

**On-Time Public Comment List**  
**Alaska Peninsula, Chignik, Aleutian Islands-Bering**  
**Sea Pacific Cod Meeting**  
**November 30–December 1, 2015**

---

Adak Community Development Center .....	PC 01
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration .....	PC 02
Dan Veerhusen.....	PC 03
Todd Hoppe.....	PC 04
Ronald Swahlen.....	PC 05
Tom Evich.....	PC 06
Jeff Steele.....	PC 07
Jamie Ross.....	PC 08
Thomas Meiners .....	PC 09
Mark Anderson .....	PC 10
Andrew Wilder .....	PC 11
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.....	PC 12
Joshua Trosvig .....	PC 13
Aaron Anderson .....	PC 14
Timothy Gervais .....	PC 15
Bering Sea Pot Cooperative .....	PC 16
Freezer Longline Coalition .....	PC 17



# Adak Community Development Corporation

November 3rd, 2015

ADF&G Board of Fisheries  
Boards Support Section  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526  
(907) 465-6094 FAX

Re: Proposal 14

Dear Chairman Tom Kluberton,

Proposal 14 would set the AI GHL based on a percent of the AI cod ABC, instead of a percent of the combined BS&AI cod ABCs. To change the basis of the calculation to be based on the AI ABC, the BOF will need to pick an AI ABC percentage which results in an amount that is roughly equivalent to 3% of the combined BS&AI ABC.

We believe there are two options to approach this issue:

- one that maintains the A/B season split and,
- one that would set a single annual GHL (by modifying 5 AAC 28.647(d) in Proposal 18.)

Either option could be done in such a way that the revised formula would result in a GHL amount that would be consistent with the status quo.

## Option 1 - With an A/B Season Split

**ACDC supports the proposal to calculate the AI GHL based on the AI ABC. We support setting the percentage at 39% which would result in a GHL equal to the average of the 2006 to 2015 GHs when applied to the 2015 AI ABC.**

39% would yield a GHL of about 15 million lbs. based on the 2015 AI ABC, or about 13 million lbs. based on the 2014 AI ABC, which is more conservative than GHL's since 2012 calculated on 3% of the combined BS & AI ABCs.

Applying the 70% limit in the A-season would result in an A-season GHL of about 10.5 million lbs. based on the 2015 ABC, or about 9 million lbs. based on the 2014 ABC.

The average A-season harvest in the years 2012 to 2014 was about 10.3 million lbs. which is consistent with the range of A-season GHs that would result from 39% of the AI ABC.



ACDC further supports a cap of 15 million lbs. on the annual AI GHL (10.5 million lbs in the A-season) if the AI cod ABC increases above the current ABC level of 17,600 metric tons.

Year	GHL	A-season GHL	A-season catch
2006	12,830,772	8,981,540	8,502,781
2007	11,640,288	8,148,202	8,229,931
2008	11,640,288	8,148,202	7,477,507
2009	12,037,116	8,425,981	1,737,434
2010	11,508,012	8,055,608	7,959,514
2011	15,542,430	10,879,701	595,289
2012	20,767,332	14,537,132	11,462,339
2013	20,304,366	14,213,056	10,563,646
2014	17,863,874	12,504,712	9,036,655
2015	18,029,219	12,620,453	-
<b>2006-2015 Average</b>	<b>15,216,370</b>	<b>10,651,459</b>	<b>7,285,011</b>
<b>2012-2014 Average</b>	<b>19,645,191</b>	<b>13,751,633</b>	<b>10,354,213</b>

**Option 2 - With an Single Season Annual GHL**

The Federal AI cod fishery does not have a split season. The seasonal split of the GHL in the AI has resulted in “stranding” of the 30% if the GHL that is allocated to the B-season. If there is latitude within the context of Proposals 14 and 18, ACDC believes the Board should consider setting a single annual GHL with a “stair stepped” percentage formula.

**ACDC supports a formula that sets a single season annual GHL at 27% percent of the AI cod ABC, with a step up provision that would increase the GHL 4% in the following year if the GHL is attained. The step up would be limited to three 4% increments up to 39% total, combined with a cap on the resulting GHL at 15M lbs.**

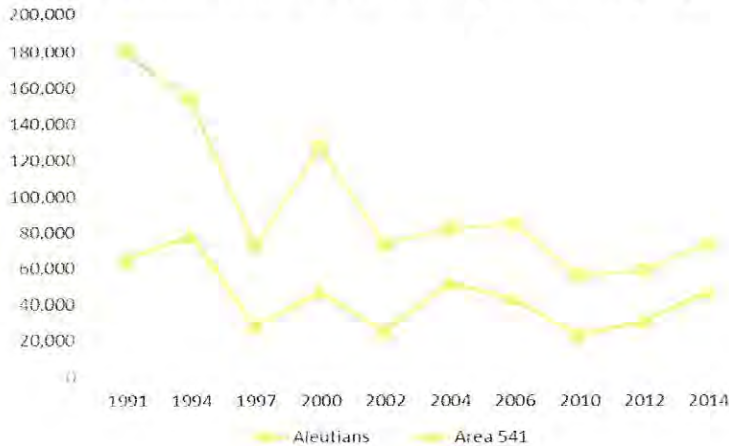
This approach has several advantages:

- It initially results in a GHL that is equal to the average A season harvest for 2012 to 2014 (10.3M lbs).
- It initially results in a GHL that is roughly equal to the average A-season GHL from 2006 to 2015 (10.6M lbs).
- It reduces the likelihood of the “stranded” fish by eliminating the B-season.
- It provides a “stair step” opportunity to work back up to a GHL amount that is the equivalent of the 2006 to 2015 average GHL of 15M lbs. (39% of the 2015 AI ABC =15.1M lbs.)
- It is more conservative than the status quo which resulted in an 18M lb GHL in 2015.



The NMFS survey biomass estimates for the AI cod stock have decreased in the last decade, though there has been some indication of rebuilding from the recent surveys.

### Aleutian Island Cod Survey Biomass (mt)



ACDC supports an approach which balances a conservative harvest strategy with maintaining the current level of opportunity for small boats in state waters while avoiding stranding fish.

ACDC believes either Option 1 or 2 as described in this letter are acceptable, though Option 2 would be better at avoiding stranded quota.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Rick Koso, President  
Adak Community Development Corporation  
PO Box 1943  
Adak AK 99546





# Adak Community Development Corporation

November 3rd, 2015

ADF&G Board of Fisheries  
Boards Support Section  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526  
(907) 465-6094 FAX

Re: Proposals 18, 20, & 21

Dear Chairman Tom Kluberton,

Proposals 18, 20 & 21 are primarily "housekeeping" measures to clarify the regulations.

ACDC **supports Proposal 18** to better coordinate with closures of the federal Aleutian Islands subarea to Pacific cod and to give the Commissioner broader authority to provide for orderly fisheries. **ACDC further recommends that the Board consider modifying section 5 AAC 28.647(d) to eliminate the A/B season split and set a single annual GHL for the AI cod fishery.**

ACDC **supports Proposal 20** to identify the area between 175 to 178 longitude as the Adak Section.

ACDC **supports Proposal 21** to update the references to SSL area restrictions "*without modifying closed areas applicable to state-waters seasons*" **only if** it results in no changes from the area restrictions in the 2004 reference.

There is one important difference between the closures listed in Table 5 pg. 70325 from the "79 Federal Register 70286, November 25, 2014" and the closures listed in Table 5 pg. 75871 from the "69 Federal Register 75865, December 20, 2004." The 2014 table extends the Kanaga Ship Rock 3 mile closure for cod out to 10 miles. Thus it would close state waters for 10 miles along the coast from Ship Rock that has been important to our fleet. The 2014 EIS and BiOp were not predicated on any changes in the SSL closures that applied to the state water GHL fishery.

**If the Board adopts the reference change, it should specify that the Kanga Ship Rock closure of state waters in the GHL fishery is limited to 3 miles from the coordinates of the listed site (51° 46.70 N / 177° 20.72 W.)**

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

Rick Koso, President  
Adak Community Development Corporation  
PO Box 1943,  
Adak AK, 99546



# Adak Community Development Corporation

November 3rd, 2015

ADF&G Board of Fisheries  
Boards Support Section  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526  
(907) 465-6094 FAX

Re: Proposal 19

Dear Chairman Tom Kluberton,

ACDC supports the basic intent of Proposal 19 to limit the stranding of the B-season portion of the GHIL if <60' vessels are not able to take the quota by September 1st. If the Board takes action on this proposal, ACDC requests a couple modifications of the proposal as described below.

The current regulations limit longline vessels to <60' in the B-season.

ACDC **supports** removing the vessel size limitation on longliners **west of 178 longitude** to allow the freezer longliners into the state water B-season fishery after Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>.

If the Board removes the A/B season split as a part of the action under Proposals 14 & 18, there should be less concern over possible stranding of fish in the later part of the year.

ACDC **opposes** lifting the size limit Aug. 1<sup>st</sup>. We believe that a September 1<sup>st</sup> date allows adequate time for the large longline catcher processors to harvest any amount of the GHIL that is available after that date.

To avoid gear conflict with halibut/sablefish boats and to avoid overharvest of the local cod stocks in the areas where most of the small boat GHIL harvest occurs, **the area east of 178 longitude should remain at a <60' limit for longliners during the entire year.**

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Koso".

Rick Koso, President  
Adak Community Development Corporation  
PO Box 1943  
Adak AK 99546



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

*National Marine Fisheries Service  
P.O. Box 21668  
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668*



PC 2  
1 of 3

November 10, 2015

Tom Kluberton, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Dear Mr. Kluberton:

The National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Region (NMFS), appreciates the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes to management of the State of Alaska (State) Pacific cod fisheries that the Alaska Board of Fisheries (Board) will be addressing at its meeting in Anchorage on November 30, and December 1, 2015.

If adopted, three of the proposals (Proposals 10, 11, and 15) would increase State Pacific cod guideline harvest levels (GHLs) that would require changes in Federal management to ensure that total harvests of groundfish species under State GHL and Federal fisheries would not exceed the acceptable biological catch (ABC) limit for Pacific cod. We would accommodate any increase in State Pacific cod GHLs by reducing the Federal total allowable catch (TAC) limit in the appropriate area so that total allocation of the State GHL and the Federal TAC does not exceed the ABC in that area. This is the current process we use to accommodate State GHL fisheries. If the Board recommends increasing the Pacific cod State GHLs in one or more areas at its upcoming meeting, NMFS would revise its Federal TAC limits in that area so that the revised TAC limits would be effective beginning on January 1, 2016.

We have additional comments on Proposals 1, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, and 18, which have implications for Federal fisheries or management.

**Proposal 1: Add purse seine gear as an additional gear type to share the 10 percent jig allocation in the Chignik Area State-waters Pacific cod fishery.**

Although this proposal would not affect Federal fisheries, NMFS would need to coordinate with the State to revise our Interagency Electronic Reporting System, eLandings system, to allow for the reporting of groundfish by seine gear.







**Proposal 9: Reduce waters closed for the protection of Steller sea lions during the parallel Pacific cod fishery in the Chignik Area.**

This proposal would repeal closures to fishing for Pacific cod with pot gear in Steller sea lion critical habitat from 0 to 3 nm around the Sutwik Island, Lighthouse Rock, Spitz Island, and Mitrofanina haulouts in the State parallel fishery. These areas are currently closed to Pacific cod fishing with pot gear to conserve prey for Steller sea lions (see 68 FR 204, January 2, 2003). These areas are not closed to fishing for Pacific cod with jig gear.

If adopted, this change would require NMFS to reinitiate formal consultation under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) on effects of the Federal and State parallel groundfish fisheries on the endangered western distinct population segment of Steller sea lions (WDPS). On November 24, 2010, NMFS issued an ESA section 7 biological opinion on effects of the Federal and State parallel groundfish fisheries off Alaska on species listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA. Because the action analyzed in that biological opinion included the area closures adopted by the State during the parallel groundfish fisheries, any change to those closures would require NMFS to reinitiate consultation on the effects of the groundfish fisheries as modified by the reduction in areas closed to fishing around Steller sea lion haulouts.

A new biological opinion would assess the impact of this change and whether the Federal and State parallel groundfish fisheries are likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the WDPS or adversely modify its designated critical habitat. Depending on the outcome of this biological opinion, NMFS could be required to further restrict Federal fisheries to avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of the WDPS or adversely modifying its designated critical habitat.

Due to this proposal's potential to reduce the availability of an important prey species for endangered Steller sea lions, we encourage the Board to maintain the existing closure to Pacific cod pot gear in the vicinity of haulouts.

**Proposals 10 & 11: Increase the South Alaska Peninsula Area State-waters Pacific cod fishery GHl from 30 to 40 percent of the Western Gulf of Alaska ABC.**

As noted earlier, these proposals would result in NMFS reducing the Federal TAC for all participants in the Western Gulf of Alaska to account for the increased State GHl in the South Alaska Peninsula. Under current Federal regulations, the TAC is apportioned by sectors that include vessels using specific gear types (e.g., pot or hook-and-line gear) and vessel operational types (i.e., catcher vessels or catcher/processors). Adoption of a significantly larger GHl could require NMFS to close directed fishing to participants in the Federal Pacific cod fishery because some sector allocations in the Western GOA are already very small and further reductions in the TAC needed to accommodate a larger GHl fishery may prohibit a Federal directed fishery for these sectors. The hook-and-line catcher vessel and trawl catcher/processor sectors are the two sectors most likely to face a closure to directed fishing.





**Proposal 14: Calculate GHLS for Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) State-waters Pacific cod fisheries based on federal ABC for subareas of the federal Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands area.**

NMFS supports this proposal to clarify the method for calculating the State GHL fisheries based on the appropriate ABC in each subarea.

**Proposal 15: Expand the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict State-waters Pacific cod fishery boundaries and increase the state-waters fishery GHL from 3 to 9 percent of the Federal BSAI ABC.**

This proposal would increase the size of the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict. This proposal would require NMFS to update the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict boundaries in the NMFS Catch Accounting System to oversee the Federal overfishing levels.

If adopted, this proposal would open state waters south of 55 degrees 30 minutes N lat. from 167 degrees W long. to 170 degrees W long. to fishing for Pacific cod in the state-waters fishery. This area includes the Bogoslof Area, which is designated as a special aquatic foraging area within critical habitat for Steller sea lions. This proposal would open the western portion of the Bogoslof Area to fishing for Pacific cod in the state-waters fishery including the Unmak Island and Uliga Island Steller sea lion haulouts. This area (from 168 degrees W long. to 170 degrees W long.) is closed to Pacific cod fishing in the Federal fishery to conserve prey for the WDPS of Steller sea lions.

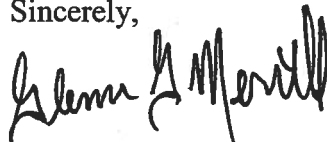
This change to the State GHL Pacific cod fishery would not require an ESA section 7 consultation. However, NMFS is concerned that fishing in these areas may have negative consequences for Steller sea lions. When the Board adopted the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict State GHL Pacific cod fishery in 2012, it maintained closures in areas currently closed to Federal fishery participants to minimize potential impacts on Steller sea lion prey resources in these areas. We encourage the Board to maintain these existing closure areas to conserve nearshore prey for Steller sea lions.

**Proposal 18: Align AI District state-waters Pacific cod season opening and closing dates with recent changes to federal Pacific cod management.**

NMFS supports this proposal to clarify the AI District state-waters Pacific cod season opening and closing dates.

Thank you for considering our comments. Glenn Merrill from my staff will be attending the Board meeting and will be available to answer questions for the Board.

Sincerely,

  
James W. Balsiger, Ph.D.  
Administrator, Alaska Region



Submitted By  
Dan Veerhusen  
Submitted On  
11/15/2015 9:04:00 PM  
Affiliation

Phone  
9072991395  
Email  
[veerhusen@gmail.com](mailto:veerhusen@gmail.com)  
Address  
PO BOX 971  
Homer, Alaska 99603

November 17, 2015

Mr. Tom Kluberton  
Chairman  
Alaska Board of Fisheries

Boards Support Section  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Dear Chairman Kluberton;

My name is Dan Veerhusen. I was born in Alaska. I have fished for 50 years. My 58 foot vessel, Taurus, fishes out west. I have been fishing out of Dutch Harbor since 1970. I have had an annual moorage slip in the small boat harbor in Dutch Harbor for over twenty years. My cod captain resides in Dutch Harbor. I live in Homer when I'm not fishing.

We participated in the Adak GHF cod fishery until we no longer had a market in Adak. We fished the new Area O state cod fishery last season. The Area O –Dutch Harbor sub-district p-cod fishery has been a huge success. Thank you for instituting this new fishery and bringing some of the vast wealth of the Bering Sea to state water fishermen. Just two years ago no one thought we would catch the quota. Last season the season didn't even last until April when the best fishing begins. State water cod fishermen need enough quota to fish thru April.

I support Proposal 15. The area west of Cape Cheerful towards Umnak Pass (particularly Makushin Bay) offers some protected bays to fish, which should benefit smaller vessels. The Bering Sea state cod fishery around Unimak Pass on open ocean, exposed shorelines with no protection is big country. Smaller boats could fish the new proposed area safely with some nearby protection, and tenders could take the fish to town.

Even though I have a sponsored 58 foot steel vessel which is considered big in a salmon fishery it is small compared to the boats I fish around in the federal fishery. Several times every spring we experience 30 foot waves, and even the biggest 58 footer seems tiny in comparison to the boats that we see delivering in Dutch Harbor and Akutan.

State water cod fisheries are a big part of my income. Managers recognize that the cod are inside state waters and a 60 pot limit for under 60 foot boats is very forward thinking. I see it as a historical progression. Residents who historically only fished salmon, herring and halibut now need the opportunity to utilize state groundfish resources. I am also a halibut fisherman in the Bering Sea. My quota has been cut for many years, and it turns out most of the halibut in the Bering Sea now are used by bycatch fishermen in the trawl fisheries. Directed fishermen get the left-overs and that doesn't leave us much. The state water cod fishery has very little bycatch of any kind and almost zero halibut mortality. The more cod that are caught in state waters the less bycatch of halibut there will be. The state water GHF cod fisheries in the Gulf get 25-30 percent of the ABC. I think Proposal 15's nine percent of the total BSAI (or the equivalent amount of Bering Sea ABC) is

a reasonable amount of quota.



PC 3  
2 of 2

I also support proposal 16, but more area And more quota as in proposal 15 is preferred.

Sincerely

Dan Veerhusen





Todd Hoppe

P. O. Box 2589

Homer, AK 99603

November 16, 2015

Re: Letter of support for Proposal 15 Dutch Harbor Sub district Pacific Cod

Dear Chairman Kluberton and members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries,

I am writing in support of Proposal 15: to increase the Guideline Harvest Level (GHL) for the Dutch Harbor Sub district State Waters Pacific cod pot fisheries from 3% to 9% of the Federal Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Acceptable Biological Catch. (ABC)

The current state water fishery of 3% has seen great success in catching the allocated quota. There has been a high catch rate for state water season.

I feel strongly feel that the large biomass that aggregates inside the state waters' three-mile boundary can sustain the increase. Having said that, it would be beneficial if the state of Alaska manage more of the Pacific cod in the Bering Sea.

Cod pot fishing has the lowest halibut by-catch of any cod fishery in the Bering Sea. As a 4A halibut fisherman, it is vital to me to maintain and protect this fishery.

The newly developed state water pot cod fishery in the Bering Sea has provided a great economic opportunity for pot vessels up to 58 feet. The majority of these vessels are owned and maintained by Alaskans. The 2014-2015 season has seen a catch of eighteen million pounds. The price of thirty cents per pound has benefited the local communities of the Alaskan Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands.

State water pot cod fishing is a strong element in my commercial fishing program as I have had several state cod seasons more productive than my federal cod season.

I feel that there is a need to increase the Dutch Harbor Sub district from its present line at 164 to 170 degrees west longitude. This is the Bering sea/Aleutian Islands state waters line or "boundary."



The present area of the Dutch harbor sub district is very volatile around Akutan and Unimak Pass with high wind and huge currents. I am speaking from personal experience fishing the 2014 season with my 18' wide, 58' pot boat. I did not fish the 2015 season because I determined my boat was not adequate to fish in this harsh area. The 58' and under boats are the smallest pot boats participating in the Bering Sea. Regardless of width and displacement, they are still only 58'. I strongly believe that by increasing the areas it will provide greater opportunity for the smaller boats of this fleet to fish west of Dutch Harbor in and around Makushin Bay and west. Many of these bays have excellent protected anchorages from bad weather, plus they can deliver their catch to tenders. This would make more viable fishing for a larger more versatile small pot boat fleet.

I would like to finish by stating again how this proposal would economically benefit local Alaskan communities. I want to thank you the board of fisheries for managing productive and healthy Pacific cod state waters fishery.

Thank you for your time,

Todd Hoppe

F/V Deliverance

907-299-2045/ hoppeent@gmail.com



Submitted By  
Ronald Zwahlen  
Submitted On  
11/17/2015 10:40:14 AM  
Affiliation

Phone  
907-299-2402

Email  
[captainz1958@gmail.com](mailto:captainz1958@gmail.com)

Address  
1552 saltwater dr  
Homer, Alaska 99603

Hello, My name is Ron Zwahlen, a 40-year Alaska resident involved in the area O state water cod pot fishery. State water cod fisheries are a big part of myself and my crew's annual income. I'm a huge supporter for state water cod fisheries, so I support proposal 15 to increase area and quota in the Bering Sea area O and proposal 16 to increase quota in existing areas.





Submitted By  
Tom Evich  
Submitted On  
11/17/2015 4:19:31 AM  
Affiliation  
  
Phone  
360-201-0486  
Email  
[Tomevich@comcast.net](mailto:Tomevich@comcast.net)  
Address  
2051 North Shore Rd  
Bellingham, Washington 98226

Dear BOF Chairman Kluberton,

I own and operate a 58' combination trawler/seiner based in Sand Point, Alaska. I own cod pots and the boat has, and is capable of pot fishing. I reside in Bellingham, Washington and have been fishing in Alaska for 46 years. I oppose proposals 10 and 11 for state waters pacific cod.

Proposal 10. The King Cove advisory committee points out that in the years before the N.P.F.M.C. put in place sector splits, that pots were taking over 50% of the cod quota. That's correct, but how many years would you like to go back? When the cod fishery was developed in the late 1980s (my current boat's first year was 1990) the entire quota was taken by trawlers. Is it unreasonable to go back to that far to look at history? Also, in the few years preceding the sector split that 50% was a combination of federal and state waters. In those years, and currently, the federal pot season opens [January 1](#) giving the pot fleet a 20 day head start on the trawl fleet. In the years of small cod quotas, that head start made a huge difference.

I would ask the Board to carefully consider whether it wants to take more cod out of "inside 3 miles" or "critical habitat". In 1999 I thought that I had lost my job and business for a 4 month period due to the sea lion injunction. Senator Stevens saved us that time. I may agree with the state on sea lions, but the state has lost twice in court over sea lions at Adak. I don't want to be caught in the cross fire again.

Although, at the time I didn't think the trawl fleet got what it deserved, I applauded the N.P.F.M.C. decision on sector splits. It gave everyone involved a bit more stability which business ultimately likes. I was at that meeting and I did not witness one resident of King Cove or False Pass advocating for more fish in the pot sector.

Proposal 11. The False Pass advisory committee justifies their proposal by saying the state water cod quota "is not sufficient". I can make that claim for every fishery I'm involved with. Next cycle I may submit a proposal to put all cod back into federal waters and use the same justification.

Two years ago, when we had to deal with these same proposals, I tried to make the argument that pots probably could catch the entire cod quota, but then who is going to catch the pollock? I tried to explain to the board that the small local trawlers need a combination of both cod and pollock to survive. The local trawlers have not been able to catch the Western Gulf pollock quota for the past 3 years now. Trawl equipment is expensive and if my boat, and others, didn't have enough cod we would not be able to maintain and upgrade that boat as a trawler. If the board continues to erode the federal quota, at some point in the future, the pollock will ultimately have to be caught by either Kodiak trawlers, where they have multiple trawl opportunities, or by Bering Sea trawlers that are rationalized.



I own an Area M seine permit and have fished there for the better part since 1979. Every board cycle we are attacked by the A.Y.K., Bristol Bay, and Chignik as an intercept fishery wanting to curtail us further or eliminate us altogether. Every year we argue that this is reallocation and it's all political. Simply put, someone is trying to take money out of your pocket and put it in theirs. What I would like is that the Board ask the King Cove and False Pass advisory committee why is this different? Why, in a few months, will those same people be indignant that some one else is trying to stop them from fishing so they can have more fish. It appears to me what their asking the Board now for cod is what their not going to like when it comes to salmon proposals. (I honestly have not read the salmon proposals, but I would assume there are the same ones there always are, a closure of the Area M June Fishery.)

I was fishing pollock the first of September this year when the Cod B season opened. I did not see one local pot cod or salmon boat, owned by individuals that two years ago argued they wanted more cod in state waters, attempt fishing pot cod. I suppose that is another question that I would like the Board to ask, "Why didn't the people that want more in state waters attempt fishing last fall?"

If the answer is the price of bait is too high, they had best get used to it. Sardines, the favored bait, has come from Washington and Oregon the last 15 years. That fishery has been closed and now sardines will have to come from somewhere else in the world. When some one brings up a trawlers by-catch, just imagine the carbon footprint of thousands of tons of sardines being caught, shipped, and held from somewhere other than the U.S.

B season cod opens for the trawl fleet basically at the same time as C season pollock, but I make the choice to fish pollock. I have attempted to fish cod that time of year and found it to be "dirty" and slow fishing. I'm assuming these people want more quota when fishing is fast, more profitable. Don't we all.

The people that advocate putting more cod into state waters may be careful of what they wish for. Any body can buy a permit. If there gets to be enough quota in state waters it's going to be difficult for me and others to ignore. Myself, and at least 6 others I can think of, keep the trawl gear on during the state water season. If I continue to loose trawl quota, I'm going to have to fish the state water fishery and I imagine others will do the same. There are a lot of big 58' boats in the state that will also take a close look.

I plan on attending the meeting [Nov. 30th.](#)

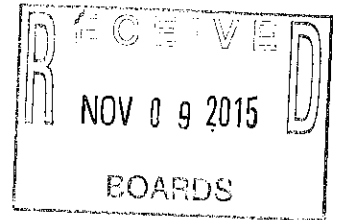
Sincerely,

Tom Evich



**Jeff Steele**  
**Box 3369**  
**Homer Alaska 99603**

November 9, 2015



Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Board of Fisheries  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

**Re: Proposal 17: Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan**

Dear Members of the Board of Fisheries:

My family and I have been involved in the commercial fishing industry for 50 years. I have commercially fished for crab, cod, and halibut in the Bering Sea for the last 25 years. We have also commercially fished in the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict for Pacific cod for almost a decade now. It is a very important fishery for my livelihood and other Alaskans. Those of us with vessels over 58 feet long depend on our diversified commercial fishing operations and the opportunity to fish year-round.

I write in support of Proposal 17, which would amend 5 AAC 28.648, the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan for Area O in the Bering Sea. Proposal 17 would allow vessels up to 125 feet long to operate in this fishery. Presently, the P cod management plan for this Dutch Harbor Subdistrict limits vessels participating in this fishery to 58 feet.

The Board has already adopted precedent for Proposal 17. The Kodiak Management area has a twenty five percent allocation of state water fish to vessels over 58 feet long. I know of no negative impact from the Board's decision to do that. Likewise, I know of no negative impact on the resource in Area O if the Board adopts Proposal 17.

Vessels longer than 58 feet presently, and historically, have participated in the Bering Sea P cod fishery. We have been disenfranchised from the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific cod fishery that we helped build because our boats are





Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Proposal 17  
November 9, 2015  
Page 2

longer than 58 feet. Another reason for supporting the 125 foot amendment is safety. Operations in the Bering Sea are very dangerous. A bigger boat, that would be allowed if the Board adopts Proposal 17 would provide a safer platform for commercial fishing operations in winter, early spring, and fall weather. Adoption of Proposal 17 would promote the safety of fishermen at sea.

It has been almost 20 years since the pot cod fleet started fishing in Unimak Pass. We developed the market in Dutch Harbor along with the processors who first started buying on a consistent, year-round basis. The over 58-foot fleet has made Dutch Harbor an internationally known port, and one of the most highly productive fishing ports in the United States. Shipping, communications, and port facilities infrastructure have been paid for by the federal and state fleet that have harvested P cod both east and west of Dutch Harbor for decades.

I understand that there are some small boat owners who are eager to create what would essentially be a preserve for smaller boat fishing operations. Their reasoning is that they are residents of the area and their commercial interests are greater than anyone else. This reasoning does not have a basis in conservation and development of the fishery. Historically the State of Alaska has benefitted greatly from participation of all players both resident and non-resident and will so into the future. The newer boats that are 58 feet long can now pack as much gear and product as the 90-foot boats that pioneered this fishery. Adopting Proposal 17 would be fair and equitable to all Pacific cod fishermen operating in Area O. It would promote conservation and not result in any fisherman obtaining an excessive share of commercial fishing privileges.

Excluding boats up to 125 feet from the fishery does not have valid conservation and development reasons. On the contrary, there are sound conservation and development reasons for allowing boats up to 125 feet long to operate in Pacific Cod Management Plan for Area O in the Bering Sea.

Vessels up to 125 feet would be excellent stewards of the resource for several reasons. First, we have an observer program already in place, which insures careful monitoring of our harvests and the ability to conduct good in-season management of the fishery.



Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Proposal 17  
November 9, 2015  
Page 3

Second, these boats all have VMS equipment that allow both federal and state fishery managers to monitor our location and fishing efforts with no problems. Our bycatch and harvest data is immediately available to fishery managers. This will help managers of this fishery carefully monitor harvesters, and this in turns allows the state to conduct a transparent fishery based on reliable data and in-season management.

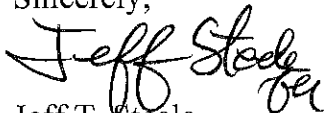
Third, adopting Proposal 17 would help bring the state to a full utilization of the Pacific cod fishery in this area. It would give our fishery managers the opportunity to fully allocate the resource to all users and participants.

With the adoption of Proposal 17, the Bering Sea will continue to be a strong and vibrant ecosystem supporting small local families and coastal communities just like it does now. Proposal 17 will enhance the economic activity in the Dutch Harbor area and make it an even more appealing place to live work and raise a family.

By adopting Proposal 17, the state would be able to expand the Dutch Harbor sub-district area for Pacific cod using pot gear by vessels that can travel further with more gear and fuel, and with refrigeration systems. This would create significant positive economic benefits to the local Alaskan fishermen and our Bering Sea communities. The amount of fish available in between the ABC and TAC could become fully utilized. This kind of Proposal is particularly useful here. There is little opportunity for growth like this any where else in a fishery in the state. The benefit of adopting this Proposal is that the fishery could be managed properly for the benefit of the resource, our communities, and our fishermen.

Thank you for considering and adopting this proposal

Sincerely,

  
Jeff T. Steele



Submitted By  
Jamie Ross  
Submitted On  
11/17/2015 12:48:38 PM  
Affiliation  
self

To: The Alaska Board of Fisheries

From: Jamie Ross, F/V "Anduril", Homer, Alaska

Dear Chairman Kluberton and fellow Board Members,

Hello and Greetings from Homer! I just had some comments on a few proposals regarding the State water Pacific Cod fisheries.

These fisheries were specifically established to benefit the small boat (58' and under) fleet, that predominant the small Coastal villages of Alaska. Obviously, there have been many evolutions of these fisheries since they have been created; but it would be nice to keep the spirit of why they were created alive- which was to help the small coastal communities of Alaska.

Given the drastic decline in salmon prices the past couple years, these State Water Pacific Cod fisheries are that much more important to the under 58' fleet. It is in the State's best interest to bolster what ever opportunities that these small coastal villages can possibly have!

With lower Oil Revenues to the State; the future of new fisheries opportunities, financial relief, or any other help the State may offer to small communities shall dwindle further. Lets help out the small boat fleet by expanding opportunities to the under 58' fleet as much as we can.

TO that end, I encourage the Board of Fish to Pass PROPOSALS # 10 and 11 - these seek to increase the State water P-COd quota's for the Alaska Peninsula area. This would definitely benefit the Communities of Sandpoint, King Cove, False Pass and Akutan - and all the small boat fishermen that participate in these fisheries. These fishermen are heavily dependent on Salmon, and with the dramatic decline in salmon prices, these Cod Fisheries all all that much more important.

I also encourage the BOF to Pass Proposals # 15 and 16 - These proposals also seek to increase the Dutch Harbor/Bering Sea side State water P-Cod quota's - this not only helps the under 58' fleet participating in these fisheries, but it also has the side benefit of keeping the "Jumbo" 58' fleet out of the other State Water fisheries. The Dutch Harbor/ Bering Sea State Water fishery, typically has the worst weather in the State, but also the best fishing. By increasing this quota, it may draw some of these "jumbo" 58' rigs out of the Chignik or Alaska Peninsula Statewater fisheries, thereby benefitting the more "local" smaller boats in those fisheries.

Finally, I would encourage the BOF to Pass Proposal # 4 - This proposal seeks to make the Chignik Statewater P-Cod fishery a "daylight hours only" fishery. This is the same for the existing Tanner Crab Fishery in Chignik. Because Chignik has very few 58' rigs, and is dominated by 42' seine vessels, the large, "Outside" rigs have a huge advantage over local boats. Chignik has the least amount of "other" fisheries and economic opportunities of any other community in the region. They have no year-round processor. Especially now that Salmon prices are so poor, Chignik needs any advantage it can have.

I personally own a large 58" "Limit" seiner - but I would still support this proposal, because I know that it would really benefit my friends and fellow fishermen who participate, or who would like to participate in this fishery - but currently can't compete, with the large, "Outside" vessels that come in specifically for the Cod Fishery.

Thank you very much for considering my comments! Please fell free to call and talk with me about any of these proposals.

Sincerely

Jamie Ross

F/V "Anduril" 58' Limit Rig

Homer, AK 99603



Submitted By  
Thomas Meiners  
Submitted On  
11/18/2015 10:53:47 AM  
Affiliation

Phone  
7202532393  
Email  
[thomasm.meiners@gmail.com](mailto:thomasm.meiners@gmail.com)  
Address  
805 Goldbelt Ave  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

My name is Tom Meiners. I live at 805 Goldbelt Ave, in Juneau, Alaska and I would like to voice my strong support for proposal 15, as well as proposal 16, if proposal 15 becomes no longer an option.

As a young skipper, I'm 26, the Bering Sea state waters cod fishery is one of very few fisheries that is actually feasible to break into. With permit prices in the salmon fisheries reaching as high as \$300k, the jump from crewman to skipper is a very difficult one to make. In the state waters cod fishery, the price of the permit does not hold young fisherman back from stepping into the wheelhouse. Expanding the fishing opportunities in the fishery will help get young skippers into the wheel house for the first time and groom the next generation of skippers and eventually boat owners.

Not only does this fishery help young people break into the fisheries as a whole, it helps residents. Alaskan residents. Alaska is an owner state, set up intentionally to divide resources amongst residents. In the Bering Sea state water cod fishery, 87% of the money being made is going to state residents. This is nearly reversed in all the other Bering Sea fisheries, minus CDQ. Expanding this fishery will help keep money in state, going to Alaskan residents, not down south investors.

Another thing that is important to us young fishermen, stewardship of our environment. The pot cod fishery in the Bering Sea has proven itself as not only an incredibly effective way to catch fish, but a clean one. The bycatch rates for the pot cod fishery are incredibly low, nearly nonexistent. When compared with other means to catch cod, such as trawl and long line, the difference is huge. Catching cod in pots is clean, which is not something that can easily be said about the other gear types in the cod fishery.



Submitted By  
Mark Anderson  
Submitted On  
11/18/2015 10:32:38 AM  
Affiliation  
Captain/owner

Dear Board Members

My name is Mark Anderson and I have run a 58 ft pot cod boat, the Magnus Martens, for the last two years in the Bering Sea State water fishery. First I would like to thank the board for creating this fishery two years ago as it has been a significant part of my yearly income. I support proposal 15 to expand the quota and area for this fishery.

The first year of the state water fishery there was a lot of doubt about weather there would be sufficient fish accessible inside of three miles. As a result there was a relatively small fleet and we were able to fish until mid May. With the clear success of the fishery the first year there was the predictable increase in the fleet the following year and we were done fishing before the end of March. I believe there will be additional vessels joining the fishery this year and we will likely be looking at a 3-4 week season.

The state water fisheries, with the 60 pot limit, provide for an orderly, bycatch free fishery that gives small boat operators (I know everyone calls these boats Super 8s but if you got to Dutch Harbor and compare them to the rest of the fleet the only thing super about these boats is they are super small) an opportunity to keep their vessels working at a time of year we would otherwise be tied up. Please give your support to expand this fishery and allow the fleet to have adequate time and area to keep this a viable winter option for the under 60 pot fleet.

Thank you for your consideration,

Mark T Anderson

Captain f/v Magnus Martens





Submitted By  
Andrew Wilder  
Submitted On  
11/19/2015 12:57:35 PM  
Affiliation  
  
Andy Wilder  
  
F/V Claire Oceana  
  
Seward Alaska

To the Members of the Board of Fish,

I am writing to ask the BOF to support proposal 15 to expand the boundaries and increase the GHL for Bering Sea Area O state waters cod. These state water fisheries are good for the state. They support the small boats that are predominantly owned by Alaskans who work on their boats and live in and support Alaskan communities.

I own a 58' pot vessel that has participated in many of the state waters pot cod fisheries including Adak, Western Gulf, Bering Sea, and lower Cook Inlet. We also participate in federal pot cod fisheries in WG and BS. The 58' and under pot boats have proven to be extremely efficient at harvesting pacific cod with virtually no halibut mortality. Other gear sectors are struggling with the problem of a excessive halibut bycatch. The Bering Sea Pacific cod TAC has not been fully harvested since 2011.

The state water fishery happens during late winter through early spring, when it is most effective to catch cod inside state waters and last year it closed before fishing even hit its peak. NMFS ends up reallocating the unharvested cod to other gear sectors including 60' and under pot sector in the fall. Catch rates in the fall for pot cod are usually very slow compared to the state fishery. At the end of the year there is 20-30 million pounds of cod that go unharvested that could be caught inside state waters. The fishery closed last year on March 31 when the previous year the best fishing was in April.

I also ask the board to support extending the boundary to the west out to 170. This would spread the fleet out and open up area that is better suited to small boat fishery with more coastal areas that have safe harbors in closer proximity to the fishing grounds.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Andrew Wilder



IN REPLY REFER TO:

## United States Department of the Interior

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
1011 East Tudor Road  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199



FWS/OSM 16063.GP

**NOV 19 2015**

Mr. Tom Kluberton, Chair  
Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Dear Chairman Kluberton:

The Alaska Board of Fisheries will consider 21 proposals, among other issues, at its Alaska Peninsula, Chignik, Aleutian Islands, Bering Sea Pacific Cod meeting beginning November 30, 2015.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management, working with other Federal agencies, has reviewed the proposals and believes that adoption of any of these proposals are unlikely to have any adverse impact on Federal subsistence users or fisheries. During the meeting, we may wish to comment on other agenda items if issues arise, which may have an impact on Federal subsistence users or fisheries.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on these important regulatory matters and look forward to working with the Board and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game on future issues.

Sincerely,

Eugene R. Peltola Jr.  
Assistant Regional Director, OSM

cc: Sam Cotten, ADF&G  
Tim Towarak, Chair FSB  
Lisa Olson, ADF&G, Anchorage  
Hazel Nelson, ADF&G, Anchorage  
Scott Kelley, ADF&G, Juneau  
Tom Brookover, ADF&G, Anchorage

Glenn Haight, ADF&G, Juneau  
Drew Crawford, ADF&G, Anchorage  
Jill Klein, ADF&G, Anchorage  
Chuck Ardizzone, OSM, Anchorage  
Interagency Staff Committee  
Administrative Record



Submitted By  
Joshua Trosvig  
Submitted On  
11/19/2015 4:59:06 PM  
Affiliation

Phone  
909 359 3110  
Email  
[josh.trosvig@gmail.com](mailto:josh.trosvig@gmail.com)  
Address  
PO Box 920704  
Dutch Harbor, Alaska 99692

~19 November, 2016  
To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to offer a few comments and observations on Proposal 15 concerning the quota and area increase for Area O. The <58 foot pot fleet is the most efficient of the gear types and vessel classes at harvesting pacific cod. Increasing the catch allowed for the State water fishery will allow for the TAC for the Bering Sea to be reached on a regular basis, instead of leaving fish on the table each year. As far as bycatch goes, pots catch less halibut and all other species than other gear types. Harvesting cod in the spring is by far the most feasible in terms of gallons of fuel consumed and pounds of bait used in harvesting the fish. The economic benefits to the State of Alaska are profound in the fact that many of the vessels are homeported in the state and a higher percentage of the crews reside in state. This money trickles down to all aspects of the local economies statewide including fuel and bait sales, groceries, airlines, hotels, to name a few.

Increasing the are to the 170 line will alleviate a number of issues. The most applicable is gear conflict in and near Unimak Pass. Increasing the scope of the fishery would spread out the fleet and reduce localized depletion of stocks specifically near Cape Sarichef and Billings head. Also gear loss, due to larger fishing vessels, tugs and ships transitting to and from Akutan and Dutch Harbor, would be greatly reduced. Safety is another issue which needs to be addressed. Unimak Pass is an inhospitable place in the winter and spring for small vessels. There are few ports of refuge nearby. Extending the border to the 170 line would allow smaller vessels a better choice of places to fish with the option of a bay to hide in nearby in heavy weather. Finally, another economic value is the fact that the fish are larger further west. The market demands for larger fish could be met with fewer animals taken to reach the quota.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joshua Trosvig  
Owner/Operator  
FV Cerulean  
FV Cynosure



## Aaron Anderson

Box 43  
Chignik Lagoon, AK 99565

November 9, 2015

Alaska Board of Fisheries  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Dear Board Members,

I am a life long resident of Chignik Lagoon. I provide for my family by commercial fishing for Salmon and Pacific Cod in the Chignik area.

I support proposals 1 and 2. I feel that they would increase economic opportunity for local boats who are invested only in the salmon fishery. These proposals would not take away from the boats who have invested in the P. Cod fishery as the Jig quota has remained unharvested, pre roll over date, for years.

I am strongly opposed to proposal 3. There are many local residents who have invested in the P. Cod fishery for years. It would be unfair to take away quota from those who have invested in the fishery and give it to those who have not. As I'm sure you have heard many times, Chignik is a small boat fishery. Chignik Lagoon is very shallow and the local boats are built shallow to fish it. One common misconception is that the length of a boat reflects its size. While length is considered criteria, one must also consider draft. Shallow draft boats cannot handle the weather that deep drafted boats can. Stability of a boat is directly related to the relationship of the amount of boat out of the water versus the amount of boat in the water. If this proposal were to pass, the local, shallow draft boats of Chignik would lose out to the non-local, deep drafted boats.

I am opposed to proposal 4. This proposal will slow the fishery down too much. As the proposer states in the proposal, weather plays a huge factor for the local shallow draft boats of Chignik. As everyone will agree, weather can be very unpredictable especially during the winter and early spring. Storms during this time of year occur frequently. There are times when the only time you can get to your gear is at night, in between storms. If the times that we can fish is restricted to a few hours during the day, fishers would take more risks in order not to miss a fishing period.

I support Proposal 5. As the proposal states "the fall rollover fish has gone unharvested with limited participation." By removing the gear restrictions, we would increase the economic viability of the fishery.



I don't have a problem with Proposal 6. There is plenty of opportunity for local fishers to harvest the roll over fishery before the October 30<sup>th</sup> date in the proposal.

I support Proposal 7.

I strongly oppose Proposal 8. Cod are more spread out during the federal fishery. Any more restrictions on the amount of gear a fisher could use will severely impact the economic viability of the fishery.

I strongly support Proposal 9. Chignik is unique when it comes to the Stellar Sea lion restrictions. We have very little area inside three miles that can be fished during the parallel season. Most residents of Chignik did not qualify for a P. Cod endorsement on their LLP, therefore they are restricted to state waters. By opening the closed waters around haul outs to pots and jig within state waters, the State will increase opportunity to local fishers without jeopardizing Stellar Sea lions.

Thank You,

Aaron Anderson

F/V Arianna Sage





Submitted By  
Timothy Gervais  
Submitted On  
11/19/2015 11:12:44 PM  
Affiliation  
self  
  
Phone  
843-1455  
Email  
[timgervais@hotmail.com](mailto:timgervais@hotmail.com)  
Address  
Box 7  
Ruby, Alaska 99768

Dear Board of Fish, I am opposed to Proposal 5, Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan for the following two reasons.

- 1) The proposed change date of August 14 is too early for that management action because most of the Chignik fishing fleet is still fully engaged in the Chignik Salmon Seine fishery on August 14 and the managers will not be able to accurately assess the effort level that will pursue the remaining unharvested quota at that time of year. I am agreeable to amending the proposed date change to September 15 or not passing the proposal at all.
- 2) Any type of action removing the 60 pot limit has a tendency to benefit the wide body "super 8" style vessels at the expense of traditional size Chignik pot fishing vessels due to the enormous pot carrying capacity of the wide body vessels.

Chignik is constructing a new city dock/bulkhead facility in 2016 and the current cod processing capacity shortfall in Chignik may change within a few years with the completion of that project.

Sincerely, Timothy Gervais F/V Wolverine 843-1455



Bering Sea Pot Cod Cooperative  
218 Center Street  
Kodiak, AK 99615

October 29, 2015

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Board of Fisheries  
PO Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

RE: Proposal 17- 5 AAC 28.648. Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Management Plan

Dear Board of Fisheries Members:

The Bering Sea Pot Cod Cooperative submits this letter in support of Proposal 17. Our rationale for supporting this proposal includes our fleet's dependence on the Bering Sea Pacific Cod Pot fishery, precedence set in the Kodiak Island area state waters fisheries, current vessel configuration and fishing capabilities and of course safety concerns.

The majority of the  $\geq 60'$  LOA Bering Sea Pacific Cod Pot vessels are dependent upon the federally managed BSAI Pacific Cod Pot fishery. Most of these vessels have limited fisheries they can participate in, such as, the BSAI Crab Rationalization Program and salmon tendering. Thereby, preventing vessel owners from achieving a significant amount of diversification. The federally managed BSAI Pacific Cod Pot fishery has been one of the fisheries that have historically provided additional diversification options to vessel owners. However, as the state increases their GHJ in the Area O fishery, the amount of TAC available in the federal fisheries is reduced.

The Kodiak Management Area has a 25% set aside for vessels over 58' LOA in the Pacific Cod Pot fishery. We are not aware of any adverse affects created by allowing vessels over 58' LOA to participate in this fishery. In fact, allowing the larger vessels to participate has had a positive affect in the Kodiak community, by way of, increased economic activity, additional employment opportunities and increased utilization of the resource.

Furthermore, we find the 58' LOA vessel size limit to be somewhat obsolete. There was a time when a 58' LOA vessel was considered a relatively "small" vessel. Characterizing the current 58' LOA vessels as small or entry-level platforms is just not accurate any longer. The 58' vessels, or "super 8's" as they are sometimes referred to, have the capacity to pack several hundred thousand pounds of Pacific cod. Essentially the same capacity as that of a 90-125' LOA vessel built 20 years ago. If a restrictive limit is actually necessary, we believe using a vessel's holding capacity is a better measurement to use.



Of course safety is a concern as well. It is well known that weather in the Bering Sea often create hazardous conditions at sea during the period in which the Pacific Cod Pot fisheries take place. Requiring that only relatively small vessels (length-wise) are able to participate, seems contrary to promoting the safest fishing conditions.

For these reasons we urge you to allow vessels up to 125' LOA to participate in the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict Pacific Cod Fishery.

Sincerely,



Craig Lowenberg  
Executive Director



November 19, 2015

Mr. Tom Kluberton, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

**Re: South Alaska Peninsula: Oppose Proposals 10 and 11. Dutch Harbor Sub-district:  
Oppose Proposals 15 & 16.**

Mr. Chairman and members of the Board of Fisheries,

The Freezer Longline Coalition (FLC) urges the Board of Fisheries (BOF) **not to adopt** the allocative proposals that seek to increase the Pacific cod (p-cod) GHs in the South Alaska Peninsula (**Proposals 10 and 11**) and in the Dutch Harbor Sub-district (Area O, **Proposals 15 & 16**).

These four proposals seek to reallocate harvest away from participants, many of whom are Alaskans, in federal p-cod fisheries who have made significant investments in vessels, gear, and licenses and have long term dependence on the p-cod resource. These proposals will also further concentrate harvest inside of three miles, which raises numerous Steller sea lion implications and issues. Lastly, these proposals will create additional costs to the Department of Fish & Game for the management and enforcement of the South Alaska Peninsula and Area O fisheries.

The FLC represents owners and operators of over 30 U.S.-flag vessels that participate in the hook-and-line CP, or freezer longline sector of the p-cod fishery in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI). The freezer longline fleet is almost completely (over 90%) reliant on p-cod and have few alternative fisheries. FLC member vessels are specialized longline vessels that range in size from approximately 110 to 190 feet and have a long history of dependence on the p-cod resource.

The proposals that seek to reallocate from participants in the federal fishery to the statewater GH fishery will also be reallocating from the parallel fishery to the statewater GH fishery. Therefore, these proposals will also be reallocating within state waters fisheries (parallel and GH) and consequently the BOF allocation criteria need to be considered in the deliberation process.



It is important for the BOF to recognize that many of the participants in the federal fisheries are Alaskans. Reallocation from the federal fishery would entail (in part) reallocating from Alaskans (who have invested in federal LLP licenses) to Alaskans who may have chosen not to invest in federal licenses. These actions create winners and losers amongst Alaskans who rely on fishing for their livelihood. Destabilizing one set of fishery participants over another set of participants is poor public policy.

For example, 82% of the participants in the <60' federal BSAI p-cod fixed gear (pot and longline) fishery are Alaskans. Some of these individual <60' vessels participate in both the GHL and federal fisheries (including the proposers of proposals 15 and 16). In this instance, they would be reallocating from and to themselves. The "need" for reallocation is not supported as there is still considerable harvest opportunity for the same <60' fixed gear sector in the federal BSAI p-cod fishery. As of November 7, 2015, the same federal <60' sector in the BSAI has only harvested 65% of the available sector allocation and still has 4,337 mt of p-cod available to harvest (9.6 million pounds).

Vessels that are over 60 feet cannot participate in the GHL fishery so any reallocation from federal vessels >60' is a direct loss of historic harvest opportunity for those vessels. With federal sector allocations and license requirements, the vessels cannot make up the re-allocation by simply shifting to other fishery resources.

This is not the case for the participants in the GHL fishery who have numerous other options for available fishery resources. For example, of the vessels that have participated in the Area O GHL fishery in 2014 and 2015, **95%** have federal fishing permits and **76%** have a federal LLP (license limitation program) as well participation in other statewater GHL fisheries (South Alaska Peninsula etc). With the Area O fishery only in existence for two years, no vessel can claim a long history or historic dependence on this fishery. At the same time, most of these <60' vessels do have dependence on numerous other p-cod fisheries (both federal and GHL), as well alternative fisheries such as salmon and halibut.

The proposed reallocation would allocate in part from large federal vessels, only to reallocate to other "large" vessels in the GHL fishery. The new <60' vessels that have recently entered the GHL fisheries are extremely wide Super 58' vessels (with a width of 26 to 29 feet) that have the equivalent tonnage of conventional commercial fishing vessels that are twice that length. A "normal" 58' Delta combination vessel (seine/crab/longline) is 72 gross tons (and 19.5' wide). A wide-body 58' Delta is 97 gross tons (and 23.5 foot wide). A new Fred Wahl 58' vessel measures out at 140 gross tons (and 111 net tons) with a beam of 28.5 feet (see attached **Appendix I**). In comparison, a 124' freezer longliner measures out at 191 gross tons (and 100 net tons).



**Table 1: Vessel Characteristics**

Vessel Type	LOA	Width	Depth	Gross Tons (GRT)	Net Tons
Delta combination (old)	58'	19.5'	10'	79	63
Delta wide-body	58'	23.5'	11'	97	78
Fred Wahl 26' wide	58'	26'	13'	131	105
Fred Wahl 28.5' wide	58'	28.5'	13'	140	110
BSAI freezer-longliner	125'	27'	13'	194	100

### Steller sea lion (SSL) management

The BOF should be aware that while there is a Steller sea lion (SSL) incidental take statement for the federal p-cod fisheries (including the parallel fishery), there is no such incidental take statement coverage for the GHL statewater fishery. While NMFS has not forced the issue, NMFS has previously strongly suggested in SSL Biological Opinion(s) that the State of Alaska should consider a Section 10 ESA consultation (see **Appendix II** attached). If someone were to press the issue and/or litigate, the State would likely be compelled to undergo an ESA Section 10 consultation. While it is unknown what may transpire and result in that process, it is evident that just undergoing that process would be a rigorous, time-consuming, and potentially expensive undertaking (see **Appendix III** attached).

The essential elements of the SSL management program are to disperse fishery harvest of SSL prey items (such as p-cod) in both time (season) and space (grounds) so as not to cause localized depletion, particularly near SSL rookeries and haulouts. Of particular concern is the area inside of three miles, a large portion of which is designated Critical Habitat for SSLs.

Previously, the Alaska Board of Fisheries created "Guiding Principles for Groundfish Fishery Regulations" (5 AAC 028.89) which stipulated that state groundfish fisheries are managed conservatively to:

- (1) Conserve groundfish resources to ensure sustained yield
- (2) Minimize bycatch and **prevent localized depletion of stocks**
- (3) Protect habitat and other associated fish and shellfish
- (4) **Maintain slower harvest rates by methods, means, time and area restrictions**
- (5) **Extend the length of fishing seasons by methods, means, time and area restrictions**

(6) Harvest the resource in a manner that emphasizes quality and value of the product



**(7) Use the best available information**

**(8) Manage cooperatively with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and other federal agencies associated with groundfish fisheries**

Adherence to these principles would have the State more closely aligned with SSL management goals. However, the BOF chose to repeal these guidelines in 2013, and the GHL p-cod harvests have subsequently increased while seasons have become shorter, more compressed, and more concentrated (see **Appendix IV**).

**Management implications of re-allocation from the federal fishery to the GHL fishery**

	Federal p-cod fishery	State p-cod GHL – pot gear
License limitation/limited entry	Yes	No limited entry.
Seasonal dispersion of harvest (SSL management)	Yes, 70/30 in BSAI p-cod. 60/40 in GOA cod.	No seasonal apportionment. Predominately A season only harvest
Length of season	By sector, can be up to 365 days/yr.	Compressed A seasons that are shortening in recent years. Guiding principles for groundfish management repealed in 2013 by BOF (included “extend length of season”).
Spatial dispersion	Yes – fisheries occur from the parallel fishery to distant offshore (0-200 miles).	Concentrated inside 3 miles. Guiding principles for groundfish management repealed in 2013 by BOF (included “prevent localized depletion”).
Observer coverage	Yes	No
VMS	Yes	No
SSL incidental take statement	Yes	No

The FLC requests that the BOF not adopt the four allocative proposals (Proposals 10, 11, 15, and 16). Rather, we would encourage that BOF consider adopting management

measures (time, gear, area) available to them that would more spatially and to  
disperse the statewater GHL fisheries.



The FLC appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on these proposals before  
the BOF. Thank you for your consideration.

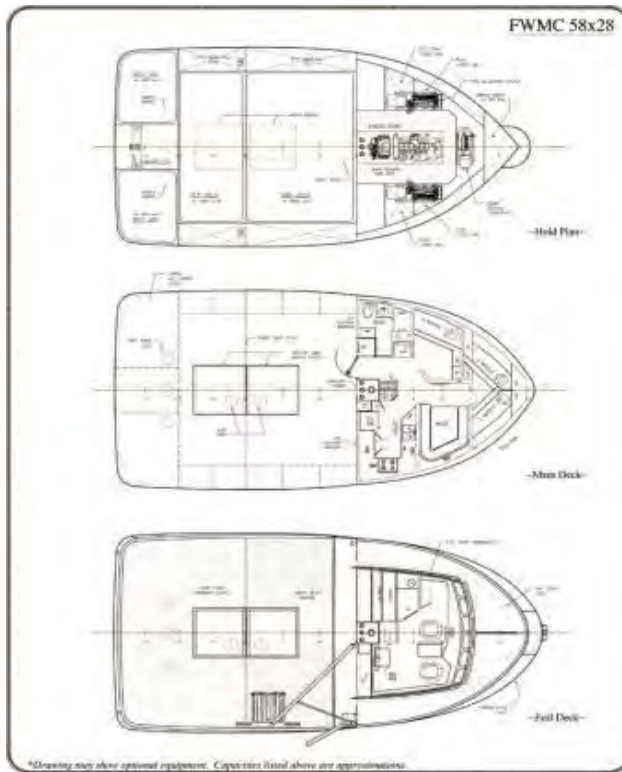
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. See".

Chad I. See  
Executive Director  
Freezer Longline Coalition



[chadisee@freezerlongline.biz](mailto:chadisee@freezerlongline.biz)





**FRED WAHL MARINE CONSTRUCTION Inc.**  
 196 PERRY ST. W. BEAVER, ALASKA 99501  
 TEL: (907) 771-5728 FAX: (907) 771-4388  
 E-mail: [rcs@fwm.com](mailto:rcs@fwm.com)  
 Web: [www.fredwahlmarine.com](http://www.fredwahlmarine.com)

**FWMC 58x28**  
 Combination Boat  
 -Outboard Profile-

<p><b>PARTICULARS</b></p> <p>LENGTH 58'00"                  BEAM 28'00"                  DEPTH 12'00"                  DISPLACEMENT 139 GROSS TONS                  NET TONS 110</p> <p><b>CAPACITIES</b></p> <p>CREW 10                  PASSENGERS 10                  FUEL 1000 GALLONS                  WATER 100 GALLONS                  OIL 100 GALLONS</p>	
--	---

\*Drawing may show optional equipment. Capacities listed above are approximations.



## SSL BIOPs and NMFS recommendations for Statewater Fisheries not covered by Section 7

A Section 10 consultation requires many elements including a Habitat Conservation Plan.

**November 30, 2000 BIOP**, (p. 11): *“However, the State fisheries in Alaska, particularly those involving salmon, herring, and Pacific cod are likely to result in take of Steller sea lions and may require modification. As a conservation measure, NMFS also recommends that the State of Alaska request NMFS to assist in the development of a Habitat Conservation Plan (as authorized under section 10 of the ESA). This plan should be designed to mitigate adverse impacts on Steller sea lions and other listed species that might accrue from State managed fisheries. This plan should employ the same standards and principles as used in this biological opinion to prevent completion and minimize take between fisheries and listed species.”*

**November 30, 2000 BIOP** (p. 306): Conservation recommendations: *“11.5 Incidental Take Statement for Alaska State Fisheries: Alaska state fisheries, particularly salmon, herring, and Pacific cod, are likely to affect Steller sea lions and thus may require an incidental take statement. Two alternatives for addressing this situation are: (1) a consultation under section 7 of the Endangered Species Act if a federal action or significant federal assistance is involved; or (2) state development of a habitat conservation plan. NMFS should assist Alaska state officials on this issue.”*

**October 19, 2001 BIOP** (p. 188): Conservation recommendation: *“9.1 Conservation Programs for State Managed Fisheries: New information available since the FMP biological opinion indicates that Steller sea lions may depend on areas closer to shore. This new information, along with other new information outlined in section 1, has resulted in a revised set of conservation measures proposed by the Council and NMFS. Analysis of this new data has also highlighted the concern that fisheries managed by the State of Alaska, within 3 nm of shore, may adversely affect sea lions through both indirect and direct mechanisms. That State of Alaska has been very supportive in providing information to NMFS in order to evaluate potential areas of concern (i.e., Kruse et al. 2000). However, further study is needed to evaluate these areas of concern to determine with greater confidence the potential types of adverse effects and their magnitude. The State of Alaska should further explore these issues and determine whether any conservation measures are necessary in order to avoid adversely affecting the survival and recover of Steller sea lions. Numerous options are available for further informal and formal consultations between the State of Alaska and NMFS depending upon the appropriate course of action. The goal should be continued cooperation in minimizing adverse impacts to Steller sea lions in order to facilitate their recovery and remove them from listing under the Endangered Species Act.”*

**2010 BIOP, November 24** (p. 425): *“10.1 Conservation Programs for State managed Fisheries: Available information in this Biological Opinion indicates that Steller sea lions may continue to depend on areas closer to shore for efficient foraging. Analysis of these data has highlighted the concern that fisheries managed by the State of Alaska,*



**within 3 nm of shore, could have adverse effects on sea lions through both indirect and direct mechanisms.** The State of Alaska has been very supportive in providing information to NMFS in order to evaluate potential areas of concern (i.e., Kruse et al. 2000, Woodby and Hulbert 2006, Soboleff 2005, and Woodby et al. 2005). **The State of Alaska should further explore these issues and determine whether any conservation measures are necessary in order to avoid adversely affecting the survival and recovery of Steller sea lions. Numerous options are available for further informal and formal consultations between the State of Alaska and NMFS depending upon the appropriate course of action.** The goal should be continued cooperation in minimizing adverse impacts to Steller sea lions in order to facilitate their recovery and remove them from listing under the Endangered Species Act.”

**2014 BIOP** (p. 238): **“6.2 State Managed Commercial Fisheries: Regarding indirect effects, NMFS concludes based on available information that State managed fisheries for pollock, Pacific cod, herring, and salmon may compete with foraging Steller sea lions for fish.** Given the importance of near shore habitats to Steller sea lions and the nearshore execution of State fisheries, this potential competition may have consequential effects for sea lions. Specifically, these potential interactions may contribute to nutritional stress for Steller sea lions, and may reduce the value of the marine portions of designated Steller sea lion critical habitat. State managed fisheries will likely continue to reduce the availability of prey within these marine foraging areas and may alter the distribution of certain prey resources in ways that reduce the foraging effectiveness of Steller sea lions.”

#### **Outtakes from SSL Biological Opinions regarding statewater fisheries:**

**1999 SSL BIOP:** “Assess the effects of other fisheries on Steller sea lions. Include fisheries managed by the Federal government and the **State of Alaska**. The assessment should give priority to **State** fisheries for herring, salmon, and **Pacific cod**.”

**2000 SSL BIOP:** “As described above, state fisheries occur inside the state territorial waters from zero to three miles, which happen to lie almost entirely within Steller sea lion critical habitat. Not only do these fisheries occur inside critical habitat, they are concentrated in space (usually bays or river outlets) and in time (usually spawning aggregations and salmon congregating near rivers for their return to spawning grounds in spring and summer).”

**2001 SSL BIOP:** “For the reasons described in this section, this new information suggests that state managed fisheries may have greater effects on sea lions than NMFS previously realized.”

“The geographic range of state managed fisheries in state waters coincides almost entirely with the area designated as Steller sea lion critical habitat. “

“Direct interactions between state managed fisheries and listed Steller sea lions involve both lethal and nonlethal impacts. Lethal impacts include sea lions inadvertently killed in fishing gear such as trawls, seines, and gill nets. Nonlethal effects include short term impacts such as disturbance of sea lion haulouts, vessel noise, entanglement in nets, and preclusion from foraging areas due to active fishing vessels and gear. State managed





fisheries are estimated to account for a lethal of about 23 Steller sea lions per year (Ferrero et al. 2000). Recently this number has been difficult to verify due to the lack of observer coverage and the expected under-reporting of takes through a voluntary reporting program.”

“Indirect effects of state managed fisheries on listed Steller sea lions include the hypothesis that fisheries may compete with sea lions for common prey.”

“As discussed below, depending on the extent of this competition, the indirect effects of state managed fisheries may reduce the prospects for survival and recovery of the western population of sea lions....The most concerning aspects of state managed fisheries would be those fisheries which remove high volumes of fish in a short period of time, and may have a greater likelihood of causing localized depletions.”

“State managed groundfish fisheries are likely to reduce the abundance and/or alter the distribution of several Steller sea lion key prey species, including walleye pollock and Pacific cod.”

“Moreover, portions of the state managed groundfish fishery are relatively new, so any effects they cause to the sea lion prey field also would be relatively new.”

“However, despite the smaller scope and scale of these state managed fisheries relative to federally managed fisheries, interactions with state managed fisheries may be a more important factor for Steller sea lions than previously realized.”

“Preferential use of near shore habitat by foraging sea lions implies that they are more susceptible to interactions with state managed fisheries than they appeared to be previously.”

“Regarding indirect effects, NMFS concludes based on available information that state managed fisheries for pollock, cod, herring, and salmon are likely to continue to compete for fish with foraging Steller sea lions. Given the importance of near shore habitats to sea lions, this competition for fish may have consequential effects. Specifically, these interactions may contribute to nutritional stress for sea lions, and may reduce the value of the marine portions of designated sea lion critical habitat. State managed fisheries will continue to reduce the abundance of preferred sea lion prey within these marine foraging areas and may alter the distribution of certain prey resources in ways that reduce the foraging effectiveness of sea lions. Therefore, state managed fisheries (particularly for herring, salmon, and groundfish) may contribute to the continued decline of the western population of Steller sea lions and may reduce the prospects for survival and recovery.”

**2010 SSL BIOP:** “The amount to which state fisheries may add to the cumulative effects to the western DPS remains unknown, but could be significant in that they take place within near-shore areas and often target highly-concentrated, high value prey species for Steller sea lions.”

“State-managed fisheries occur almost entirely within critical habitat.....NMFS concludes based on available information that State managed fisheries for pollock, Pacific cod,



*herring, and salmon are likely to continue to compete for fish with foraging Steller sea lions. Given the importance of near shore habitats to Steller sea lions, this competition for fish may have consequential effects.”*

*“To date, there have been few studies specifically designed to address the effects of these nearshore fisheries on Steller sea lions, so the information presented below is descriptive in nature...This section describes recent changes in state waters including removal of greater volumes of Steller sea lion prey biomass as well as other fish and invertebrate species from nearshore areas. Because the nearshore areas may be more important for Steller sea lions than previously thought in NMFS (2000, 2001), and because some state fisheries are concentrated in time and space critical to Steller sea lions (Woodby and Hulbert 2006), this suggests that state waters fisheries may have greater effects on Steller sea lions than NMFS previously concluded (NMFS 2000, 2001).”*

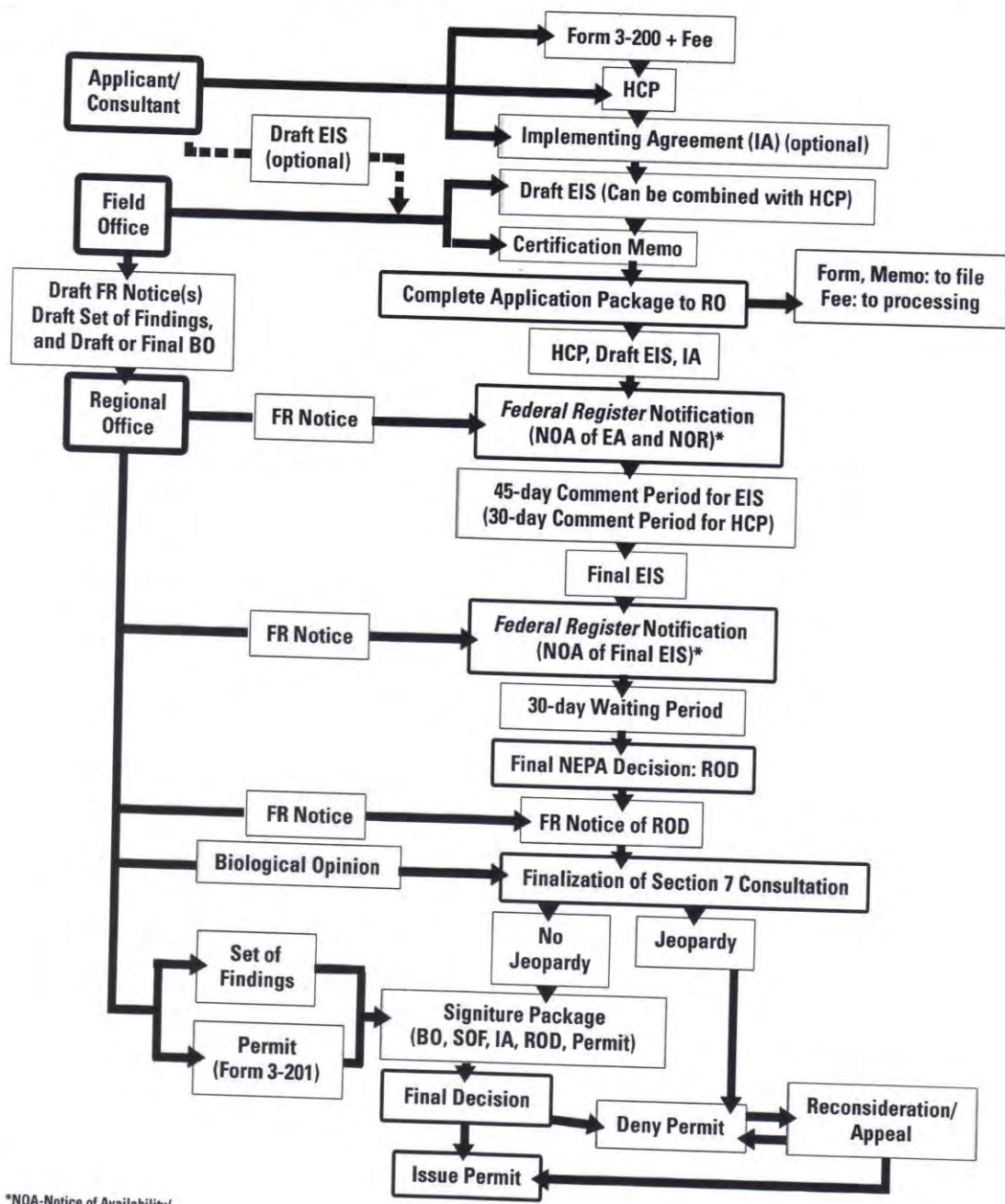
*“State managed fisheries represent a substantial influence on the near-shore marine ecosystem in Alaska. Both parallel and State managed groundfish fisheries occur almost entirely within Steller sea lion critical habitat (inside 3 nm)... The parallel fisheries for pollock, Pacific cod, and Atka mackerel are by far the largest groundfish fisheries within state waters by weight.”*

*“The amount of groundfish harvested in the state fisheries is presented in Table 2.27. Although the amount of fish harvested in the 3 nm area around haulouts appears low, when compared to the actual area in the GOA, it may not be that clear. **The amount of area composed inside 3 nm of haulouts in the GOA is roughly 0.5% of the total area, with catch percentages up to 7.4% (pot, Pacific cod); this represents two orders of magnitude higher catch rate than a theoretically dispersed fishery.** Again, the type of data necessary to evaluate whether this may or may not be a problem is lacking, such as information on biomass availability on small scales. Further complicating matters, the fleet fishing within state waters during these parallel seasons are generally small unobserved vessels.”*

**2014 SSL BIOP:** *“Regarding indirect effects, NMFS concludes based on available information that State managed fisheries for pollock, Pacific cod, herring, and salmon may compete with foraging Steller sea lions for fish. Given the importance of near shore habitats to Steller sea lions and the nearshore execution of State fisheries, this potential competition may have consequential effects for sea lions. Specifically, these potential interactions may contribute to nutritional stress for Steller sea lions, and may reduce the value of the marine portions of designated Steller sea lion critical habitat. State managed fisheries will likely continue to reduce the availability of prey within these marine foraging areas and may alter the distribution of certain prey resources in ways that reduce the foraging effectiveness of Steller sea lions.”*



**Figure 3: Typical Processing Steps for Section 10(a)(1)(B) Incidental Take Permit Applications Requiring an EIS**

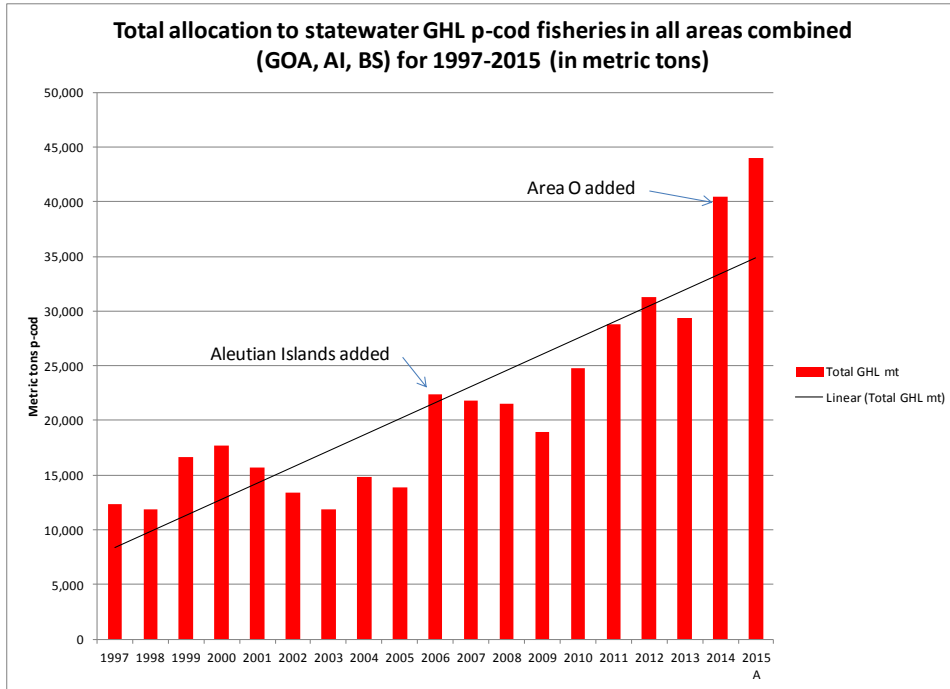


\*NOA-Notice of Availability/  
NOR-Notice of Receipt of Permit Application

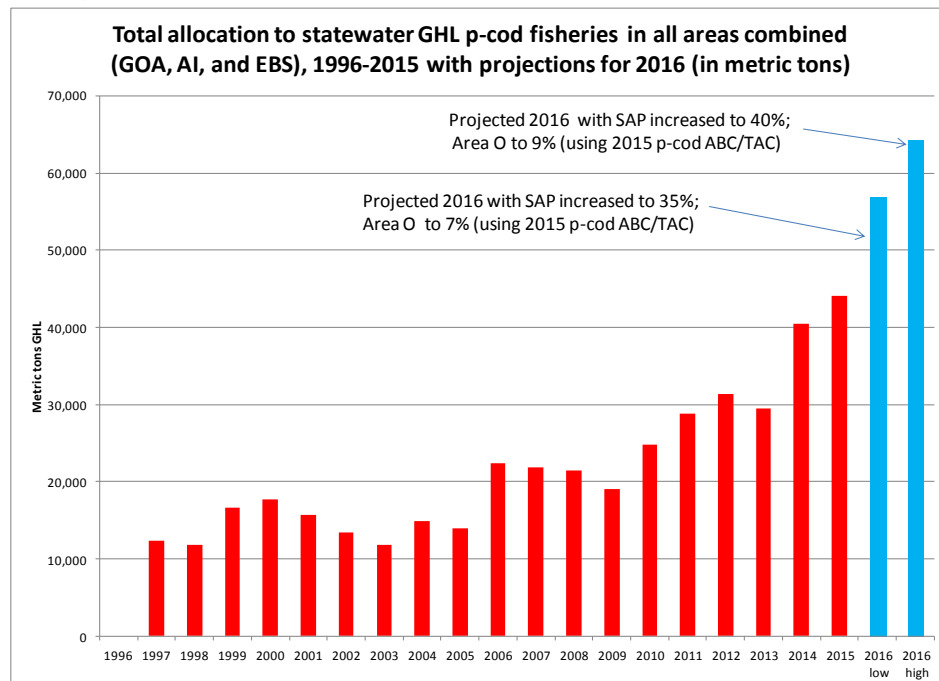


**Trends in the combined BSAI and GOA GHL p-cod fisheries:**

**Figure 1:** The total allocation to statewaters GHL p-cod (in all areas combined) has increased **3.6 X** from 1997 to 2015 (or **+260%**).

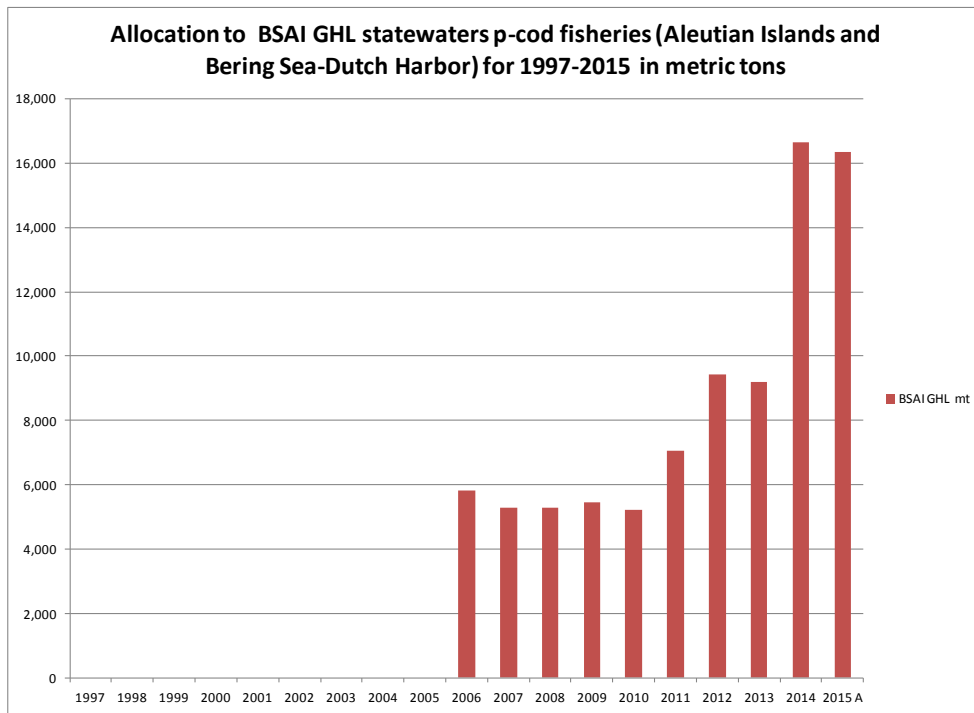


**Figure 2:** The current BOF proposals could increase the allocation to the combined GHL fisheries an additional **+46%** in 2016 (using 2015 ABC/TACs), an increase of **5.2 X** from 1997 to 2016 (or **+420%**).

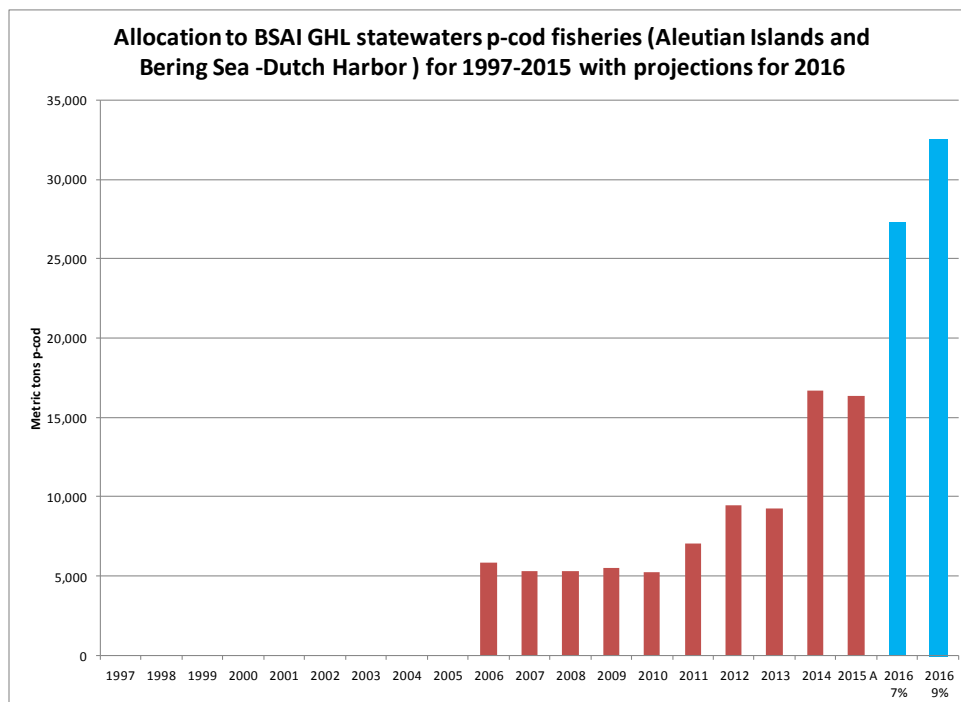


**Trends in the combined Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands GHL p-cod fisheries:**

**Figure 3:** The allocation to BSAI state GHL p-cod fisheries increased **2.8X** from 2006 to 2015 (or **180%**).

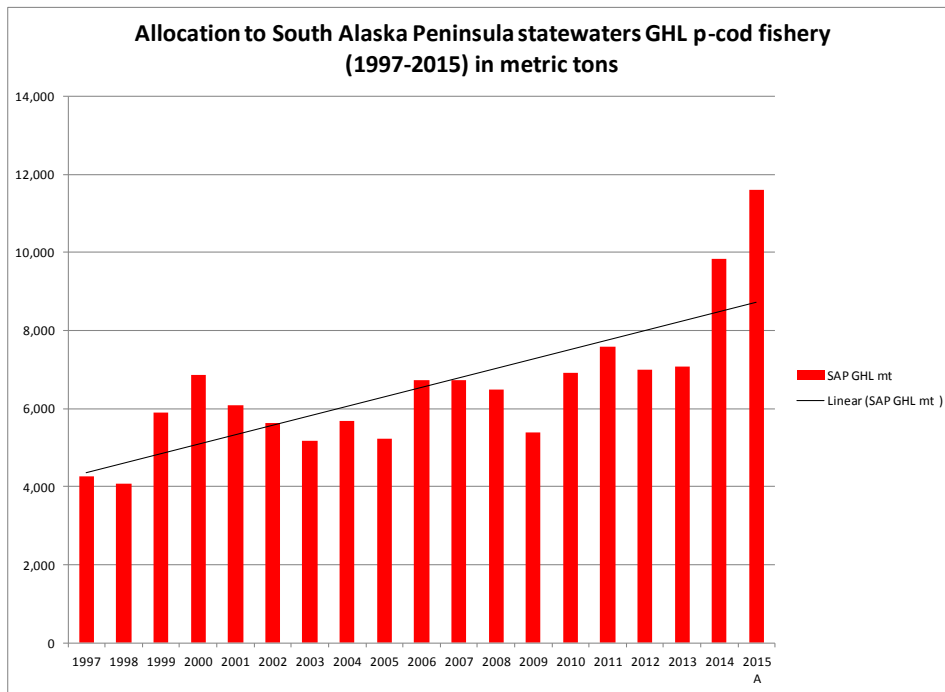


**Figure 4:** The 2015/2016 BOF proposals could increase the allocation to BSAI GHL fisheries **+67% to +100%** (or an increase of **4.7 X to 5.6 X** from 2006 to 2016 – using 2015 ABCs – or **+370% to +460%**).

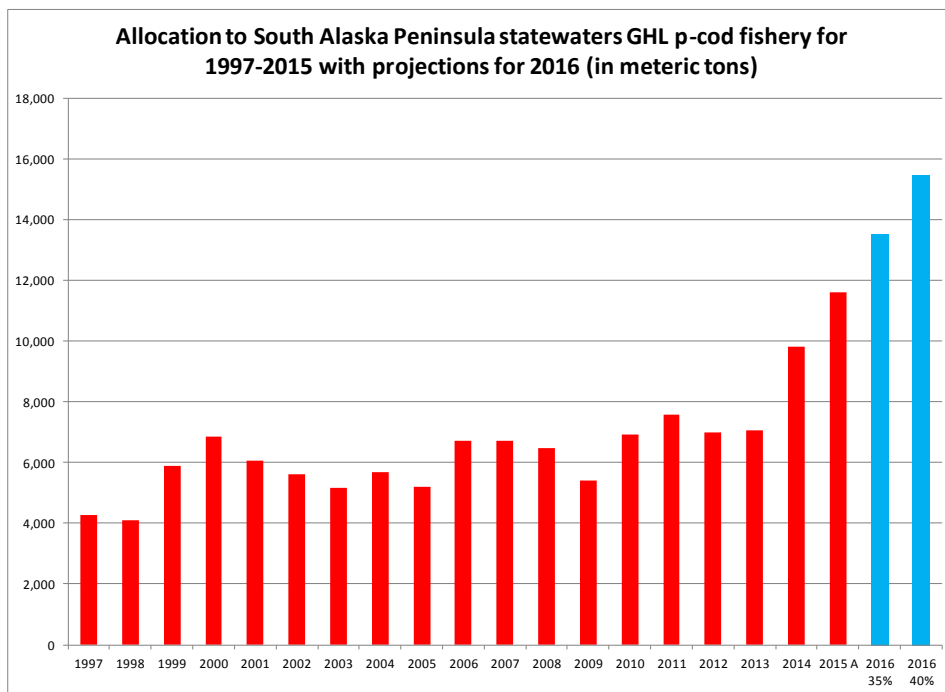


**Trends in the South Alaskan Peninsula (SAP) GHL p-cod fishery:**

**Figure 5:** The allocation to the SAP GHL p-cod fishery increased **2.7 X** from 1997 to 2015 (or **+170%**). The average “A” pot season length (1997-2007) was 30 days; the 2008-2015 avg. was 20 days. The shortest “A” pot season was 14 days (2014).



**Figure 6:** The 2015/2016 BOF proposals could increase the allocation to the SAP GHL fishery **+17% to +33%** (or an increase of **3.2 X to 3.6 X** from 1997 to 2016 – using 2015 ABC/TACs – or **+220% to 260%**).





November 19, 2015

Mr. Tom Kluberton, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

**Re: Aleutian Islands District Pacific Cod Management Plan: Proposal 19**

Chairman Kluberton and members of the Board of Fisheries,

The Freezer Longline Coalition (FLC) submitted Proposal 19 in April to address the uncaught B season Pacific cod in the Aleutians Islands (AI) statewater GHL Pacific cod fishery by revising the length limits for longline vessels in the B season.

Since the time of submission, it has become apparent that the membership of the FLC is not in consensus agreement regarding support of this proposal. Therefore, the FLC will not be taking a position on this proposal at the upcoming BOF meeting. However, some individual longline companies are still in support of the proposal and may speak to it. Conversely, some companies are opposed and may speak against it. However, the BOF should be aware that the FLC as a group will not be speaking for or against Proposal 19 at this meeting.

The FLC remains interested in exploring options to address uncaught Pacific cod in the AI statewater GHL Pacific cod fishery, including seeking a longer term solution in the federal regulatory process. This could involve modification of federal regulations that would facilitate rollback of uncaught statewater GHL Pacific cod back into the BSAI federal fishery in a timely manner (and within the confines of the 2.0 million metric ton OY cap).

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "C. See".

Chad I. See  
Executive Director  
Freezer Longline Coalition  
[chadisee@freezerlongline.biz](mailto:chadisee@freezerlongline.biz)