Pollock Conservation Cooperative (PCC)
High Seas Catchers' Cooperative (HSCC)

Annual Report 2024

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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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) and sourced via the Fisheries Monitoring and Analysis Division 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 U.S. 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 2024 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

A. 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 14 active CPs eligible to harvest and process pollock in the BSAI directed pollock fishery under section 208(e)(1)-(20) of the AFA. The Members and the Cooperative are parties to a First Amended and Restated Membership Agreement dated September 22, 2005, as amended by an Amendment thereto dated May 29, 2008, a Second Amendment dated August 13, 2008, a Third Amendment dated May 7, 2010, and a Fourth Amendment dated January 9, 2012 (as amended, the "Membership Agreement"). In December 2021, the PCC companies adopted a 5th PCC amendment through the transfer of the Starbound and all its rights and obligations to Trident Seafoods.

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
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.	8.409	22.97
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 2024 by company and vessel, and Table 2 shows PCC pollock directed fishing catch and prohibited species bycatch (PSC) for 2024.

[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.

2024	**Company** Vessel	Cooperative Shares (mt)			Catch (mt)		
		Harvest Schedule	Transfers	Final Allocation	Vessel Harvest	Company Total	Amount Remaining
PCC	**American Seafoods**	**195,696**	**1,394**	**197,090**		**197,047**	**43**
	American Dynasty				36,874		
	American Triumph				39,422		
	Northern Eagle				40,452		
	Northern Jaeger				38,963		
	Ocean Rover				41,336		
	Arctic Fjord Ltd.	**20,227**	**14,720**	**34,947**		**34,918**	**29**
	Arctic Fjord				34,918		
	Arctic Storm Ltd.	**20,783**	**2,458**	**23,241**		**23,241**	**0**
	Arctic Storm				23,241		
	C/P Northern Hawk Ltd.	**11,294**	**10,183**	**21,477**		**21,477**	**0**
	Northern Hawk				21,477		
	Glacier Fish Co.	**70,238**	**-310**	**69,928**		**69,912**	**16**
	Alaska Ocean				69,912		
	Trident Seafoods	**94,925**	**10,031**	**104,956**		**104,876**	**80**
	Island Enterprise				40,464		
	Seattle Enterprise				15,187		
	Starbound				49,040		
HSCC	Forum Star	**11,579**	**-11,579**	**-**			
	Neahkanie	**7,558**	**-7,558**	**-**			
	Sea Storm	**9,309**	**-9,309**	**-**			
	Muir Milach	**10,030**	**-10,030**	**-**			
Totals				**451,639**	**451,471**	**451,471**	**168**

Table 2. 2024 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	69,912	243	1	0	0	61	0	238	20	2	479
American Dynasty	36,874	315	4	106	0	37	0	266	57	59	891
American Triumph	39,422	94	0	2	0	0	0	189	39	179	588
Arctic Fjord	34,918	165	0	24	0	6	0	124	52	3	547
Arctic Storm	23,241	91	0	8	0	37	5	276	1	7	38
Island Enterprise	40,464	125	1	26	3	33	7	137	63	3	768
Northern Eagle	40,452	166	0	1	0	0	0	305	61	176	281
Northern Hawk	21,477	87	0	0	0	4	8	67	4	2	52
Northern Jaeger	38,963	181	1	1	0	38	9	223	21	107	1,201
Ocean Rover	41,336	365	1	11	0	6	0	257	153	75	634
Seattle Enterprise	15,187	220	2	1	0	7	0	152		5	
Starbound	49,225	210	1	6	0	42	25	157	30	5	1,064
Totals*	**451,470**	**2,262**	**12**	**186**	**3**	**271**	**54**	**2,391**	**501**	**623**	**6,543**
Catch Rate (species catch/total groundfish)		0.0050	0.0000	0.0004	0.0000	0.0006	0.0001	0.0053	0.0011	0.0014	0.0144

*Of the 453,732 tons of total groundfish catch (pollock and other non-pollock groundfish), 1,083 tons were discarded. Thus, over 99.8 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

Only the Northern Glacier participated in the directed fishery for BSAI trawl limited access (TLAS) yellowfin sole and the TLAS Central Aleutian Islands Atka mackerel fishery in 2024. 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 2024, average halibut mortality was 12 kilograms per ton of groundfish in the yellowfin sole directed fishery, and yellowfin sole catches were on average about 66 percent of the total groundfish catch. To interpret catch rates of PSC collected as number of individuals (N): In 2024, 0.3 *Opilio* crabs were caught for every ton of groundfish catch in the yellowfin sole directed fishery. Only the Katie Ann participated in directed fishing for Pacific cod by AFA CPs during all of 2024. Table 4 shows similar information for the sideboard catches of the Katie Ann and Northern Glacier in Pacific cod and Atka Mackerel TLAS fisheries respectively.

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 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. In 2024, the AFA CP fleet had minimal participation in the TLAS YFS fishery and subsequently accounted for the lowest halibut mortality of the last decade although bycatch rates were higher than the last few years due to the timing of effort in the fishery and balancing CDQ allocations.

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)
Northern Glacier	1,345	2,040	24.62	0	331	3,546	543	0	0
2024 Totals	**1,345**	**2,040**	**24.62**	**0**	**331**	**3,546**	**543**	**0**	**0**
Catch Rate	0.659	1.000	0.012	0.000	0.162	1.738	0.266	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	488	544	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2024 Totals	**488**	**544**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Catch Rate	0.897	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	286	348	2.3	0	0	312	0	89	0
2024 Totals	**286**	**348**	**2.3**	**0**	**0**	**312**	**0**	**89**	**0**
Catch Rate	0.822	1.000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Listed AFA Catcher-Processor Sideboard Limits

PCC vessels are all listed AFA catcher-processors. The 2024 AFA CP 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 CPs 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	2024 Catch	2024 Limit	Over (Under) Limit
Halibut mortality - BSAI (mt)	28	286	(258)
Red king crab - Zone 1 (N)	99	606	(507)
C. opilio crab - COBLZ (N)	543	594,336	(506,245)
C. bairdi crab - Zone 1 (N)	1,054	122,520	(121,466)
C. bairdi crab - Zone 2 (N)	2,904	132,611	(129,707)

Table 6 . All 2024 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	69,912	0.8	1	115	0.01	0	2	41
American Dynasty	36,874	0.0	36	70	0.01	1	2	98
American Triumph	39,422	0.1	0	21	0.01	0	1	42
Arctic Fjord	34,918	0.3	2	52	0.00	0	1	24
Arctic Storm	23,241	0.0	1	39	0.00	0	1	22
Island Enterprise	40,464	0.1	0	51	0.04	0	1	21
Katie Ann	12	0.0	1	287	0.00	2	5	4
Northern Eagle	40,452	0.0	1	25	0.00	0	1	17
Northern Glacier	237	487.6	1,383	145	0.00	73	68	95
Northern Hawk	21,477	0.0	0	45	0.00	0	0	12
Northern Jaeger	38,963	0.1	0	34	0.13	0	2	23
Ocean Rover	41,336	0.2	11	47	0.14	0	2	25
Seattle Enterprise	15,187	0.0	6	108	0.00	0	1	20
Starbound	49,225	0.1	1	78	0.02	0	2	35
TOTAL	**451,719**	**489**	**1,443**	**1,118**	**0**	**76**	**90**	**479**

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	0.0	0	58	2	0	0.0	0.0	1
American Dynasty	0.2	0	29	1	1	0.0	0.0	53
American Triumph	0.1	0	5	1	1	0.0	0.0	16
Arctic Fjord	0.0	0	8	1	1	0.0	0.0	62
Arctic Storm	0.0	0	15	1	0	0.0	0.0	1
Island Enterprise	0.0	0	22	1	1	0.0	0.0	16
Katie Ann	0.0	0	14	8	0	0.0	0.0	0
Northern Eagle	0.2	0	4	1	0	0.0	0.0	109
Northern Glacier	0.0	3	85	0	23	0.0	0.0	9
Northern Hawk	0.0	0	20	1	0	0.0	0.0	1
Northern Jaeger	0.0	0	3	2	1	0.0	0.0	107
Ocean Rover	0.3	0	4	2	2	0.0	0.1	259
Seattle Enterprise	0.0	0	37	1	0	0.0	0.0	33
Starbound	0.0	0	38	2	1	0.0	0.0	30
TOTAL	**1**	**5**	**343**	**23**	**33**	**0**	**0**	**696**

Table 6 continued

Vessel	Other Rockfishes (mt)	All sharks (mt)	All skates (mt)	All octopi (mt)	All squids (mt)
Alaska Ocean	0.0	5	16	0.0	5.3
American Dynasty	0.2	3	19	0.1	33.2
American Triumph	1.1	4	2	0.0	11.6
Arctic Fjord	0.0	3	11	0.1	8.9
Arctic Storm	0.1	3	7	0.1	2.3
Island Enterprise	0.1	2	10	0.0	30.8
Katie Ann	0.0	0	16	0.0	0.0
Northern Eagle	1.8	3	3	0.0	87.8
Northern Glacier	1.5	0	25	0.0	0.0
Northern Hawk	0.0	1	5	0.0	5.7
Northern Jaeger	1.2	1	7	0.0	3.9
Ocean Rover	1.1	3	8	0.0	36.8
Seattle Enterprise	0.0	0	14	0.0	0.0
Starbound	0.1	4	18	0.0	32.9
TOTAL	**7**	**31**	**161**	**0**	**259**

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	1	0.4	0	61	0	258	482
American Dynasty	4	106.2	0	37	0	323	951
American Triumph	0	1.8	0	0	0	228	768
Arctic Fjord	0	24.3	0	6	0	176	556
Arctic Storm	0	7.8	0	37	5	277	45
Island Enterprise	1	26.1	3	33	7	200	778
Katie Ann	2	0.0	0	412	0	89	0
Northern Eagle	0	0.6	0	0	0	366	458
Northern Glacier	26	0.0	331	3,546	543	0	0
Northern Hawk	0	0.2	0	4	8	71	54
Northern Jaeger	1	0.7	0	38	9	244	1,309
Ocean Rover	1	10.6	0	6	0	410	711
Seattle Enterprise	2	0.7	0	7	0	152	5
Starbound	1	6.3	0	42	25	187	1,077
TOTAL	**40**	**186**	**334**	**4,229**	**597**	**2,981**	**7,194**

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"(both squid and sculpins are no longer 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 discard details, 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 2024, jellyfish accounted for 84 percent and squid 14 percent of the non-specified species bycatch in the pollock fishery.

Table 7 . PCC Pollock Fishery Discards.

Species Category	2024 Discard Amount (mt)
Pollock	794
Other Roundfish	98
Flatfish	82
Skates	78
Octopi	0
Sharks	30
Total Groundfish	**1,083**
Forage	0
Non-specified	1,648
Total discards*	**2,731**

Year	Groundfish Bycatch Ratio (mt/mt)**	Groundfish Discard Ratio (mt/mt)***
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
2021	0.018	0.006
2022	0.011	0.003
2023	0.005	0.001
2024	**0.005**	**0.002**

*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 shows the estimated pollock discards by vessel in the pollock fishery for 2024. It should be noted that estimates of pollock discards in 2024 were higher than in most previous years, and this can be attributed to observer effects in estimating a simple visual estimate to a round number percent value. Most observers estimate that pollock is 100 percent retained, while on some vessels 99 percent is estimated, resulting in a season long discard amount that is significantly higher than the majority of vessels.

Table 8 . Pollock Discards by Vessel.

Vessel	Amount (mt)
Alaska Ocean	0
American Dynasty	0
American Triumph	212
Arctic Fjord	0
Arctic Storm	0
Island Enterprise	1
Northern Eagle	0
Northern Hawk	0
Northern Jaeger	0
Ocean Rover	295
Seattle Enterprise	0
Starbound	286
2024 Total	**794**

Pollock Landed Outside of Alaska

No pollock was landed outside the state of Alaska in 2024.

Chinook and Chum Salmon Bycatch Avoidance

Total catch of Chinook salmon by the AFA CP pollock sector in 2024 was just 2,892 fish, which equates to a bycatch performance of 156 tons of pollock catch per Chinook salmon. The total catch of chum salmon by the fleet was 7,166 fish, which equates to a bycatch performance of 63 tons of pollock catch per chum salmon. Preliminary estimates of chum salmon genetics taken in the 2024 B season pollock fishery, indicated that the CP sector had just 4% combined WAK chum salmon bycatch. When applied to the B season bycatch, this equates to just 262 WAK chum salmon taken in the AFA CP B season pollock fishery and equates to a bycatch performance of 1,723 tons of pollock catch per WAK chum salmon.

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 2022, 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. Additional measures were added to the incentive plan agreement in 2022 to further reduce chum bycatch including the addition of new Monday closures, identification of extreme high bycatch areas, and adding a vessel outlier provision. 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 2024, nearly 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 2024.

High Seas Catchers' Cooperative Annual Report

Introduction

The High Seas Catchers' Cooperative 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 Forum Star, Muir Milach, Neahkahnie, 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. In 2022, the F/V American Challenger was also replaced by the Forum Star with three vessels' historical allocations now being represented by one vessel. In 2023, the Ocean Harvester was replaced by the Muir Milach and the original magnificent seven is now represented by four remaining active vessels.

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 2024 in the "Intercoop BSAI Cod Sideboard Allocation Agreement" were made by the HSCC Board of Directors through a rollover 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 2024 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	**11,579**
Neahkahnie	**7,558**
Sea Storm	**9,309**
Muir Milach	**10,030**
Total	**38,477**

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 have historically participated.

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 2024.

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 2024.

AFA Sideboard Limits

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

No HSCC vessels participated in any BSAI sideboard fisheries in 2024.

Gulf of Alaska Sideboard Fisheries

No HSCC vessels participated in any Gulf of Alaska sideboard fisheries in 2024.

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 2024; members complied with the provisions of the membership agreement.