



Fish News

June 3, 2013

Council to Take Final Action on Gulf Chinook Salmon Bycatch at June Meeting

During its June meeting (June 5 – 11, 2013), the North Pacific Fishery Management Council is planning to take final action on the Gulf of Alaska Salmon Chinook Bycatch program in non-pollock trawl fisheries. The Council is meeting in Juneau this week and next. Under the Chinook bycatch program, the possibilities the Council is



The Council is planning to take final action on the GOA Salmon Chinook Bycatch program in non-pollock trawl fisheries during its June meeting.

considering include either a gulf-wide hard cap or members could decide to divide it up between the Central and Western Gulf (Option #1).

If the NPFMC determines that a gulf-wide cap is the best option (Alternative 1), the Council would focus on a range of numbers for the cap: 5,000; 7,500; 10,000 and 12,500.

The number would be apportioned by operational type: catcher vessel (CV) or catcher processor (CP).

Table ES-1 Proposed PSC limits for non-pollock trawl fisheries, under Alternative 2 and Options 1 and 2

			Historic basis for average apportionment	5-Year Average (2007 to 2011)				10-year Average (2002-2011)					
				%	12,500	10,000	7,500	5,000	%	12,500	10,000	7,500	5,000
Alt. 2	All GOA (W&C)			100%	12,500	10,000	7,500	5,000	100%	12,500	10,000	7,500	5,000
Option 1	WGOA	Catcher Vessels	Chinook	8%	997	797	598	399	18%	2,210	1,768	1,326	884
			Groundfish	17%	2,107	1,685	1,264	843	18%	2,263	1,810	1,358	905
	CGOA	Catcher Vessels	Chinook	92%	11,503	9,202	6,902	4,601	82%	10,291	8,232	6,174	4,116
			Groundfish	83%	10,393	8,315	6,236	4,157	82%	10,237	8,190	6,142	4,095
Option 2	All GOA (W&C)	Catcher Vessels	Chinook	52%	6,460	5,168	3,876	2,584	49%	6,104	4,883	3,662	2,442
				Groundfish	66%	8,260	6,608	4,956	3,304	64%	8,029	6,423	4,817
		Catcher Processors	Chinook	48%	6,039	4,831	3,623	2,416	51%	6,397	5,118	3,838	2,559
				Groundfish	34%	4,240	3,392	2,544	1,696	36%	4,471	3,577	2,683
Options 1 & 2	WGOA	Catcher Vessels	Chinook	1%	86	69	52	35	5%	606	485	363	242
				Groundfish	4%	541	433	325	216	5%	643	514	386
		Catcher Processors	Chinook	7%	910	728	546	364	13%	1,604	1,284	963	642
				Groundfish	13%	1,566	1,253	939	626	13%	1,620	1,296	972
	CGOA	Catcher Vessels	Chinook	51%	6,374	5,099	3,824	2,549	44%	5,498	4,399	3,299	2,199
				Groundfish	62%	7,719	6,175	4,631	3,088	59%	7,386	5,909	4,431
		Catcher Processors	Chinook	41%	5,129	4,103	3,077	2,052	38%	4,792	3,834	2,875	1,917
				Groundfish	21%	2,674	2,139	1,605	1,070	23%	2,851	2,281	1,711

Other options (Option #3) the Council may consider include allowing only a certain percentage of the cap to be caught before June 1st, and then another percentage would be allowed after that date. That would not be a favorable option for Area M fishermen. Area M fishermen typically take very few kings during the A season. This option would end up with a smaller cap up front, and that's the time frame fishermen in the AEB region go trawl fishing. Typically, AEB trawl fishermen don't fish after September 1st in the B Season because it's so full of halibut.

The Council is also considering other options. One of them includes giving the rockfish program some of these fish so they have their own quota. Another option includes full retention (Alternative #3). The Council can decide, if it chooses, to go with a combination of alternatives, for example, choosing Alternative #2 and #3.

For more information, click on the link below:

[GOA Chinook PSC Public Review Draft - Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis](#)

Here are a few other issues to keep your eye on:

GOA Trawl Bycatch:

Another major issue the Council will take up is the Gulf of Alaska trawl bycatch program (otherwise known as Gulf rationalization). According to the document published on its website, (see link below), the Council could implement prohibited species catch (PSC) limits reductions only or members could choose to provide incentives through voluntary cooperation or quota allocations. The Council will examine a discussion paper on a road map and ways to reduce bycatch.



The Council plans to examine a discussion paper on a road map and ways to reduce GOA trawl bycatch.

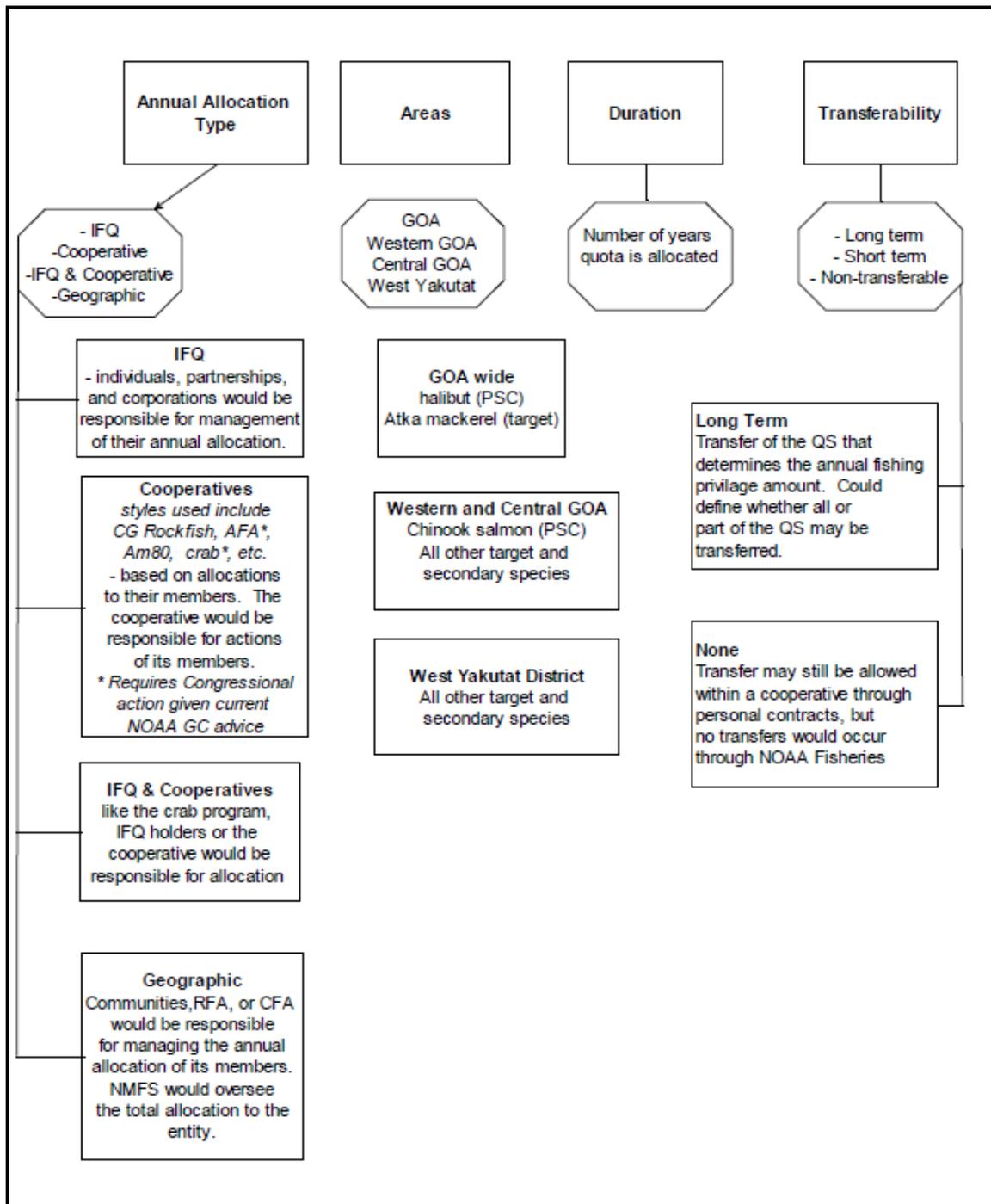
Members will also take a look at a new data collection program. Options include a no-action alternative and a fast-tracked program to collect baseline economic information from harvesters and processors in the groundfish trawl fisheries.

Eventually, the Council will need to consider decisions that would need to be made if the program moves forward, including how to treat the western and central Gulf fisheries, which species to include and issues about quota allocation. To put a program in place with quota, the council would have to decide which individuals or groups the quota is allocated to, the duration, whether the quota can be transferred and how that should be done. Below are two diagrams showing how these decisions would be made.

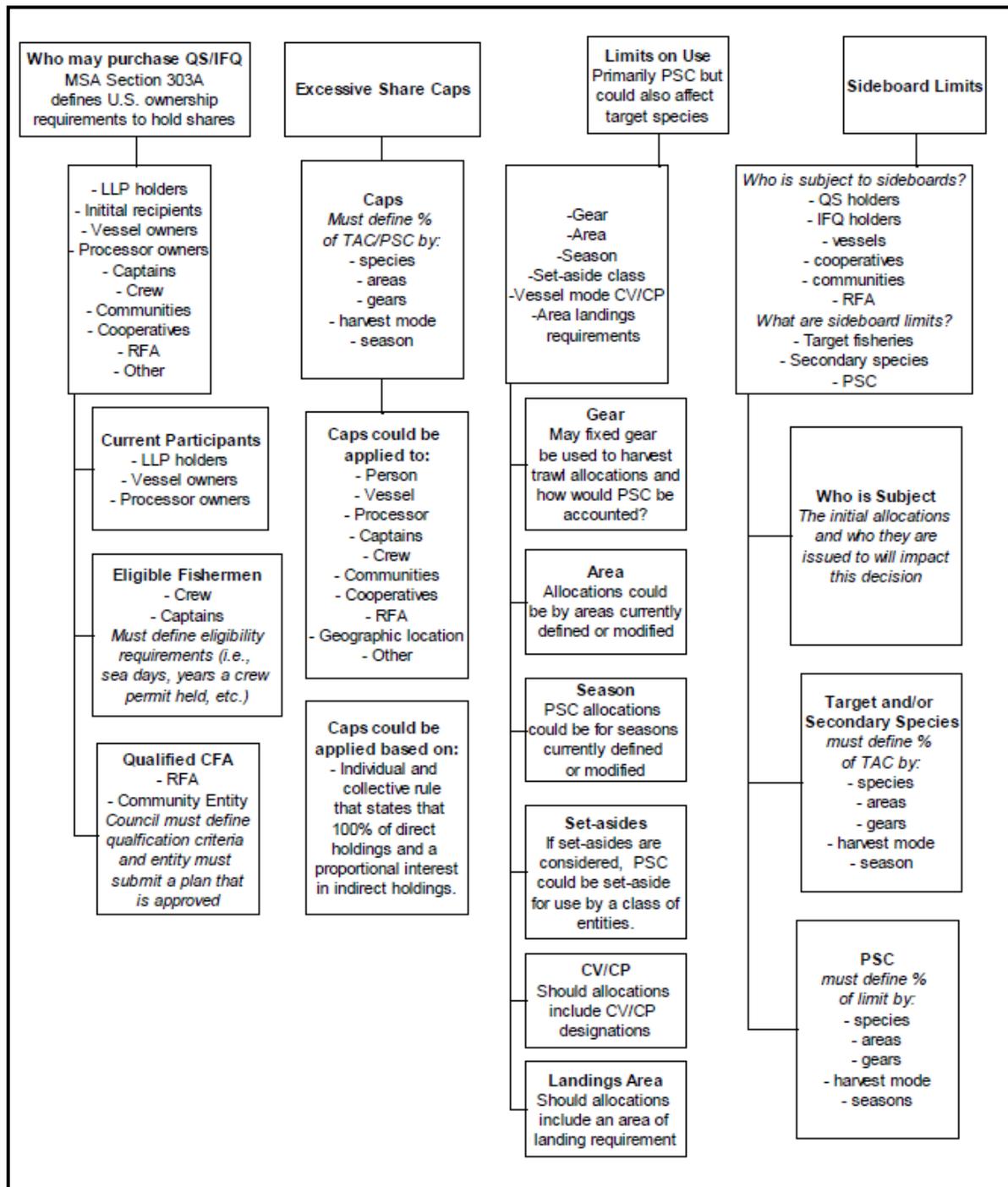


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Council's Tier 1 Decisions if program is moved forward:



Council's Tier 2 Decisions: dependent on Tier 1 decisions



For more info, click on the link below:

[GOA Trawl Bycatch Mgmt Discussion Papers and Road map](#)

Observer Program:

The Council will also listen to a report on the performance of the new observer program during the past year. Members want to learn whether observers are accurately accounting for PSC, such as halibut and salmon. So far, there have been a lot of complaints from fishermen. Many fishermen would like to see electronic monitoring (EM) replace on board observers in the future. During the June meeting, the Council will review a strategic plan for EM.

For more info, click on the link below:

[Strategic Plan for Electronic Monitoring](#)

Steller Sea Lions Protection Measures:



The public has until July 16th to comment on the SSL protection measures draft EIS for the BSAI Management Area.

The public has until July 16th to comment on the Steller Sea Lion (SSL) Protection Measures draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area.

This issue has been mired in controversy for the past few years. In 2011, NOAA's fishery management measures for SSL closed most fishing in

the western Aleutian Islands. The State of Alaska and several fishing industry groups sued NOAA, claiming the measures were based on inadequate science and the restrictions were too stringent. Furthermore, the plaintiffs claimed the measures resulted in higher costs to the fishing industry. The court upheld NOAA's ESA (environmental Species Act) analysis. However, it determined that the agency did not provide enough public review of the environmental assessment for the Steller sea lion protection

measures implemented in 2011. The court ordered NOAA Fisheries to complete a full EIS for the protection measures.

The Council recommended that NOAA consider a revised set of protection measures that would allow more fishing while still leaving protections for the sea lions in place. The Council recommended a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) at its April meeting. This alternative includes measures that spread the harvest of SSL prey species over different times and locations by shutting down areas to certain fisheries and gear types and to limit the seasonal and annual harvest. For more info on the PPA, click on the following link: [SSL Preliminary Preferred Alternative](#)

To guarantee full public participation in the EIS process, NOAA Fisheries launched a vigorous outreach effort, which included participation from ADF&G, USFWS and the U.S. Coast Guard. The draft EIS was published in the Federal Register on May 17th. The deadline for the 60-day comment period is July 16th. For more info on the draft EIS, click on the following link: [Draft EIS Steller Sea Lion protection measures](#)

Comments can be sent to:

Electronic: via the federal e-Rulemaking portal at www.regulations.gov (search for NOAA-NMFS-2012-0013)

Mail: P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668

Fax: 907-586-7557

Hand delivery to the Federal Building: 709 West 9th Street, Rom 420A, Juneau, AK

For more information, visit the links below:

[Listen to Live Council Proceedings](#)

[June 5 - 11, 2013 Council Agenda](#)



ADF&G Conducts First Chignik Lagoon Test Fishery of the 2013 Season

On June 2nd, ADF&G conducted the first Chignik Lagoon test fishery of the 2013 season:

Set Number of sockeye salmon:

Mensis Point	28
Humes Point	0
Island	115
Ole's Point	370
Dago	239
Rocky Point	(no set)
Dropoff	33
Bar 1st Set	254
Bar 2nd Set	251 (Cost Recovery)
Ocean Beach	0



Total **1,290**

According to ADF&G, the results show there isn't a substantial buildup of sockeye salmon in the lagoon right now, but the salmon abundance is somewhat high for this date. The next test fishery is scheduled for the 2:30 p.m. high tide tomorrow (June 4th).

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