



Fish News

Jan. 30, 2013

Fisheries Update

By Ernie Weiss, AEB Natural Resources Director

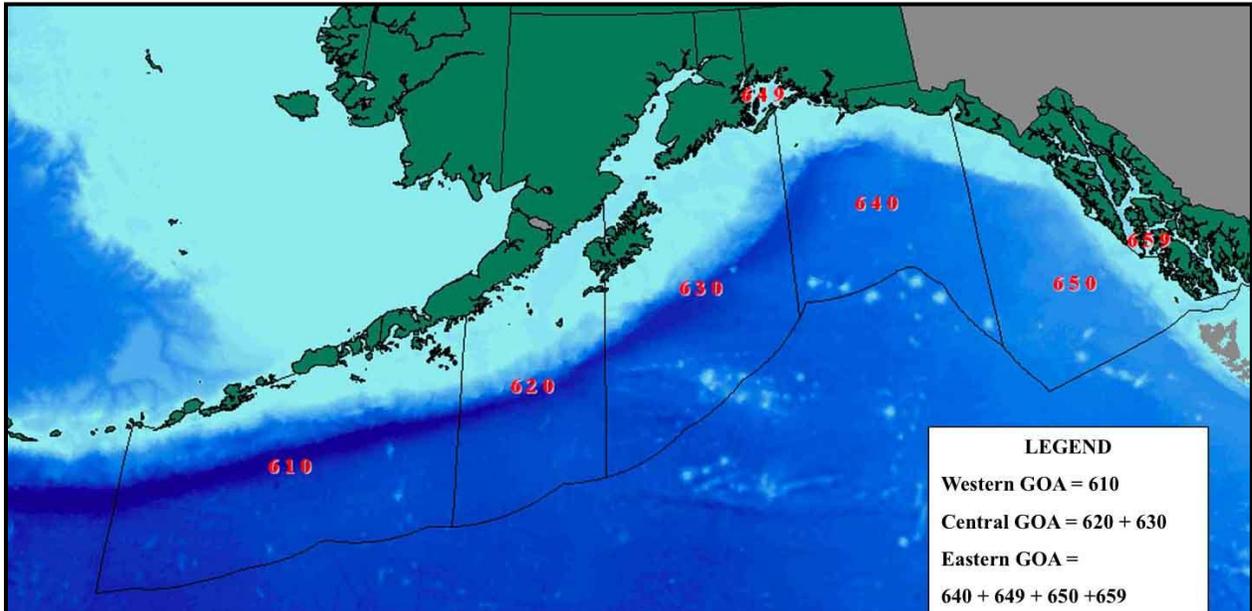
January GOA Fisheries:

Directed fishing for Pacific cod using hook and line, pot and jig gear, opened January 1, 2013, and trawl gear cod fishing opened on January 20th. The 2013 Gulf-wide total allowable catch (TAC) for cod is 60,600 metric tons (mt) down from 65,700 mt in 2012. In the Western Gulf, (Area 610) the A-season allocation for Pacific cod using pot gear is 4,095 mt. Twenty-eight vessels have reported catch so far. NMFS closed the WGOA pot gear Pacific cod fishery at noon on Monday, January 28th.

Directed fishing for pollock using trawl gear also opened January 20, 2013 in the Gulf of Alaska. So far, six vessels have reported pollock catch in Area 610. Only two vessels have reported pollock catch in Area 620. The A season pollock allocation is 4,292 mt for Area 610; 16,433 mt for Area 620; and 5,998 mt for Area 630. NMFS ended directed fishing for pollock in Area 630 on January 22, 2013 to prevent the fleet from exceeding the 630 A-season allowance.

The state Tanner crab fishery opened at noon on January 15th. The Eastern section of the South Peninsula District had a guideline harvest level (GHL) of 230,000 pounds. The Western section and the Chignik District were closed. The Kodiak district GHL was set

at 660,000 lbs. In the South Peninsula District - Eastern section, all waters between 161° and 162° west longitude (Pavlof Bay and Jude Island) closed at noon January 16th, and Beaver, Balboa & Stepovak Bays (all waters north of 55° 20' N) closed at 6 p.m. on January 22nd. The remaining open waters of the Eastern Section of the South Peninsula District closed to Tanner crab fishing at 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 26.



Halibut:

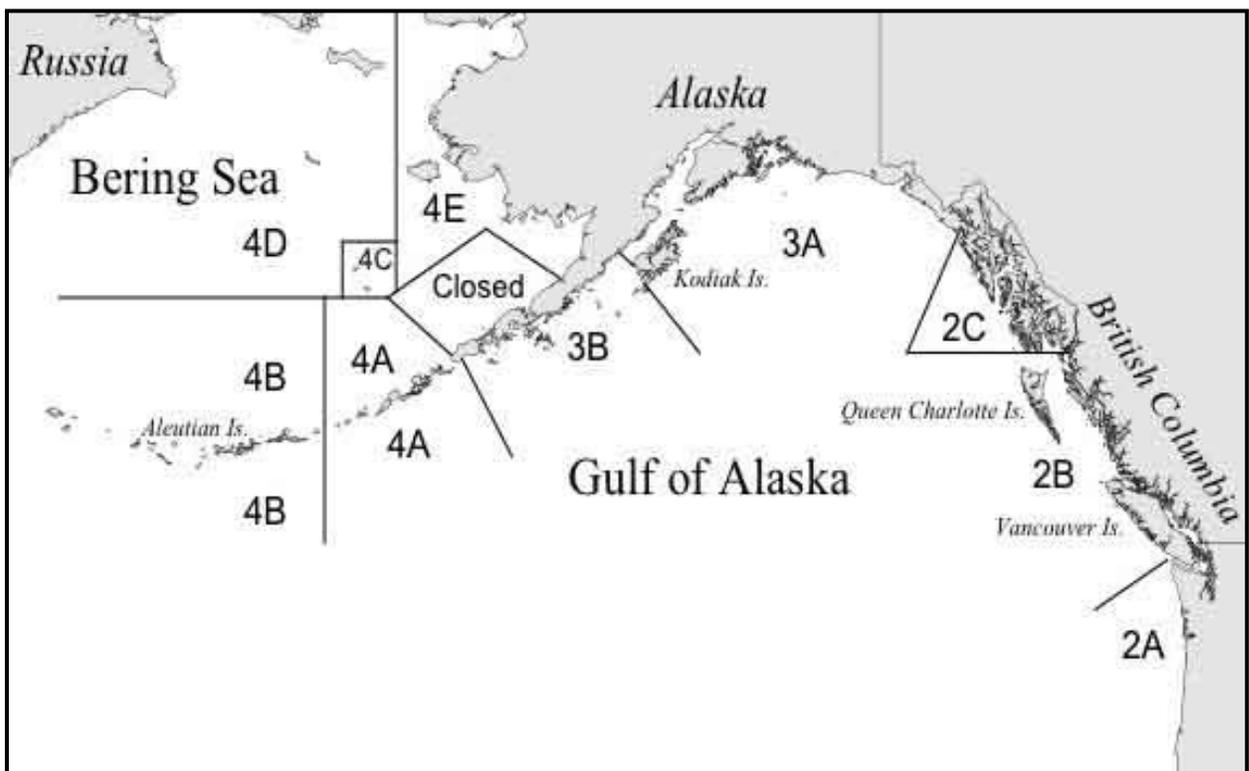
The International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) annual meeting was held last week in Victoria, BC, and most sessions were available via internet / webinar. Last Friday, the Commission adopted the 2013 Pacific halibut catch limits by area. The 2013 limits are a reduction of 7% for all areas combined, and a reduction of 15% for Area 3B.

IPHC	2012 Catch Limits	2013 Catch Limits	Percent change
Area 2A	989,000 pounds	990,000 pounds	less than 1% change
Area 2B	7,038,000 pounds	7,038,000 pounds	zero change
Area 2C	2,565,000 pounds	2,970,000 pounds	16% increase
Area 3A	11,918,000 pounds	11,030,000 pounds	7% reduction
Area 3B	5,070,000 pounds	4,290,000 pounds	15% reduction

Area 4A	1,567,000 pounds	1,330,000 pounds	15% reduction
Area 4B	1,869,000 pounds	1,450,000 pounds	22% reduction
Areas 4CDE	2,465,000 pounds	1,930,000 pounds	22% reduction
Total	33,480,000 pounds	31,028,000 pounds	7% reduction

Dr. James Balsiger was elected Commission Chair for 2013/2014. The IPHC is currently seeking nominations for 2 vacant U.S. seats on the Commission. Details on the IPHC nominations can be found at:

<http://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/newsreleases/2013/iphc011513.htm>



Salmon:

The next Board of Fisheries meeting runs February 26th – March 4th at the Sheraton Hotel in Anchorage. At this meeting, the Board will take up proposals dealing with the Alaska Peninsula / Aleutian Islands (AP/AI) salmon fisheries. The Board met in Naknek in December 2012 to discuss Bristol Bay salmon. Earlier this month, the Board met in

Anchorage to discuss Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim (AYK) salmon proposals. At each Board meeting since the initial release of the Western Alaska Salmon Stock Identification Program (WASSIP) reports from October, the Board has received additional presentations on the salmon genetic study. At the AYK salmon meeting this month, the department also showcased large posters that make the genetic study information somewhat easier to understand. Many AEB fishermen who have been reading the WASSIP reports recently and the just-released Southeastern District Mainland (SEDM) genetic study, may gain insight from viewing the new WASSIP posters. They are now kept at the Anchorage Department of Fish and Game office at 333 Raspberry Road, and are available as PDF documents at:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=wassip.posters>

The WASSIP reports are available at:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=wassip.reports>

The SEDM study can be found at:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/SP12-31.pdf>

Public comments to the Board of Fisheries submitted by February 12th will be included with the Board AP/AI meeting materials. Comments should include the specific proposal number addressed and the comment author's name.

Comments can be faxed by 2/12/13 to FAX (907) 465-6094.

NPFMC:

The AEB is closely monitoring two items on the February agenda of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) meeting in Portland. Agenda item C-3(c) is a placeholder for Western Gulf of Alaska (WGOA) trawl issues, following a new discussion paper on Central Gulf Trawl Catch shares:

http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc/PDFdocuments/catch_shares/CGOATrawlCatchShare213.pdf

AEB fishermen are planning to present ideas on new management regimes for the WGOA to the Council in Portland.

The AEB Assembly passed Resolution 13-16 in January to provide comments to the NPFMC in support of the following goals for fisheries management in the WGOA and CGOA:

AEB Goals for Fisheries Management Programs in the Central and Western Gulf of Alaska:

- Provide effective controls of prohibited species catch and provide for balanced and sustainable fisheries and quality seafood products.
- Maintain or increase target fishery landings and revenues to the Borough and AEB communities.
- Maintain or increase employment opportunities for vessel crews, processing workers and support industries.
- Provide increased opportunities for value-added processing.
- Maintain entry-level opportunities for fishermen.
- Maintain opportunities for processors to enter the fishery.
- Minimize adverse economic impacts of consolidation of the harvesting or processing sectors.
- Encourage local participation on harvesting vessels and use of fishing privileges.
- Maintain the economic strength and vitality of AEB communities.

BSAI Crab ROFR:

Another important NPFMC February agenda item is C-4(a) Final Action on Bering Sea Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Crab Rights of First Refusal (ROFR). ROFR's are part of the community protection measures in the Crab Rationalization program, giving eligible crab communities the right to purchase the right to process crab, in the event of a sale by the company owning those rights. However, these measures have been criticized as weak protection for communities since



One important item being considered by the Council includes final action on the Bering Sea Aleutian Islands Crab ROFR.

implementation of the program in 2005. Six actions regarding the sale of processing quota share (PQS) are being considered in the package:

- Action 1: Increase the ROFR holder's amount of time to exercise the right.
- Action 2: Remove provisions under which the ROFR lapses if the PQS is used outside the community.
- Action 3: Apply the ROFR to only the PQS, instead of all of a seafood processor's assets.
- Action 4: Require community consent to move quota outside the community.
- Action 5: Require additional notices by the PQS holder to the ROFR holder and to NMFS.
- Action 6: Issuance of newly created Bristol Bay King Crab PQS, (0.55 % of the PQS in that fishery) to Aleutia Corporation.

The NPFMC meetings are streamed live at a link found at:

<http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc/>.

Gulf of Alaska Coastal Communities Coalition

GOAC3 had their Annual Membership meeting and a Board of Directors meeting on Tuesday, January 29th. During the meeting, the group submitted comments to the NPFMC that the GOA Trawl Catch Shares discussion should look at 'bycatch only shares' as a way to provide more tools to harvesters and to mitigate community concerns about fleet consolidation.

The Board agreed to send letters to Governor Parnell supporting the reappointment of Sam Cotten and Duncan Fields to the NPFMC for a final term. The Board also named AEB Mayor Stanley Mack to the GOAC3 Executive Committee.

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