%	25	866,070
1998–2015 avg.	46	324	12,487,691	12,467,983	99.8%	24	511,216
2011–2015 avg.	44	317	16,155,927	16,314,544	101.0%	18	926,963

Bold text indicates years when the pot gear GHL was not fully harvested.

The 2015 South Alaska Peninsula pot gear season closed March 31; additional harvest is not anticipated.

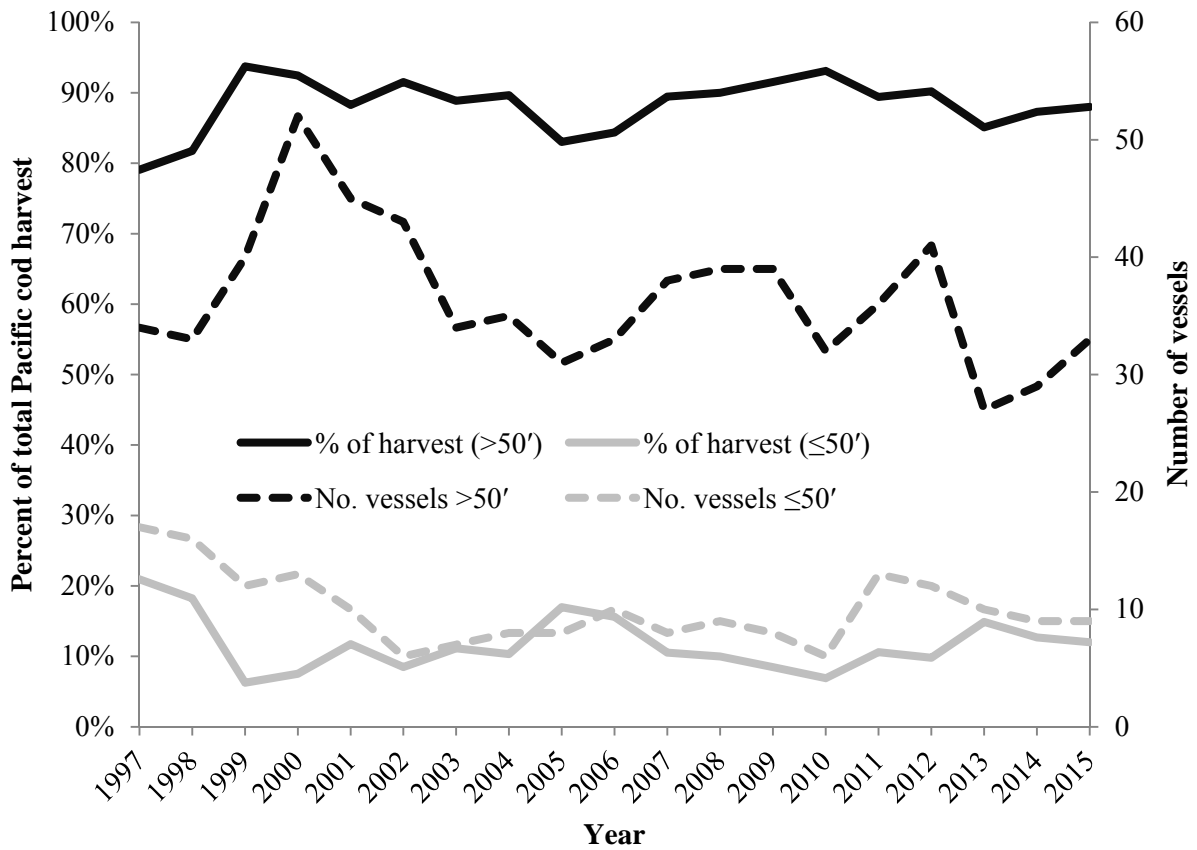


Figure 12-1.—South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod effort (dark dashed) and harvest (dark solid) by pot vessels greater than 50 feet compared to effort (light dashed) and harvest (light solid) by pot vessels less than or equal to 50 feet, by year, 1997–2015.

PROPOSAL 13 – 5 AAC 28.571. Groundfish Pot Storage Requirements for South Alaska Peninsula; and 5 AAC 28.577. South Alaska Peninsula Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would clarify groundfish pot storage regulations for the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Two regulations guide groundfish pot storage requirements in the South Alaska Peninsula Area: *Groundfish pot storage requirements for South Alaska Peninsula Area* (5 AAC 28.571) allows for shallow-water groundfish pot storage for an unlimited period of time while *South Alaska Peninsula Area Pacific Cod Management Plan* (5 AAC 28.577 (h)(2)(E)) allows shallow-water groundfish pot storage in excess of the 60-pot limit for a maximum of 7 days following the start date of the state-waters Pacific cod pot gear season.

The South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod season for pot gear vessels opens March 7 or 7 days after closure of the WGOA federal/parallel Pacific cod A season for pot gear, whichever is later.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This provides the board and fishery stakeholders opportunity to resolve gear storage provisions for pots in excess of the pot limit during the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery, thereby potentially eliminating regulatory confusion and enforcement concerns.

BACKGROUND: The South Alaska Peninsula parallel Pacific cod fishery is prosecuted prior to the start of the South Alaska Peninsula state-waters Pacific cod season. There are no pot gear limits established for the parallel fishery. Vessels registered for the South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery are restricted to operating no more than 60 groundfish pots and vessel operators are required to purchase and affix buoy tags to each pot when the pot limit is in effect to aid enforcement of the gear limit. For vessels that participate in both parallel and state-waters fisheries, the intent of 5 AAC 28.577(h)(2)(E) is to provide sufficient time after closure of the parallel Pacific cod season for fishery participants to remove pot gear in excess of the state-waters 60 pot limit.

The discrepancy in regulation has been recently highlighted by fishery participants who operate in remote areas during the state-waters Pacific cod pot gear season and have requested to store extra pots in shallow water or onboard the vessel to replace tagged pots that are lost or damaged during the season. It is unclear to department staff which groundfish storage regulation is applicable in this situation. From 2011 to 2015, the average season length for the South Alaska Peninsula state-waters pot gear fishery was 18 days. Allowing vessels to replace lost gear with excess pots stored in close proximity to the fishing grounds may increase efficiency for some vessels. Vessel operators would be required to obtain a replacement buoy tag from the department prior to operating excess gear. Replacement tags are available at most ports of

landing. Alternatively, prohibiting excess gear storage may reduce gear conflicts and improve enforcement of the existing limit.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted this proposal and **SUPPORTS** development of clear and easily communicated regulations. The department is **NEUTRAL** on which of the 2 established pot storage regulations is used to guide pot storage during the state-waters Pacific cod fishery. If the board elects to allow pot storage in excess of the 60-pot limit, the board may want to consider limiting the number of stored pots to avoid gear conflicts and aid enforcement.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE—GROUP 3 (8 PROPOSALS)

Bering Sea—Aleutian Islands Pacific Cod: 14–21

PROPOSAL 14 – 5 AAC 28.647. Aleutian Islands District Pacific Cod Management Plan; and 5 AAC 28.648. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would base the AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery GHL on the federal Aleutian Islands subarea ABC. Similarly, this proposal would base the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery GHL on the federal Bering Sea subarea ABC.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The AID and DHS state-waters Pacific cod GHLs are each set at 3% of the combined federal Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area ABC.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The AID state-waters Pacific cod GHL would fluctuate with abundance of Pacific cod in the Aleutian Islands, and the DHS Pacific cod GHL would fluctuate with abundance of Pacific cod in the Bering Sea. This proposal would set the AID state-waters Pacific cod GHL as a percentage of the federal Aleutian Islands subarea ABC; therefore, the AID state-waters Pacific cod GHL would no longer have the potential to preclude a federal fishery in the Aleutian Islands or exceed the subarea ABC.

BACKGROUND: In 2014, NPFMC adopted separate ABCs for Pacific cod in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands subareas to address genetic differences between the Pacific cod stocks and concerns about the declining Aleutian Islands Pacific cod stock, as recommended by the NPFMC’s Scientific and Statistical Committee. DHS and AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery management plans were adopted by the board prior to the NPFMC adopting separate subarea Pacific cod ABCs and are still based on a combined Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands ABC.

Federal subarea TAC may be no greater than the subarea ABC minus the state-waters GHL. Currently, the Aleutian Islands subarea maximum TAC is reduced by the AID state-waters GHL and the Bering Sea subarea maximum TAC is reduced by the DHS state-waters GHL. The Aleutian Islands subarea ABC is significantly lower than the Bering Sea subarea ABC (Table 14-1). The current GHL calculation, which uses 3% of the combined BSAI subarea ABCs, could result in an AID state-waters GHL that is greater than the entire AI ABC (and preclude a federal fishery).

At the time this proposal and staff comments were written, separate Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands subarea ABCs had only been established for the 2014 and 2015 seasons. The NPFMC is not scheduled to adopt ABCs for the 2016 season by the time the board takes up this proposal, though the ABCs recommended in November by the federal GPT for 2016 may help inform this issue. The Aleutian Islands District GHL was 53.7% of the 2014 Aleutian Islands subarea ABC and 46.5% of the 2015 subarea ABC (Table 14-1). The Dutch Harbor Subdistrict GHL was 3.2% of the 2014 and 2015 Bering Sea subarea ABC. The DHS state-waters Pacific cod GHL was

reached in both 2014 and 2015. The AID state-waters Pacific cod GHL was not reached in 2014 or 2015 and harvest is confidential; average harvest from 2010 to 2014 was 8.4 million pounds (58% of the GHL).

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 14-1.–Dutch Harbor Subdistrict and Aleutian Islands District Pacific cod 2014–2015 guideline harvest levels (GHL) and federal Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands subarea Pacific cod acceptable biological catches (ABC).

	2014	2015
Federal acceptable biological catch (ABC) ^a		
Bering Sea subarea	562.18	562.18
Aleutian Islands subarea	33.29	38.80
Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands combined	595.47	600.98
State-waters guideline harvest level (GHL) ^a		
Dutch Harbor Subdistrict	17.87	18.04
Aleutian Islands District	17.87	18.04
State-waters GHL as percent of federal subarea ABC		
Dutch Harbor Subdistrict	3.2%	3.2%
Aleutian Islands District	53.7%	46.5%

^a In millions of pounds.

PROPOSAL 15 – 5 AAC 28.648. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Buck Laukitis, Todd Hoppe, and Andrew Wilder.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would increase the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery GHL from 3% to 9% of the federal combined Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands subareas ABC. This proposal would also shift the western boundary of the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery from 167° W long to 170° W long, with state waters around Bogoslof Island and two SSL rookeries closed to fishing (Figure 15-1).

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The GHL in the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery is set at 3% of the combined federal Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands subarea ABCs. The DHS is comprised of state waters in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area (BSAI) east of 167° W long, west of 164° W long, and south of 55° 30' N lat (Figure 15-1).

State waters between 167° W long and 170° W long are solely managed under parallel fishing regulations for Pacific cod. Parallel fishing regulations mirror most federal fishery regulations, including SSL protection measures. Waters between 167° W long and 170° W long are part of the federal Bogoslof SSL foraging area which is critical habitat for SSL. Waters of the Bogoslof area are closed under federal regulation to directed Pacific cod fishing, except that 113 mt (249,120 pounds) may be harvested in the Bogoslof exemption area by vessels less than 60 feet in OAL using longline or jig gear (50 C.F.R. 679.22(a)(7)(i)).

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This would triple the DHS state-waters GHL and reduce the maximum federal Bering Sea Pacific cod TAC by a corresponding amount. Effects of increasing the proportion of Pacific cod harvested inside state waters are unknown. This proposal would also increase available fishing grounds during the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery. The department does not know what effects on the SSL population or other fisheries could occur due to increased Pacific cod harvest in the Bogoslof SSL foraging area. Increasing the GHL and geographical area of the fishery could result in more vessels participating and/or a longer season.

BACKGROUND: The DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery began in 2014 and is open to vessels 58 feet or less OAL using pot gear with a 60 pot per vessel limit. The DHS state-waters Pacific cod season opens 7 days after closure of the federal season for vessels less than 60 feet using longline or pot gear. When the federal fishery is open, state waters are open to the parallel fishery, the state mirrors most federal regulations for the parallel fishery, and harvest is deducted from the federal TAC. The parallel Pacific cod season is closed to vessels 58 feet or less OAL using pot gear while the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery is open.

The DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery opened on February 11, 2014 with a GHL of 17,863,874 pounds and on February 9, 2015 with a GHL of 18,029,404 pounds. In 2014 the state-waters harvest was 99% of the GHL during a 12-week season and in 2015 the harvest was 98% of the GHL during an 8-week season (Table 15-1; Figure 15-2). The 2014 season remained

open until the federal fishery reopened on September 1; however, the last landing occurred on May 27. The 2015 season closed on March 31.

In 2014, 16 vessels participated in the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery; however, no more than 10 vessels participated during any given week (Table 15-1). In 2015, 14 vessels participated in the fishery, with weekly participation ranging from 8 to 14 vessels. In 2014, an average 1.3 million pounds were harvested per week. In 2015, average weekly harvest was 2.2 million pounds. Average CPUE in terms of pounds of Pacific cod per pot lift were similar in the 2014 and 2015 seasons, at 244 pounds per pot in 2014 and 240 pounds per pot in 2015.

Harvest of Pacific cod by all gear types and vessel sizes in the parallel fishery from 164° W long to 167° W long (waters of the DHS area) averaged 3.8 million pounds (1% of the federal BSAI ABC) during past 10 years (Table 15-2). In 2014 and 2015, total state waters harvest (parallel and state-waters fishery combined) averaged 24 million pounds (4% of the combined BSAI ABC).

The western boundary of the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery was established at 167° W long; east of the federal Bogoslof SSL foraging area. The federal government defined the Bogoslof foraging area as SSL critical habitat in 1993 and closed the area to all directed Pacific cod fishing in 2001. In 2002, a portion of the Bogoslof area (Bogoslof exemption area), was opened to vessels less than 60 feet OAL using jig or longline gear, with a harvest limit of 113 mt (249,120 pounds). State regulations mirroring federal SSL regulations were adopted for parallel groundfish fisheries in 2002. Federal BSAI SSL restrictions have been adopted in state-waters Pacific cod fishery management plans with some exceptions. Pacific cod harvest from the parallel fishery by jig and longline gear in the Bogoslof area during the past three years has averaged 182,242 pounds.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. If adopted, the department recommends the board review SSL areas within the Bogoslof area to determine appropriate closures as SSL haulouts in the Bogoslof area are not specifically closed by federal regulation but are closed under the broader Bogoslof foraging area fishing regulations. If adopted, the department recommends setting the DHS state-waters Pacific cod GHL as a percentage of the federal Bering Sea subarea ABC instead of the combined Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands subarea ABCs as requested in Proposal 14.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 15-1.–Dutch Harbor Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod participation, harvest (in pounds) and estimated CPUE by statistical week, 2014–2015.

Statistical week	2014			2015		
	Vessels	Harvest ^a	CPUE ^b	Vessels	Harvest ^a	CPUE ^b
7	9	739,088	243	13	1,544,927	242
8	10	1,989,603	229	14	3,879,484	303
9	9	1,803,274	236	14	3,324,711	264
10	9	1,197,261	214	14	3,152,797	244
11	5	564,095	173	14	1,588,901	187
12	7	1,073,656	206	11	1,749,564	205
13	8	1,256,686	218	11	1,862,909	209
14	6	1,687,999	301	8	532,809	219
15	7	1,878,771	337	FC	FC	FC
16	8	2,156,453	327	FC	FC	FC
17	9	1,577,196	275	FC	FC	FC
18	8	1,087,759	204	FC	FC	FC
19	5	CF	CF	FC	FC	FC
20	4	235,941	130	FC	FC	FC
21	1	CF	CF	FC	FC	FC
22	1	CF	CF	FC	FC	FC
Total	16	17,666,510	-	14	17,636,103	-
Weekly average	7	1,326,752	244	12	2,204,513	240

Note: FC = fishery closed, CF = confidential.

^a Harvest in pounds from fish ticket records.

^b Catch per unit effort in pounds of Pacific cod per pot lift from inseason catch reports.

Table 15-2.–Parallel and state-waters Pacific cod harvest and percent of Bering Sea-Aleutian Islands ABC in waters of the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict, 2006–2015.

Year	Parallel	State-waters	Total	Percent of ABC ^a
2006	3,521,851	-	3,521,851	0.82%
2007	1,568,586	-	1,568,586	0.40%
2008	2,694,706	-	2,694,706	0.69%
2009	2,334,857	-	2,334,857	0.58%
2010	4,971,016	-	4,971,016	1.30%
2011	4,019,810	-	4,019,810	0.78%
2012	2,918,672	-	2,918,672	0.42%
2013	2,739,647	-	2,739,647	0.40%
2014	6,585,301	17,666,510	24,251,811	4.07%
2015	6,223,927	17,636,103	23,860,030	3.97%
Average	3,757,837	17,651,307	7,288,099	1.44%

^a Total parallel and state-waters harvest as a percent of Bering Sea-Aleutian Islands acceptable biological catch (ABC), in 2014 and 2015 the ABC for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands subareas are combined.

Table 15-3.–Dutch Harbor Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod harvest (in pounds) and participation by longitude, 2014–2015.

Longitude	2014		2015	
	Vessels	Harvest	Vessels	Harvest
164° to 165° W long	8	8,960,787	12	14,839,788
165° to 166° W long	6	3,095,718	3	1,369,771
166° to 167° W long	5	5,610,005	5	1,426,544
Total	16	17,666,510	14	17,636,103

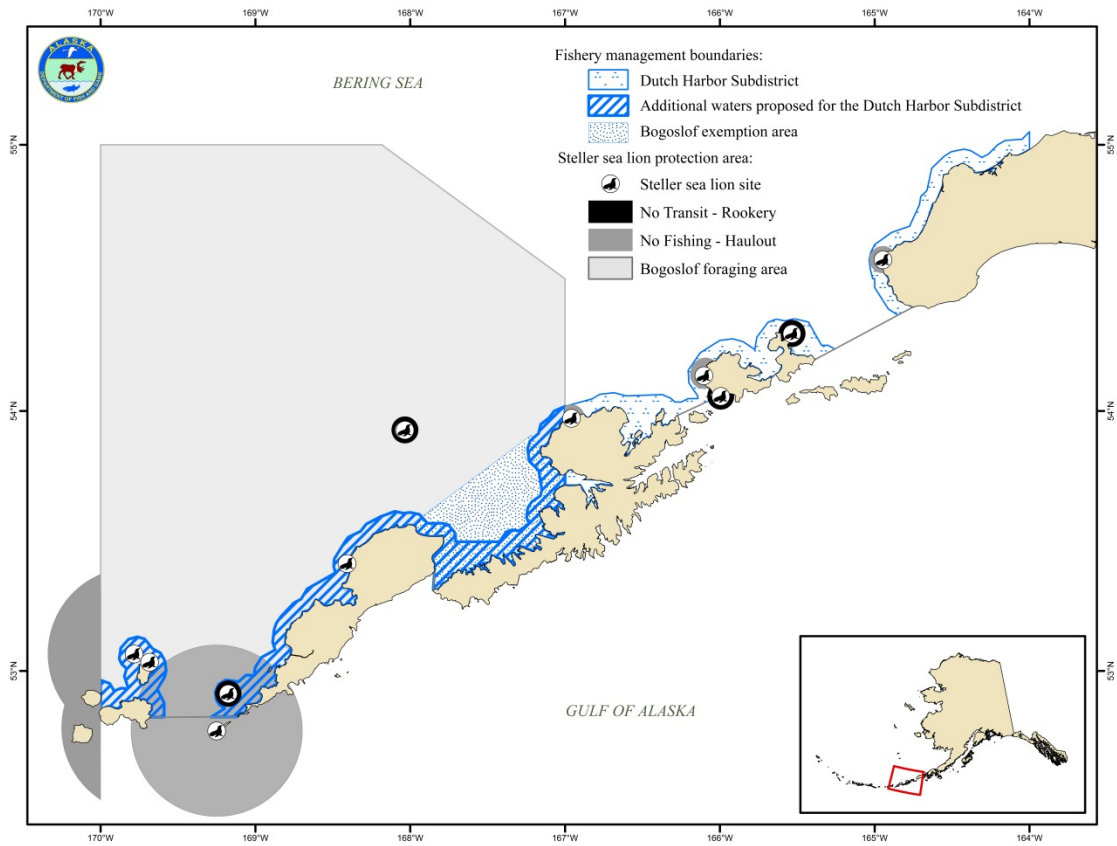


Figure 15-1.–Map of current and proposed areas for the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod fishery.

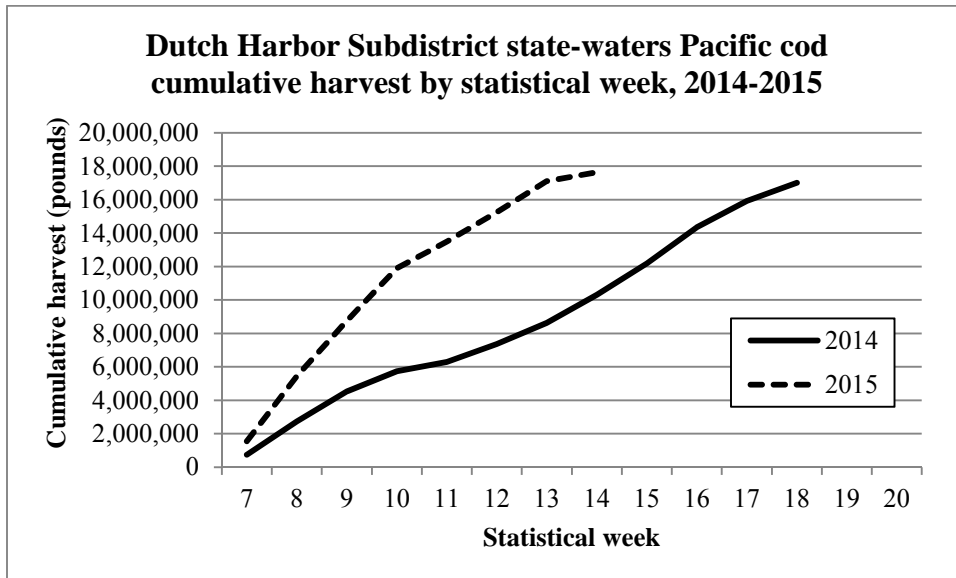


Figure 15-2.—Dutch Harbor Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod cumulative harvest by statistical week, 2014–2015. Harvest in 2014 for weeks 19–22 not shown due to confidentiality.

PROPOSAL 16 – 5 AAC 28.648. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Buck Laukitis, Todd Hoppe, and Andrew Wilder.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would increase the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery GHL from 3% to 5% of the federal combined BSAI ABC. If the GHL set at 5% of the BSAI ABC is reached, the GHL would increase in the following year to 7% of the BSAI ABC.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The GHL in the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery is set at 3% of the combined federal BSAI ABCs. The federal Bering Sea Pacific cod TAC is set no higher than the Bering Sea subarea ABC minus the state-waters GHL.

5 AAC 28.081. *State-Waters Pacific Cod Management Plans* (d) specifies that a GHL will be considered to have been achieved if total harvest is within 10% of the GHL.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This would increase the DHS state-waters Pacific cod GHL and reduce the maximum permissible federal Bering Sea Pacific cod TAC by a corresponding amount. Effects of increasing the proportion of Pacific cod harvested inside state waters are unknown. Increasing the GHL could result in more vessels participating and/or a longer season.

BACKGROUND: The DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery began in 2014 and is open to vessels 58 feet or less OAL using pot gear with a 60 pot limit. The DHS state-waters Pacific cod season opens 7 days after closure of the federal season for vessels less than 60 feet using longline or pot gear. When the federal fishery is open, state waters are open to the parallel fishery. During the parallel fishery the state mirrors most federal regulations and harvest is deducted from the federal TAC. The parallel Pacific cod season is closed to vessels 58 feet or less OAL using pot gear while the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery is open.

The DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery opened on February 11, 2014 with a GHL of 17,863,874 pounds and on February 9, 2015 with a GHL of 18,029,404 pounds. In 2014 the state-waters harvest was 99% of the GHL during a 12-week season and in 2015 the harvest was 98% of the GHL during an 8-week season (Table 16-1; Figure 16-1). The 2014 season remained open until the federal fishery reopened on September 1; however, the last landing occurred on May 27. The 2015 season closed on March 31.

In 2014, 16 vessels participated in the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery; however, no more than 10 vessels participated during any given week (Table 15-1). In 2015, 14 vessels participated in the fishery, with weekly participation ranging from 8 to 14 vessels. In 2014, an average 1.3 million pounds were harvested per week. In 2015, average weekly harvest was 2.2 million pounds. Average CPUE in terms of pounds of Pacific cod per pot lift were similar in the 2014 and 2015 seasons, at 244 pounds per pot in 2014 and 240 pounds per pot in 2015.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal. If adopted, the department recommends setting the DHS state-waters Pacific cod GHL on the federal Bering Sea subarea ABC instead of the combined Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands ABC as requested in Proposal 14.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 16-1.–Dutch Harbor Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod participation, harvest (in pounds) and estimated CPUE by statistical week, 2014–2015.

Statistical week	2014			2015		
	Vessels	Harvest ^a	CPUE ^b	Vessels	Harvest ^a	CPUE ^b
7	9	739,088	243	13	1,544,927	242
8	10	1,989,603	229	14	3,879,484	303
9	9	1,803,274	236	14	3,324,711	264
10	9	1,197,261	214	14	3,152,797	244
11	5	564,095	173	14	1,588,901	187
12	7	1,073,656	206	11	1,749,564	205
13	8	1,256,686	218	11	1,862,909	209
14	6	1,687,999	301	8	532,809	219
15	7	1,878,771	337	FC	FC	FC
16	8	2,156,453	327	FC	FC	FC
17	9	1,577,196	275	FC	FC	FC
18	8	1,087,759	204	FC	FC	FC
19	5	CF	CF	FC	FC	FC
20	4	235,941	130	FC	FC	FC
21	1	CF	CF	FC	FC	FC
22	1	CF	CF	FC	FC	FC
Total	16	17,666,510	-	14	17,636,103	-
Weekly average	7	1,326,752	244	12	2,204,513	240

Note: FC = fishery closed, CF = confidential.

^a Harvest in pounds from fish ticket records.

^b Catch per unit effort in pounds of Pacific cod per pot lift from inseason catch reports.

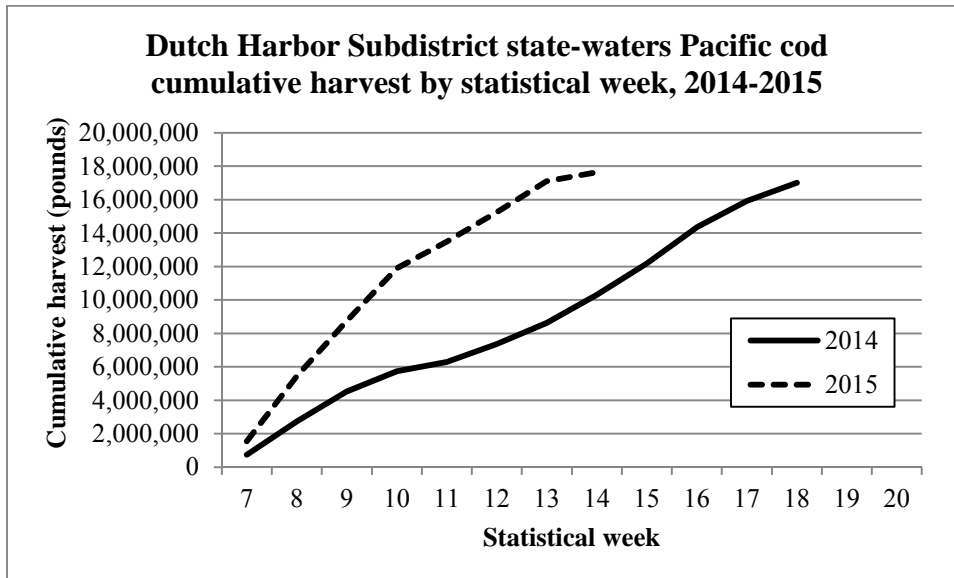


Figure 16-1.—Dutch Harbor Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod cumulative harvest by statistical week, 2014–2015. Harvest in 2014 for weeks 19–22 not shown due to confidentiality

PROPOSAL 17 – 5 AAC 28.648. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Jeff T. Steele.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would allow vessels up to 125 feet OAL to participate in the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Vessels participating in the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery may be no more than 58 feet OAL. Fishermen may only use pot gear limited to no more than 60 pots per vessel. There is no observer requirement for the DHS state-waters fishery.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Allowing larger vessels into the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery could result in increased fleet size and shorter fishing seasons.

BACKGROUND: The DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery began in 2014 and is open to vessels 58 feet or less OAL using pot gear. The parallel Pacific cod season is closed to vessels 58 feet or less OAL using pot gear while the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery is open, but is open to all other vessel lengths and gear types, if the applicable season is also open in adjacent federal waters.

When the federal fishery is open in adjacent waters to the DHS, state waters are open to a parallel fishery, and harvest in state waters is deducted from the federal TAC. The state mirrors most federal regulations into state waters, including vessel size limits. The Bering Sea-Aleutian Islands federal/parallel season for pot catcher vessels over 60 feet OAL has closed in late January during 4 of the past 5 years (2011 – 2014); however, was open through the DHS state-waters Pacific cod season in 2015 (Table 17-1).

During the past 5 years, vessels using pot gear from 59 to 125 feet OAL in the Bering Sea federal/parallel fishery have landed an average of 137,372 pounds per landing compared to 95,072 pounds per landing for vessels 58 feet OAL and 69,156 pounds per vessel for vessels less than 58 feet OAL (Figure 17-1).

The DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery averaged 15 vessels during the 2014 and 2015 seasons. The federal/parallel Bering Sea Pacific cod fishery during 2011 – 2015 averaged 25 vessels using pot gear from 59 to 125 feet OAL, and 17 vessels 58 feet or less OAL. Of those federal/parallel fishery participants, an average of 2 vessels using pot gear were from 59 to 125 feet OAL in the parallel fishery, compared to 6 vessels 58 feet or less OAL (Table 17-2). In 2014, 11 vessels participated in both the federal/parallel season and state-waters season; in 2015, 14 vessels participated in both seasons.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 17-1.–Bering Sea-Aleutian Islands federal/parallel Pacific cod A season for vessels over 60 feet OAL using pot gear, 2011–2015.

Year	Open	Close
2011	Jan 1, 2011	Jan 21, 2011
2012	Jan 1, 2012	Jan 20, 2012
2013	Jan 1, 2013	Jan 22, 2013
2014	Jan 1, 2014	Jan 24, 2014
2015	Jan 1, 2015	Jun 10, 2015

Table 17-2.–Number of vessels using pot gear that participated in the Bering Sea federal and parallel fishery combined and in the parallel fishery by overall length category, 2011–2015.

Year	Federal/Parallel		Parallel		State-waters
	≤58 feet	59-125 feet	≤58 feet	59-125 feet	≤58 feet
2011	15	30	7	1	-
2012	18	27	9	2	-
2013	22	25	5	2	-
2014	15	27	4	2	16
2015 ^a	17	16	7	2	14
Average	17	25	6	2	15

Source: Department fish ticket database.

^a Current season ongoing.

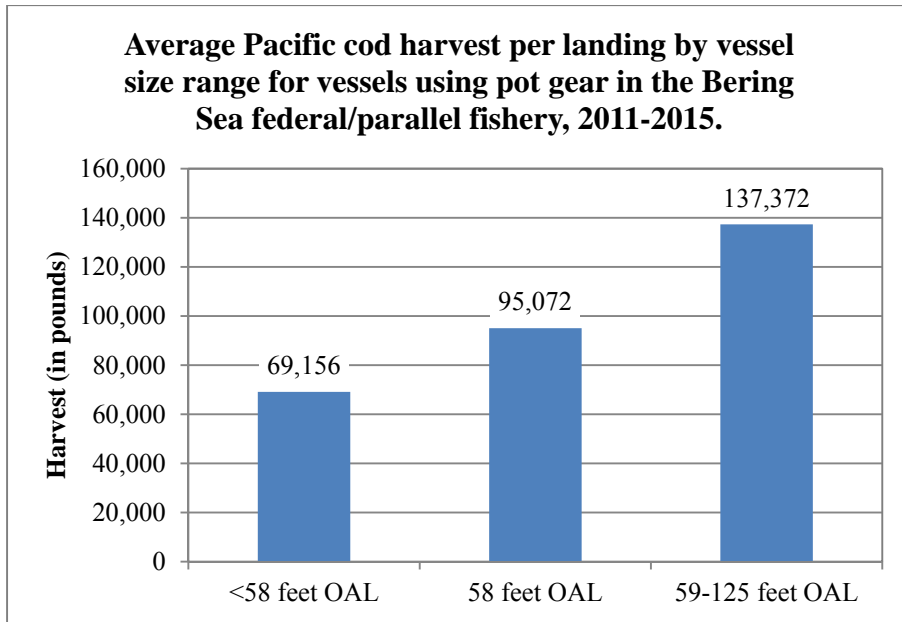


Figure 17-1.—Bering Sea federal/parallel Pacific cod average harvest (in pounds) for vessels using pot gear per landing by vessel size range, 2011–2015 (2015 season is ongoing).

Source: Department fish ticket database.

PROPOSAL 18 – 5 AAC 28.647. Aleutian Islands District Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would open the AID state-waters Pacific cod A season in all waters west of 170° W long upon closure of the federal Aleutian Islands subarea non-CDQ Pacific cod fishery and would remove subsequent season opening and closure triggers while providing flexibility to open and close the state-waters fishery to adapt to unanticipated federal/parallel season openings and closures, provide maximum opportunity, maintain sustained yield management, and provide for orderly fisheries.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery opens on January 1 in state waters between 175° W long and 178° W long to vessels 60 feet or less OAL using trawl, pot, jig, and vessels 58 feet or less using longline gear. All state waters west of 170° W long open to the state-waters fishery for pot vessels 125 feet or less OAL, trawl vessels 100 feet or less OAL, and longline and jig vessels 58 feet or less OAL, either on March 15 or upon closure of the federal BSAI catcher vessel trawl Pacific cod A season, whichever occurs first.

The AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery closes in waters west of 170° W long when the federal BSAI catcher vessel trawl B season opens on April 1, except state waters between 175° W long and 178° W long where the state-waters season is open to vessels 60 feet or less OAL for trawl, pot, and jig gear and 58 feet or less for longline gear. Upon closure of the BSAI catcher vessel trawl B season, the AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery reopens in all waters west of 170° W long to the same vessels that could participate prior to the April 1 state-waters closure.

The AID state-waters Pacific cod A season closes on June 9 and reopens to the AID state-waters Pacific cod B season on June 10 to vessels using pot, trawl, longline, and jig gear 60 feet or less OAL. On August 1, vessels using pot gear may be up to 125 feet OAL and vessels using longline, pot, and jig gear may be no more than 60 feet OAL. The AID state-waters Pacific cod B season closes on September 1, upon opening of the BSAI catcher vessel pot B season for vessels over 60 feet OAL. If the BSAI catcher vessel pot B season for vessels over 60 feet OAL closes, the AID state-waters B season reopens.

Where the state-waters fishery is closed, the parallel Pacific cod fishery is open, mirroring most federal fishery regulations. Parallel seasons are open to the vessel size and gear type open in adjacent federal waters. Harvest during a parallel season is deducted from federal TAC. Federal Pacific cod seasons in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands subareas open and close by sector for the entire BSAI area. A combined TAC for all sectors is available each year in the federal Aleutian Islands subarea and when the TAC is reached the subarea closes to directed Pacific cod non-CDQ fishing for the rest of the year.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This would clarify AID state-waters Pacific cod seasons and maximize opportunity by providing the

department flexibility to open and close the state-waters season to coordinate with fishery dynamics in the federal Aleutian Islands subarea.

BACKGROUND: The AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery was established in 2006. Season opening and closing dates have been based on the predominant participating gear type (federal sector) in each season to maximize opportunity between the state-waters fishery and federal/parallel BSAI area Pacific cod seasons. Fishery dynamics in the AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery have evolved due to changes in processor activity in Adak, federal fishery management in the Aleutian Islands, and changes in the state-waters fishery management plan. Most recently, in 2014, federal fishery management divided BSAI Pacific cod into the Bering Sea subarea and Aleutian Islands subarea and established separate ABC and TAC for each subarea. Federal allocations and seasons by vessel size and gear sector have not been separated by subarea and apply to the entire BSAI area. When a BSAI area sector's TAC is reached, that sector's season is closed to directed Pacific cod fishing in both the Bering Sea subarea and the Aleutian Islands subarea. The Aleutian Islands subarea Pacific cod non-CDQ TAC may be harvested by any vessel whose BSAI sector is open. Upon reaching the non-CDQ TAC in the Aleutian Island subarea, the federal Aleutian Islands subarea is closed to non-CDQ directed Pacific cod fishing for the remainder of the year.

The AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery management plan opens the state-waters fishery on January 1 in state waters between 175° W long and 178° W long. All waters west of 170° W long open to the state-waters fishery upon closure of the federal BSAI catcher vessel trawl A season, or March 15, whichever comes first. In 2015, the Aleutian Islands subarea closed on February 27 (Table 18-1); however, the BSAI catcher vessel trawl A season did not close. Due to the federal Aleutian Islands subarea closure on February 27, the parallel season was also closed; therefore, the department opened all state waters west of 170° W long to the state-waters season after closure of the Aleutian Islands subarea. The department did not subsequently close the AID state-waters fishery in 2015 based on federal BSAI sector season openings because the federal Aleutian Islands subarea, and therefore the parallel fishery, was already closed.

Historic gear type participation by season is provided in Table 18-2.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. In years when the Aleutian Islands subarea does not close, this proposal would provide the department flexibility to close the AID state-waters fishery if doing so would maximize fishing opportunity and provide for orderly fisheries.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 18-1.–Pacific cod season dates for the Aleutian Islands District (AID) state-waters fishery, the federal Aleutian Islands subarea (AI), and Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) sectors used in the AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery management plan.

	2014		2015	
	Open	Close	Open	Close
State-waters AID				
A season	03/15	06/09	03/03	06/09
B season	06/10	12/31	06/10	12/31
Federal BSAI				
AI subarea	01/01	03/16	01/01	02/27
BSAI CV trawl A season	01/20	04/01	01/20	04/01
BSAI CV trawl B season	04/01	06/10	04/01	06/10
BSAI CV >60ft pot B season	09/01	12/31	09/01	12/31

Table 18-2.–Aleutian Islands District state-waters Pacific cod fishery number of vessels by season and gear type, 2006–2015.

Year	Longline	Jig	Pot	Trawl	Total
A season					
2006	5	0	1	20	26
2007	0	0	7	20	27
2008	2	0	6	22	30
2009	2	1	3	16	22
2010	0	0	3	13	16
2011	0	0	1	2	3
2012	2	0	5	14	21
2013	0	0	7	5	12
2014	0	0	4	4	8
2015	0	0	0	2	0
B season					
2006	3	0	2	0	5
2007	7	1	5	0	12
2008	7	5	8	0	18
2009	4	1	0	0	5
2010	1	0	3	0	4
2011	3	0	1	0	4
2012	4	3	1	0	8
2013	1	0	0	0	1
2014	0	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0	0

PROPOSAL 19 – 5 AAC 28.647. Aleutian Islands District Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Gerry Merrigan (on behalf of the FLC - Freezer Longline Coalition).

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would remove vessel size limits for vessels using longline gear in the AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery when the federal Aleutian Islands Pacific cod fishery is closed. From August 1 to August 31 if more than 50% of the AID state-waters B season GHL remains there would be no limit on the size of a longline vessel. If the longline vessel length limit was not lifted August 1, longline vessel length will be repealed on September 1, regardless of remaining GHL.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? During the AID state-waters B season, vessels may be no more than 60 feet OAL from June 10 through July 31. Beginning August 1, vessels using pot gear may be no more than 125 feet OAL and vessels using jig, trawl, or longline gear may be no more than 60 feet OAL.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? Allowing longline vessels greater than 60 feet OAL into the AID state-waters Pacific cod B season during late summer and fall would increase harvest and probability of achievement of the state-waters GHL.

BACKGROUND: Current vessel length restrictions during the B season were implemented in 2010. The AID state-waters Pacific cod B season GHL was reached only in 2007 and 2008. B season harvest is confidential in most years so is not presented in table format. From 2009 to 2013, B season harvest averaged 0.5 million pounds, the average B season GHL was 4.4 million pounds (not including rollovers from the A season). In 2014 and 2015, no effort occurred (Table 19-1). Participation in the B season was highest in 2007 and 2008, with 13 and 18 vessels, respectively. In both 2007 and 2008, seven vessels used longline gear. In 2006, prior to vessel length restrictions, there were 5 longline vessels that were over 60 feet OAL; however, since 2006 vessels using longline gear during the B season have all been less than 60 feet OAL. Unused B season GHL does not roll back into the federal fishery.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department is **NEUTRAL** on this allocative proposal.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

Table 19-1.–Aleutian Islands District state-waters Pacific cod
B season number of vessels by gear type, 2006–2015.

Year	Longline	Jig	Pot	Trawl	Total
2006	3	0	2	0	5
2007	7	1	5	0	13
2008	7	5	8	0	18
2009	4	1	0	0	5
2010	1	0	3	0	4
2011	3	0	1	0	4
2012	4	3	1	0	8
2013	1	0	0	0	1
2014	0	0	0	0	0
2015	0	0	0	0	0

PROPOSAL 20 – 5 AAC 28.647. Aleutian Islands District Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would define waters between 175° W long and 178° W long as the Adak Section in the AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? The AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery opens January 1 in waters from 175° W long to 178° W long to vessels 60 feet or less OAL using pot, jig, and trawl gear and to vessels 58 feet or less OAL using longline gear. On March 15, or upon closure of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands parallel catcher-vessel trawl A season, whichever comes first, all waters of the AID west of 170° W long open to vessels 100 feet or less OAL using trawl gear, 58 feet or less OAL using longline or jig gear, and 125 feet or less OAL using pot gear.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This would simplify the management plan; instead of referencing a portion of the fishery by longitude, a two-word title would be applied. Defining waters from 175° W long to 178° W long as the Adak Section will help reduce confusion.

BACKGROUND: Waters of the AID Pacific cod fishery between 175° W long and 178° W long are managed separately from the remaining waters of the AID during part of the A season. Waters from 175° W long to 178° W long open before the rest of the AID. When only waters from 175° W long to 178° W long are open, vessels are subject to different size limits than when the A season is open in all waters west of 170° W long.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. This proposal would not change how the AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery is managed.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.

PROPOSAL 21 – 5 AAC 28.647. Aleutian Islands District Pacific Cod Management Plan; and 5 AAC 28.648. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSAL DO? This would update references to SSL protection measures in the AID and DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery management plans.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Federal SSL protection areas specified in Table 5 to 50 C.F.R. 679 apply in the AID and DHS state-water Pacific cod fishery management plans. The AID state-waters Pacific cod fishery management plan references 69 Federal Register 75865, December 20, 2004 and the DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery management plan references 75 Federal Register 81921, December 29 2010.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? This would provide current SSL references in the AID and DHS state-waters Pacific cod fishery management plans, which would reduce confusion without modifying closed areas.

BACKGROUND: Regulations for SSL restrictions during the AID and DHS state-waters Pacific cod fisheries are adopted by references to federal registers. In December 2014, NMFS implemented revised SSL restrictions during federal seasons that match those in place during state-waters seasons.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department submitted and **SUPPORTS** this proposal. Updating references in AID and DHS state-waters fishery management plans would clarify that federal and state-waters fishery closures are the same.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery.