Pollock Conservation Cooperative

and

High Seas Catchers' Cooperative

Joint Annual Report 2020

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Pollock Conservation Cooperative Annual Report

Introduction

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

Purpose of Report

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

Reporting Requirements

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

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

[1] The NMFS catch database for the 2020 fishing year is still subject to revision as catch data and other information from the fishery is finalized. To the extent that information in this report is based on NMFS data, it is still subject to revision. At this point, however, neither the PCC nor the HSCC are aware of any data discrepancies that would materially alter the substantive elements of this report.

Cooperative Members and Allocations

The Pollock Conservation Cooperative was formed in December 1998 in order to promote the rational and orderly harvest of pollock by the catcher-processor (CP) sector of the BSAI pollock trawl fishery. The PCC is made up of the companies that today operate 15 active CPs eligible to harvest and process pollock in the BSAI directed pollock fishery under section 208(e)(1)-(20) of the AFA. In September 2005 the PCC companies adopted an amended and restated membership agreement.

According to the PCC harvest schedule, each member is allocated a percentage of the directed fishery specified under Section 206(b) of the AFA. The percentage of the catcher-processor directed pollock fishery allocated to each PCC member by the amended membership agreement is shown below[2].

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

Inter-Cooperative Agreement Between PCC and HSCC

Under the inter-cooperative agreement, the PCC and HSCC established a joint harvest schedule and agreed to retain the same independent quota monitoring service. The inter-cooperative agreement governs the harvest and processing of the HSCC members' share of the BSAI directed pollock fishery and the transfer of pollock allocations between members of the two cooperatives. Table 1 shows PCC and HSCC pollock allocations and catch for 2020 by company and vessel, and Table 2 shows PCC pollock directed fishing catch and prohibited species bycatch (PSC) for 2020.

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

Table 1. PCC and HSCC Pollock Allocations and Catch.

2020	**Company** Vessel	Cooperative Shares (mt)			Catch (mt)		
		Harvest Schedule	Transfers	Final Allocation	Vessel Harvest	Company Total	Amount Remaining
PCC	**American Seafoods**	**215,838**	**1,841**	**217,679**		**199,249**	**18,430**
	American Dynasty				39,784		
	American Triumph				33,428		
	Northern Eagle				42,825		
	Northern Jaeger				32,343		
	Ocean Rover				50,869		
	Arctic Fjord Ltd.	**22,309**	**11,603**	**33,912**		**33,751**	**161**
	Arctic Fjord				33,751		
	Arctic Storm Ltd.	**22,922**	**6,954**	**29,876**		**27,548**	**2,328**
	Arctic Storm				27,548		
	C/P Northern Hawk Ltd.	**12,456**	**10,886**	**23,342**		**23,342**	**0**
	Northern Hawk				23,342		
	Glacier Fish Co.	**77,463**		**77,463**		**74,611**	**2,852**
	Alaska Ocean				74,611		
	Starbound Ltd.	**19,730**	**11,038**	**30,768**		**28,077**	**2,691**
	Starbound				28,077		
	Trident Seafoods	**84,958**		**84,958**		**82,081**	**2,877**
	Island Enterprise				28,439		
	Kodiak Enterprise				31,551		
	Seattle Enterprise				22,091		
HSCC	Forum Star	**8,819**	**-8,819**	**-**			
	American Chall.	**3,921**	**-3,921**	**-**			
	Ocean Harvester	**5,385**	**-5,385**	**-**			
	Neahkanie	**8,316**	**-8,316**	**-**			
	Sea Storm	**10,242**	**-10,242**	**-**			
	Muir Milach	**5,650**	**-5,650**	**-**			
Totals				**497,998**	**468,659**	**468,659**	**29,339**

Table 2. 2020 BSAI PCC Pollock Directed Fishing Catch and Bycatch.

Vessel	Pollock (mt)	Other Ground-fish (mt)	Halibut Mortality (mt)	Herring (mt)	Red King Crab (N)	*Bairdi* Crab (N)	*Opilio* Crab (N)	Chinook Salmon A (N)	Chinook Salmon B (N)	Other Salmon A (N)	Other Salmon B (N)
Alaska Ocean	74,611	1,167	7	145	0	8	93	853	922	18	6,990
American Dynasty	39,784	960	9	63	0	24	177	710	471	37	6,618
American Triumph	33,428	799	6	171	0	3	142	509	115	28	1,835
Arctic Fjord	33,751	697	3	209	0	3	51	481	244	38	5,864
Arctic Storm	27,548	674	5	291	0	0	18	365	366	23	2,163
Island Enterprise	28,439	665	3	9	0	89	221	440	202	3	8,580
Kodiak Enterprise	31,551	696	3	27	0	7	230	396	481	4	20,331
Northern Eagle	42,825	991	1	126	0	71	158	736	372	39	6,725
Northern Hawk	23,342	388	1	15	0	8	99	136	45	5	1,400
Northern Jaeger	32,343	910	2	148	3	214	12	782	62	45	3,419
Ocean Rover	50,869	1,993	10	258	0	54	115	839	694	24	7,700
Seattle Enterprise	22,091	327	1	29	0	0	9	421	80	4	3,501
Starbound	28,077	487	5	19	0	3	25	570	97	13	1,992
Totals*	**468,659**	**10,753**	**56**	**1,511**	**3**	**484**	**1,350**	**7,238**	**4,151**	**281**	**77,118**
Catch Rate (species catch/total groundfish)		0.0224	0.0001	0.0032	0.0000	0.0010	0.0028	0.0151	0.0087	0.0006	0.1609

*Of the 479,412 tons of total groundfish catch (pollock and other non-pollock groundfish), 4,167 tons were discarded. Thus, over 99.1 percent of all groundfish harvested by PCC vessels in the directed-pollock fishery was retained and used to make a marketable product.

Yellowfin Sole, Atka Mackerel, and Pacific Cod Fisheries

Two PCC vessels participated in the directed fishery for BSAI yellowfin sole in 2020. Groundfish catch and PSC bycatch for PCC yellowfin sole directed fishing is shown in Table 3. Catch rates are provided to assess target catch and PSC bycatch per ton of total groundfish catch. For example, in 2020, average halibut mortality was 2.6 kilograms per ton of groundfish in the yellowfin sole directed fishery, and yellowfin sole catches were on average about 52 percent of the total groundfish catch. To interpret catch rates of PSC collected as number of individuals (N): In 2020, 1.7 *Opilio* crabs were caught for every ton of groundfish catch in the yellowfin sole directed fishery. Table 4 shows similar information for the catch of the F/T Northern Glacier in the 2020 Central Aleutian Islands Atka mackerel fishery and the catch of the F/T Katie Ann in the 2020 directed Pacific cod fishery.

Halibut Bycatch Reduction Efforts in the BSAI Trawl Limited Access Sector Yellowfin Sole Fishery

In 2017, the Council requested that participants in the BSAI Trawl Limited Access Sector (TLAS) Yellowfin Sole directed fishery should include information about measures taken to reduce halibut bycatch in the TLAS yellowfin sole fishery in their respective cooperative reports. While the TLAS YFS fishery did not have a comprehensive bycatch reduction plan that applied to all participants in the fishery, the AFA CP participants were subject to a fishing plan which allocates halibut mortality pro-rata to participants based on historical participation in the fishery. In addition, GOAL and WARNING level bycatch performance is reported by vessel to the fleet and fleet managers on a bi-weekly basis throughout the course of the season. The WARNING level is consistent with the fishery exceeding its annual PSC allocation. Additionally, bycatch reports keep the vessels and vessel managers apprised of their bycatch performance relative to the other participants in the BSAI TLAS YFS fishery. For example, in 2020, the AFA CP fleet took a total of 5,590 tons of yellowfin sole and accounted for just 28.49 tons of halibut mortality. This is a bycatch rate of 5.10 kg of halibut mortality per ton of YFS catch. The total catch in 2020, was 17,187 tons of YFS and 123.8 tons of halibut mortality. The CV participants in the fishery therefore had a bycatch rate of 8.22 kg of halibut mortality per ton of YFS catch. This rate was significantly higher than the rate of the AFA CP fleet.

Table 3 . PCC Yellowfin Sole Directed Fishing Catch and Bycatch

Vessel	Yellowfin Sole (mt)	Total Groundfish (mt)	Halibut Mortality (mt)	Herring (mt)	Red King Crab (N)	*Bairdi* Crab (N)	*Opilio* Crab (N)	Chinook Salmon (N)	Other Salmon (N)
Katie Ann	2,516	4,780	12	0	714	5,892	13,000	0	0
Northern Glacier	3,074	5,887	16	2	215	6,112	5,017	0	0
2020 Totals	**5,590**	**10,667**	**28.49**	**2.04**	**929**	**12,004**	**18,017**	**0**	**0**
Catch Rate	0.524	1.000	0.003	0.000	0.087	1.125	1.689	0.000	0.000

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

Vessel	Atka Mackerel CAI (mt)	Total Groundfish (mt)	Halibut Mortality (mt)	Herring (mt)	Red King Crab (N)	*Bairdi* Crab (N)	*Opilio* Crab (N)	Chinook Salmon (N)	Other Salmon (N)
Northern Glacier	443	523	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020 Totals	**443**	**523**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Catch Rate	0.847	1.000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vessel	**Pacific Cod (mt)**	**Total Groundfish (mt)**	**Halibut Mortality (mt)**	**Herring (mt)**	**Red King Crab (N)**	***Bairdi* Crab (N)**	***Opilio* Crab (N)**	**Chinook Salmon (N)**	**Other Salmon (N)**
Katie Ann	300	310	3	0	0	0	23	5	0
2020 Totals	**300**	**310**	**3**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**23**	**5**	**0**
Catch Rate	0.968	1.000	0.010	0	0	0	0.074	0.016	0

Listed AFA Catcher/Processor Sideboard Limits

PCC vessels are all listed AFA Catcher Processors. The 2020 AFA C/P sideboard limits and catches of PSC species are shown in Table 5. The PSC limits cap bycatch of these species in the non-pollock fisheries, therefore the PSC bycatch amounts in Table 5 reflect total PCC bycatch of PSC species in the TLAS directed yellowfin sole, Atka mackerel, and Pacific cod fisheries only. On February 8, 2019, NMFS published a final rule (84 FR 2723) that implemented regulations to prohibit non-exempt AFA C/Ps from directed fishing for groundfish species or species groups subject to sideboard limits, therefore catches and sideboard limits for those species are no longer reported here.

Table 6 shows PCC catches of all groundfish and PSC species by vessel from the pollock, yellowfin sole, Atka mackerel, and Pacific cod fisheries combined. Note the difference between the pollock catch given in Table 1 and that in Table 6 is because Table 6 includes all groundfish and PSC catches from PCC vessels, including incidental pollock catch in the yellowfin sole, Atka mackerel, and Pacific cod fisheries, while Table 1 includes only directed pollock fishing catch.

Table 5 . PSC Species Sideboard Limits and PCC Catch.

Prohibited Species	2020 Catch	2020 Limit	Over (Under) Limit
Halibut mortality - BSAI (mt)	34	286	(252)
Red king crab - Zone 1 (N)	500	606	(106)
C. opilio crab - COBLZ (N)	17,933	1,172,400	(1,154,467)
C. bairdi crab - Zone 1 (N)	779	122,520	(121,741)
C. bairdi crab - Zone 2 (N)	11,666	132,611	(120,945)

Table 6 . All 2020 PCC Catches by Vessel.

Vessel	Pollock (mt)	Atka Mac-kerel (mt)	Yellowfin Sole (mt)	Pacific Cod (mt)	Sablefish (mt)	Alaska Plaice (mt)	Arrowtooth Flounder (mt)	Flathead Sole (mt)
Alaska Ocean	74,611	2.2	37	378	3.06	0	16	99
American Dynasty	39,784	0.0	10	321	2.25	1	14	92
American Triumph	33,428	0.0	80	320	0.37	1	11	86
Arctic Fjord	33,751	0.3	88	189	5.47	0	7	59
Arctic Storm	27,548	0.8	67	135	1.88	0	4	44
Island Enterprise	28,439	0.2	1	288	0.58	0	5	39
Katie Ann	696	0.0	2,773	755	0.01	828	1	55
Kodiak Enterprise	31,551	4.3	1	127	1.12	0	9	62
Northern Eagle	42,825	0.0	62	157	0.87	0	4	38
Northern Glacier	1,085	442.9	3,074	370	0.02	841	0	49
Northern Hawk	23,342	2.9	90	110	0.25	0	4	28
Northern Jaeger	32,343	1.0	40	224	0.72	0	6	36
Ocean Rover	50,869	0.2	90	499	11.67	1	23	107
Seattle Enterprise	22,091	0.7	0	159	0.91	0	4	30
Starbound	28,077	0.1	88	178	1.59	1	5	46
TOTAL	**470,440**	**456**	**6,503**	**4,209**	**31**	**1,673**	**111**	**869**

Table 6 continued

Vessel	Green-land Turbot (mt)	Kam-chatka Flounder (mt)	Rock Sole (mt)	Other Flat-fishes (mt)	Northern Rockfish (mt)	Rougheye Rockfish (mt)	Short-raker Rockfish (mt)	Pacific Ocean Perch (mt)
Alaska Ocean	4.1	5	69	12	7	0.1	0.6	254
American Dynasty	2.5	3	29	10	5	0.1	0.5	193
American Triumph	1.8	2	65	5	0	0.0	0.0	14
Arctic Fjord	0.3	0	15	4	2	0.0	0.3	289
Arctic Storm	1.1	1	32	5	4	0.0	0.9	297
Island Enterprise	0.6	2	18	7	5	0.0	1.9	224
Katie Ann	0.3	0	502	46	0	0.0	0.0	0
Kodiak Enterprise	1.2	4	19	15	16	0.1	0.0	265
Northern Eagle	1.4	1	15	5	0	0.3	3.1	161
Northern Glacier	0.0	0	411	34	17	0.0	0.0	2
Northern Hawk	0.6	1	21	2	2	0.0	0.0	106
Northern Jaeger	0.6	1	34	3	6	0.2	6.7	519
Ocean Rover	2.7	6	39	35	18	1.7	11.5	717
Seattle Enterprise	0.3	1	13	4	1	0.1	0.0	87
Starbound	0.9	1	27	5	3	0.0	0.1	55
TOTAL	**18.5**	**29**	**1,309**	**190**	**86**	**2.6**	**25.6**	**3,183**

Table 6 continued

Vessel	Other Rockfishes (mt)	All sculpins (mt)	All sharks (mt)	All skates (mt)	All octopi (mt)	All squids (mt)
Alaska Ocean	0.0	5	6	57	0.1	212.4
American Dynasty	0.0	3	7	43	0.0	223.0
American Triumph	0.0	5	3	43	0.0	163.1
Arctic Fjord	0.0	2	3	27	0.1	5.8
Arctic Storm	0.0	3	2	20	0.1	53.2
Island Enterprise	0.0	1	2	28	0.1	41.9
Katie Ann	0.0	42	0	50	0.0	0.0
Kodiak Enterprise	0.0	2	3	15	0.0	149.7
Northern Eagle	0.0	1	4	8	0.0	529.4
Northern Glacier	5.7	43	0	35	0.0	0.0
Northern Hawk	0.0	2	2	15	0.1	1.1
Northern Jaeger	0.0	2	4	17	0.0	10.9
Ocean Rover	0.0	8	5	55	0.2	360.0
Seattle Enterprise	0.0	1	3	11	0.1	9.0
Starbound	0.0	1	2	24	0.0	48.7
TOTAL	**5.7**	**121**	**46**	**447**	**0.7**	**1,808**

Table 6 continued

Vessel	Halibut Mor-tality (mt)	Pacific Herring (mt)	Red King Crab (N)	Tanner Crab, *Bairdi* (N)	Snow Crab, *Opilio* (N)	Chinook Salmon (N)	Other Salmon (N)
Alaska Ocean	7	144.8	0	8	93	1,775	7,008
American Dynasty	9	63.4	0	24	177	1,181	6,663
American Triumph	6	170.5	0	3	142	624	1,864
Arctic Fjord	3	209.3	0	3	51	725	5,904
Arctic Storm	5	290.9	0	0	18	731	2,187
Island Enterprise	3	9.2	0	89	221	642	8,588
Katie Ann	17	0.2	1,110	6,333	13,100	5	0
Kodiak Enterprise	3	27.4	0	7	230	877	20,338
Northern Eagle	1	125.9	0	71	158	1,108	6,765
Northern Glacier	16	1.9	215	6,112	5,017	0	0
Northern Hawk	1	15.1	0	8	99	181	1,408
Northern Jaeger	2	148.0	3	214	12	844	3,467
Ocean Rover	10	257.9	0	54	115	1,533	7,728
Seattle Enterprise	1	29.3	0	0	9	501	3,506
Starbound	5	19.1	0	3	25	667	2,005
TOTAL	**89**	**1,513**	**1,328**	**12,929**	**19,467**	**11,394**	**77,431**

Pollock Fishery Discards

Groundfish bycatch amounts and total amounts of other (non-pollock) groundfish[3] in the pollock target fishery are reported in Table 2 by vessel. These groundfish bycatch amounts include catches of all of the species groups listed on the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands "TAC sheet"-note that squid and sculpins are still accounted for as an FMP managed species in this report. In contrast to groundfish bycatch, groundfish discards include all groundfish catches, including pollock, from which no edible, saleable product was produced. An estimate of the total groundfish discard amount is provided as a footnote to Table 2. Table 7 provides additional pollock-fishery bycatch and discards detail, including in particular the bycatch and discard of forage and non-specified species. These discard estimates are made by the North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program. The non-specified category includes species that occur infrequently in the BSAI, or have little or no economic value, and so are neither targeted by the commercial fisheries nor managed by the National Marine Fisheries Service. In 2020, jellyfish accounted for 85.7 percent of the non-specified species bycatch in the pollock fishery. Table 8 shows the estimated pollock discards by vessel in the pollock fishery for 2020.

Table 7 . PCC Pollock Fishery Discards.

Species Category	2020 Discard Amount (mt)
Pollock	149
Other Roundfish	1,987
Flatfish	432
Skates	195
Squid and Octopi	1,360
Sharks	45
Total Groundfish	**4,167**
Forage	0
Non-specified	616
Total discards*	**4,783**

Year	Groundfish Bycatch Ratio (mt/mt)**	Groundfish Discard Ratio (mt/mt)***
2008	0.025	0.008
2009	0.040	0.010
2010	0.030	0.009
2011	0.038	0.010
2012	0.034	0.014
2013	0.031	0.007
2014	0.020	0.006
2015	0.018	0.005
2016	0.017	0.004
2017	0.018	0.006
2018	0.012	0.004
2019	0.023	0.008
2020	**0.022**	**0.009**

*Does not include the prohibited species amounts listed in Table 2 or seabird bycatch (reported in numbers). By regulation, all prohibited crab species, halibut, and herring must be discarded, while salmon may be discarded or donated to food banks.
**Groundfish bycatch ratio is groundfish bycatch divided by total groundfish catch.
***Groundfish discard ratio is groundfish discards divided by total groundfish catch.

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

Table 8 . Pollock Discards by Vessel.

Vessel	Amount (mt)
Alaska Ocean	1
American Dynasty	0
American Triumph	0
Arctic Fjord	0
Arctic Storm	0
Island Enterprise	0
Kodiak Enterprise	0
Northern Eagle	0
Northern Hawk	0
Northern Jaeger	101
Ocean Rover	0
Seattle Enterprise	0
Starbound	47
2020 Total	**149**

Pollock Landed Outside of Alaska

No pollock was landed outside the state of Alaska in 2020.

Chinook and Chum Salmon Bycatch Avoidance

Chinook

Amendment 91 to the BSAI FMP limits Chinook salmon bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery. Regulations implementing the Amendment 91 program came into force in 2011. The program is an innovative approach to managing Chinook salmon bycatch that combines overall, sector-specific limits on the amount of Chinook salmon bycatch with a voluntary incentive plan agreement (IPA) and performance standard requirement designed to minimize Chinook bycatch by each individual vessel. These vessel-level incentives are created through contracts among the IPA participants. Amendment 110 to the BSAI FMP further specifies incentive plan components as well as reduces the Chinook salmon bycatch limits in the Bering Sea pollock fishery in years when a 3-river run index of Western Alaskan Chinook is determined to be low abundance. Regulations implementing the Amendment 110 program came into force in 2017.

The PCC member companies participate in a *Chinook and Chum Salmon Bycatch Reduction Incentive Plan and Agreement*. The agreement was first implemented in 2011, revised in 2017, and is designed to provide the incentives necessary to accomplish the goals and objectives of Amendment 91 and 110. The plan builds on experience gained in the development and refinement of time-and-area-based salmon "hot-spot" (bycatch avoidance-area) programs. The plan creates incentives to avoid Chinook bycatch by restricting the pollock fishing opportunities of vessels with poor bycatch performance while allowing vessels with good bycatch performance less restricted access to fishing grounds. Losing access to good fishing grounds increases

vessel operating costs and reduces product values; avoiding these costs and producing more high-value products increases vessel profitability.

The plan is designed to work in concert with the annual Chinook bycatch limits specified in Amendment 91 and 110. Primary plan components include: (1) data gathering, monitoring, reporting, and information sharing; (2) identification of bycatch avoidance areas; and (3) pollock fishing prohibitions for vessels with poor bycatch performance. The plan also includes an A-season closure area (Chinook Salmon Conservation Area). This 735 square-mile area is on the northwestern flank of the Bering Canyon, and remains closed to pollock fishing for the entire A-season. An analysis of A-season data from 1995-2007 showed that in some years nearly 20 percent of the Chinook salmon bycatch occurred in this area along with only 2-3 percent of the pollock catch.

Chum

Prior to 2017, all BSAI pollock cooperatives participated in an inter-cooperative chum salmon bycatch avoidance (hot-spot closure) program. The PCC first began participating in this program in 2001, and since then has worked to improve the program. The program became a regulated component of the Bering Sea pollock fishery in 2006 (Amendment 84 to the BSAI Fishery Management Plan). As with the Chinook bycatch management program, the chum bycatch avoidance program was implemented via contracts among the program participants.

However, Amendment 110 to the BSAI FMP, required pollock fishery participants who conduct fishing operations under incentive plan agreements to include measures for avoiding chum salmon as well as Chinook salmon. Since Amendment 110 regulations superseded those of Amendment 84, the inter-cooperative agreement and contracts were annulled and along with it the cooperative rolling hot spot program as well as the "Dirty 20 List". The PCC amended its Incentive Plan Agreement to include new measures that reduce chum salmon bycatch during the B-season at all levels of pollock and chum salmon abundance. The incentive measures created to reduce chum salmon bycatch utilize the same time-and-area-based salmon "hot-spot" (bycatch avoidance-area) program along with the same plan components described above for Chinook salmon. Details of the revised IPA agreement and incentive measure performance results are provided in the CP IPA report available from the NPFMC.

Monitoring and Enforcement

All data used in monitoring pollock and non-pollock fishing activities was obtained from the North Pacific Groundfish Observer Program. Aboard each vessel, the catch is weighed using motion-compensated flow scales. The species composition of the catch is determined from observer sampling. Since two observers are required on AFA catcher-processors, the number of unsampled hauls is very low. In 2020, virtually 100 percent of pollock hauls were sampled. For the rare hauls that were not sampled, species composition data from the next nearest haul (in time and area) within the same vessel and gear type is applied to the unsampled catch. Priority in this imputation process is given to a sampled haul that occurs on the same day, but prior to the non-sampled haul.

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

Companies with several vessels often set initial vessel allocations, and then manage vessel harvests independently until late in the season. Typically, inter- and intra-company transfers of pollock occur near the end of the season to promote quota usage. No enforcement actions were taken by the PCC against any members during 2020.

High Seas Catchers' Cooperative Annual Report

Introduction

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

Cooperative Members and Allocations

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

Allocations of pollock to members of HSCC were established within the HSCC membership agreement, as well as within the Cooperative Agreement with the PCC. Allocations of the BSAI Pacific cod sideboard amounts available for 2020 in the "Intercoop BSAI Cod Sideboard Allocation Agreement" were made by the HSCC Board of Directors through a roll over of the "Consent of Directors" document included as an appendix to the HSCC 2000 Annual Report. Other sideboard species were allocated by action of the HSCC Board of Directors. Prior to participation in any sideboard fishery, members were required to provide notice to the HSCC Executive Director, and-or the Manager of the Catcher Vessel Inter-Cooperative Agreement (CVICA). There is additional information about the flow of information between the vessels, the HSCC, SeaState, the CVICA Manager, and NMFS in the Catcher Vessel Inter-Cooperative Agreement (available from the NPFMC).

The 2020 distribution in metric tons to the HSCC vessels based on 206(b)(2) allocation of the directed pollock fishery to catcher-processors and catcher vessels, including releases from the pollock incidental catch allowance and rollovers from the Aleutian Islands fishery, is as follows:

Vessel	**Allocation (mt)**
Forum Star	**8,819**
American Challenger	**3,921**
Ocean Harvester	**5,385**
Neahkahnie	**8,316**
Sea Storm	**10,242**
Muir Milach	**5,650**
Total	**42,332**

Inter-Cooperative Agreement Between HSCC and PCC

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

Catcher Vessel Inter-Cooperative Agreement

HSCC is also a party to the Catcher Vessel Inter-Cooperative Agreement (CVICA) for purposes of groundfish sideboard harvest management. Compliance with both agreements is based upon monitoring of catch and bycatch by SeaState, Inc. Information concerning CVICA allocations and rules as well as inter-cooperative transfer arrangements is contained in an annual report submitted to the NPFMC by the CVICA Manager. Among other things, the CVICA contains specific provisions on management of halibut prohibited-species catches (PSC) in the BSAI Pacific cod fishery, in which some HSCC vessels participate (see below). Prohibited species bycatch (PSC) by HSCC vessels is provided in Table 9.

Bering Sea Pollock Transfers and Directed Pollock Fishing

Based upon the January 1999 "Cooperative Agreement Between Offshore Pollock Catchers' Cooperative and Pollock Conservation Cooperative," individual members of HSCC have made transfers of pollock to individual members of PCC. These transfers are reported in Table 1 while no directed catch of Bering Sea pollock by HSCC vessels occurred in 2020.

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Shellfish Fisheries

The BSAI crab rationalization program was implemented in August 2005. As part of that program, the AFA crab sideboard limits were eliminated. The HSCC vessel Forum Star leased all of its scallop catch history and so did not catch any scallops in 2020.

AFA Sideboard Limits

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

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Sideboard Fisheries

Three non-sideboard-exempt vessels participated in the Pacific cod fishery in 2020 and caught 904 metric tons of cod. Table 9 shows target, bycatch, and prohibited species catch by vessel for this fishery. Catch rates are provided to assess target catch and PSC use. Total groundfish catch by species is shown in Table 10, trace amounts of groundfish catches less than 0.1 metric ton have been omitted.

Table 9 . HSCC BSAI Directed Pacific Cod Catch and Bycatch by Vessel.

Vessel	Total Groundfish (mt)	Cod (mt)	Halibut mortality (mt)	King crab (N)	*Bairdi* (N)	*Opilio* (N)	Herring (mt)	Chinook (N)	Other salmon (N)
Muir Milach	148	146	1.74	3	12	16	0	1	0
Ocean Harvester	423	418	0.40	0	0	0	0	24	0
Sea Storm	347	340	2.51	7	28	39	0	3	0
2020 Totals	**918**	**904**	**5**	**10**	**40**	**55**	**0**	**28**	**0**
Catch Rate	1.000	0.985	0.005	0.011	0.044	0.060	0.000	0.031	0.000

Table 10. HSCC Catch of BSAI Groundfish.

Species	Catch (mt)
Pacific Cod	904
Pollock BSAI	2
Arrowtooth Flounder	1
Flathead Sole	1
Yellowfin Sole	1
Other Flatfish	1
Sculpins	2
Skates	6
2020 Total	**918**

Gulf of Alaska Sideboard Fisheries

No HSCC vessels participated in Gulf of Alaska sideboard fisheries in 2020.

Monitoring and Enforcement

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

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

Penalty Structures within the HSCC and Between Cooperatives

The Cooperative Agreement between HSCC and PCC provides for inter-cooperative enforcement of penalties in the event of over-harvest of pollock. The CVICA also contains penalty provisions for over-harvest of sideboard species. HSCC members took no enforcement actions in either its pollock or sideboard fisheries in 2020; members complied with the provisions of the membership agreement.