

ADVISORY PANEL
Motions and Rationale
December 2-3, 6-9, 2021 - Anchorage, AK

C4 GOA Groundfish Specs

The AP recommends that the Council approve the 2021 Gulf of Alaska SAFE report.

The AP recommends that the Council approve the final 2022 and 2023 Gulf of Alaska groundfish specifications for OFLs and ABCs as recommended by the SSC, and the TACs as shown in the attached table 1.

The TACs for both GOA Pacific cod and pollock have been adjusted to account for the State water Guideline Harvest Level fisheries. The GOA Pacific cod adjustments are shown in revised table 2.

The AP recommends that the Council set the final 2022 and 2023 Pacific halibut PSC limits, allowances and apportionments in the GOA as shown in tables 14 – 16 below.

The AP recommends the Council approve the updated halibut discard mortality rates for 2022 and 2023 as shown in table 17.

Table 2. GOA TAC and GHL Considerations for State Waters Pacific Cod (TACs are preliminary and based on SSC recommendations for Pacific cod ABCs)

Final 2022 Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod ABCs, TACs and State Guideline Harvest Levels (GHLs) in metric tons.

Specifications	Western	Central	Eastern	Total
ABC	9,942	19,752	3,117	32,811
State GHL	2,983	4,938	779	8,700
(%)	30%	25%	25%	25-30%
Federal TAC	6,959	14,814	2,338	24,111

Note: The Federal TAC is only for Federal fisheries. It does not include the State GHL within it.

Final 2023 Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod ABCs, TACs and State Guideline Harvest Levels (GHLs) in metric tons.

Specifications	Western	Central	Eastern	Total
ABC	8,699	17,282	2,727	28,708
State GHL	2,610	4,321	682	7,612
(%)	30%	25%	25%	25-30
Federal TAC	6,089	12,962	2,045	21,096

Note: The Federal TAC is only for Federal fisheries. It does not include the State GHL within it.

Table 14--Final 2022 and 2023 Pacific Halibut PSC Limits, Allowances, and Apportionments (Values are in metric tons)

Trawl gear			Hook-and-line gear ¹				
			Other than DSR			DSR	
Season	Percent	Amount	Season	Percent	Amount	Season	Amount
Jan 20 - April 1	30.5	519	Jan 1 - June 10	86	221	Jan 1 - Dec 31	9
April 1 - July 1	20	341	June 10 -Sept 1	2	5		
July 1 - August 1	27	462	Sept 1 - Dec 31	12	31		
August 1 - Oct 1	7.5	128					
Oct 1 - Dec 31	15	256					
Total		1,706			257		9

¹ The Pacific halibut prohibited species catch (PSC) limit for hook-and-line gear is allocated to the demersal shelf rockfish (DSR) fishery and fisheries other than DSR. The Council recommended and NMFS proposes that the hook-and-line sablefish fishery, and the pot and jig gear groundfish fisheries, be exempt from halibut PSC limits.

Table 15--Final 2022 and 2023 Seasonal Apportionments of the Pacific Halibut PSC Limit Apportioned Between the Trawl Gear Shallow-Water and Deep-Water Species Fisheries (Values are in metric tons)

Season	Shallow-water	Deep-water ¹	Total
January 20 - April 1	384	135	519
April 1 - July 1	85	256	341
July 1 - August 1	121	341	462
August 1 - October 1	53	75	128
Subtotal, January 20 - October 1 ¹	643	807	1,450
October 1 - December 31 ²			256
Total			1,706

¹ Vessels participating in cooperatives in the Rockfish Program will receive 191 mt of the third season (July 1 through August 1) deep-water species fishery halibut PSC apportionment.

² There is no apportionment between trawl shallow-water and deep-water species fisheries during the fifth season (October 1 through December 31).

Table 16--Final 2022 and 2023 Apportionments of the “Other hook-and-line fisheries” Halibut PSC Allowance Between the Hook-and-Line Gear Catcher Vessel and Catcher/Processor Sectors (Values are in metric tons)

“Other than DSR” allowance	Hook-and-line sector	Sector annual amount	Season	Seasonal percentage	Sector seasonal amount
257	Catcher Vessel	150	January 1 - June 10	86	129
			June 10 - Sept 1	2	3
			Sept 1 - Dec 31	12	18
	Catcher/Processor	107	January 1 - June 10	86	92
			June 10 - Sept 1	2	2
			Sept 1 - Dec 31	12	13

Table 17--Final 2022 and 2023 Discard Mortality Rates for Vessels Fishing in the Gulf of Alaska (Values are percent of halibut assumed to be dead)

Gear	Sector	Groundfish fishery	Halibut discard mortality rate (percent)
Pelagic trawl	Catcher vessel	All	100
	Catcher/processor	All	100
Non-pelagic trawl	Catcher vessel	Rockfish Program	66
	Catcher vessel	All others	69
	Mothership and catcher/processor	All	83
Hook-and-line	Catcher/processor	All	15
	Catcher vessel	All	12
Pot	Catcher vessel and catcher/processor	All	29

Table 1. SSC recommended OFLs and ABCs and AP recommended TACs for Groundfish in the Gulf of Alaska (metric tons) for 2022 and 2023.

Species	Area	2021			Catch 11/6/2021	2022			2023		
		OFL	ABC	TAC		OFL	ABC	TAC	OFL	ABC	TAC
Pollock	State GHL	n/a	2,643	n/a		n/a	3,327	n/a	n/a	3,298	n/a
	W (610)	n/a	18,477	18,477	18,112	n/a	23,714	23,714	n/a	23,506	23,506
	C (620)	n/a	54,870	54,870	52,432	n/a	69,250	69,250	n/a	68,642	68,642
	C (630)	n/a	24,320	24,320	23,079	n/a	30,068	30,068	n/a	29,803	29,803
	WYAK	n/a	5,412	5,412	5,145	n/a	6,722	6,722	n/a	6,663	6,663
	Subtotal		123,455	105,722	103,079	98,768	154,983	133,081	129,754	153,097	131,912
	EYAK/SEO	13,531	10,148	10,148	1	15,150	11,363	11,363	15,150	11,363	11,363
	Total	136,986	115,870	113,227	98,769	170,133	144,444	141,117	168,247	143,275	139,977
Pacific Cod	W	n/a	7,986	5,590	3,792	n/a	9,942	6,959	n/a	8,699	6,089
	C	n/a	13,656	10,242	8,258	n/a	19,752	14,814	n/a	17,282	12,962
	E	n/a	1,985	1,489	222	n/a	3,117	2,338	n/a	2,727	2,045
	Total	28,977	23,627	17,321	12,272	39,555	32,811	24,111	34,673	28,708	21,096
	WYAK	n/a	3,224	2,428	1,763	n/a	3,727	3,727	n/a	3,951	3,951
Sablefish	C	n/a	9,527	8,056	6,551	n/a	9,965	9,965	n/a	9,495	9,495
	WYAK	n/a	3,451	2,929	2,188	n/a	3,437	3,437	n/a	3,159	3,159
	SEO	n/a	5,273	4,579	3,613	n/a	5,665	5,665	n/a	5,398	5,398
	GOA Total ¹	n/a	21,475	17,992	14,115	n/a	22,794	22,794	n/a	22,003	22,003
	AK Total	60,426	29,588	n/a		40,432	34,521	n/a	42,520	36,318	n/a
	Total										
Shallow-water Flatfish	W	n/a	24,151	13,250	26	n/a	21,256	13,250	n/a	22,464	13,250
	C	n/a	28,082	28,082	1,654	n/a	25,305	25,305	n/a	26,743	27,361
	WYAK	n/a	2,808	2,808	1	n/a	2,531	2,531	n/a	2,674	2,674
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	1,123	1,123	1	n/a	1,518	1,518	n/a	1,605	1,605
	Total	68,841	56,164	45,623	1,682	62,273	50,610	42,604	65,676	53,486	44,890
Deep-water Flatfish	W	n/a	225	225	1	n/a	256	256	n/a	256	256
	C	n/a	1,914	1,914	79	n/a	2,139	2,139	n/a	2,105	2,105
	WYAK	n/a	2,068	2,068	5	n/a	1,431	1,431	n/a	1,408	1,408
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	1,719	1,719	4	n/a	2,082	2,082	n/a	2,049	2,049
	Total	7,040	5,926	5,926	89	7,026	5,908	5,908	6,920	5,818	5,818
Rex Sole	W	n/a	3,013	3,013	14	n/a	2,981	2,981	n/a	3,222	3,222
	C	n/a	8,912	8,912	269	n/a	12,076	12,076	n/a	13,054	13,054
	WYAK	n/a	1,206	1,206	2	n/a	1,361	1,361	n/a	1,439	1,439
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	2,285	2,285	-	n/a	2,723	2,723	n/a	2,879	2,879
	Total	18,779	15,416	15,416	285	23,302	19,141	19,141	25,049	20,594	20,594
Arrowtooth Flounder	W	n/a	32,377	14,500	332	n/a	33,658	14,500	n/a	33,214	14,500
	C	n/a	69,072	69,072	9,114	n/a	68,394	68,394	n/a	67,493	67,493
	WYAK	n/a	8,380	6,900	47	n/a	6,707	6,707	n/a	6,619	6,619
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	17,141	6,900	24	n/a	11,020	6,900	n/a	10,875	6,900
	Total	151,723	126,970	97,372	9,517	143,100	119,779	96,501	141,231	118,201	95,512
Flathead Sole	W	n/a	14,209	8,650	106	n/a	14,755	8,650	n/a	14,708	8,650
	C	n/a	20,826	15,400	555	n/a	22,033	15,400	n/a	21,962	15,400
	WYAK	n/a	2,427	2,427	-	n/a	1,511	1,511	n/a	1,506	1,506
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	1,915	1,915	-	n/a	1,876	1,876	n/a	1,870	1,870
	Total	47,982	39,377	28,392	661	48,928	40,175	27,437	48,757	40,046	27,426
Pacific ocean perch	W	n/a	1,643	1,643	1,654	n/a	2,602	2,602	n/a	2,523	2,523
	C	n/a	27,429	27,429	24,809	n/a	30,806	30,806	n/a	29,869	29,869
	WYAK	n/a	1,705	1,705	1,663	n/a	1,409	1,409	n/a	1,366	1,366
	W/C/WYAK	36,563	30,777	30,777	28,126	41,470	34,817	34,817	40,211	33,758	33,758
	SEO	6,414	5,400	5,400	-	4,110	3,451	3,451	3,985	3,346	3,346
Total	42,977	36,177	36,177	28,126	45,580	38,268	38,268	44,196	37,104	37,104	
Northern Rockfish	W	n/a	2,023	2,023	708	n/a	1,944	1,944	n/a	1,859	1,859
	C	n/a	3,334	3,334	1,670	n/a	3,202	3,202	n/a	3,061	3,061
	E	n/a	1	-	-	n/a	-	-	n/a	-	-
	Total	6,396	5,358	5,357	2,378	6,143	5,146	5,146	5,874	4,920	4,920
Shortraker Rockfish	W	n/a	52	52	5	n/a	51	51	n/a	51	51
	C	n/a	284	284	197	n/a	280	280	n/a	280	280
	E	n/a	372	372	273	n/a	374	374	n/a	374	374
	Total	944	708	708	475	940	705	705	940	705	705
Dusky Rockfish	W	n/a	270	270	146	n/a	269	269	n/a	259	259
	C	n/a	4,548	4,548	2,748	n/a	4,534	4,534	n/a	4,373	4,373
	WYAK	n/a	468	468	30	n/a	427	427	n/a	412	412
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	103	103	-	n/a	142	142	n/a	137	137
Total	8,655	5,389	5,389	2,924	8,614	5,372	5,372	8,146	5,181	5,181	
Rougheye and Blackspotted Rockfish	W	n/a	168	168	21	n/a	184	184	n/a	182	182
	C	n/a	456	456	175	n/a	235	235	n/a	234	234
	E	n/a	588	588	185	n/a	369	369	n/a	365	365
	Total	1,456	1,212	1,212	381	947	788	788	937	781	781
Demersal shelf rockfish	Total	405	257	257	105	579	365	365	579	365	365
Thornyhead Rockfish	W	n/a	352	352	42	n/a	352	352	n/a	352	352
	C	n/a	910	910	99	n/a	910	910	n/a	910	910
	E	n/a	691	691	133	n/a	691	691	n/a	691	691
	Total	2,604	1,953	1,953	274	2,604	1,953	1,953	2,604	1,953	1,953
Other Rockfish	W/C	n/a	940	940	1,060	n/a	940	940	n/a	940	940
	WYAK	n/a	369	369	119	n/a	370	370	n/a	370	370
	EYAK/SEO	n/a	2,744	300	40	n/a	2,744	300	n/a	2,744	300
	Total	5,320	4,053	1,609	1,219	5,320	4,054	1,610	5,320	4,054	1,610
Atka mackerel	Total	6,200	4,700	3,000	940	6,200	4,700	3,000	6,200	4,700	3,000
Big Skate	W	n/a	758	758	142	n/a	591	591	n/a	591	591
	C	n/a	1,560	1,560	752	n/a	1,482	1,482	n/a	1,482	1,482
	E	n/a	890	890	193	n/a	794	794	n/a	794	794
	Total	4,278	3,208	3,208	1,087	3,822	2,867	2,867	3,822	2,867	2,867
Longnose Skate	W	n/a	158	158	26	n/a	151	151	n/a	151	151
	C	n/a	1,875	1,875	447	n/a	2,044	2,044	n/a	2,044	2,044
	E	n/a	554	554	417	n/a	517	517	n/a	517	517
	Total	3,449	2,587	2,587	890	3,616	2,712	2,712	3,616	2,712	2,712
Other Skates	GOA-wide	1,166	875	875	632	1,311	984	984	1,311	984	984
Sharks	GOA-wide	5,006	3,755	3,755	1,639	5,006	3,755	3,755	5,006	3,755	3,755
Octopuses	GOA-wide	1,307	980	980	51	1,307	980	980	1,307	980	980
TOTAL		610,917	484,150	407,976	178,511	626,738	520,038	448,118	622,931	517,507	444,233

Sources: 2021 OFLs, ABCs, and TACs, as well as 2022 OFLs and ABCs, are from harvest specifications adopted by the Council in December 2020. 2021 catches through November 6, 2021 from AKR Catch Accounting.

¹ The sablefish ABC total for the GOA is **not** included in the grand total.

² The Alaska-wide sablefish OFL and ABC are included in the grand total.

Motion passed 20-0

Rationale:

- *The recommended TACs presented in the table reflect GOA groundfish industry recommendations. Some species TACs are set below the ABC recommendations. These species include flatfish species complexes in some regulatory areas, other rockfish in SE, and Atka Mackerel GOA wide.*
- *For sablefish, the TAC is set to ABC in all GOA regulatory areas. This is responsive to the majority of public comment, acknowledges improved model performance, and reflects Plan Team consensus that they are not concerned with the amount of fishing pressure on coastwide sablefish. Per the stock assessment, survey abundance and biomass indices continued to increase in 2021. The longline survey abundance index increased by 9% in 2021 following a 32% increase in 2020. The biennial trawl survey biomass index has increased nearly five-fold since 2013, with a 40% increase from 2019 to 2021. The data and model indicate strong year classes from 2014, 2016, 2017, and 2018. Based on the strength of these recent year classes, biomass estimates have more than doubled from a time series low of 215,000 t in 2015 to 553,000 t in 2021, exceeding the highs of the mid-1980s. Spawning biomass is also increasing but more gradually since many of these year classes are immature. The 2021 SSB was estimated to be 36% of the B100% value. Spawning biomass is projected to increase to B44% in 2022 and B51% in 2023.*
- *Despite some of the positive signals outlined above, it was also noted that the sablefish stock is still below B40 when stock assessments authors have said for the last three years it will be above B40 the following year, and this has yet to happen. Additionally, the 2014-2018 year classes comprise 50% of total SSB in 2022, and the current HCR's don't recognize the importance of a well distributed age composition.*
- *From a trawl perspective, the fleet needs the additional revenue from sablefish since economics within the sector are currently not good: low GOA Pacific cod TACs, limited/no flatfish markets for the shoreside sector, and poor ex-vessel pricing for headed and gutted products due to Covid impacts and tariffs with China. For fixed gear, vessel harvests caps prevent individual businesses that are more efficient from catching more sablefish; therefore, setting TAC to ABC gives these businesses greater opportunity to harvest more and increase revenue.*