



# BERING SEA ALEUTIAN ISLAND PACIFIC COD SMALL VESSEL ACCESS

Joint Protocol Committee

October 13, 2022

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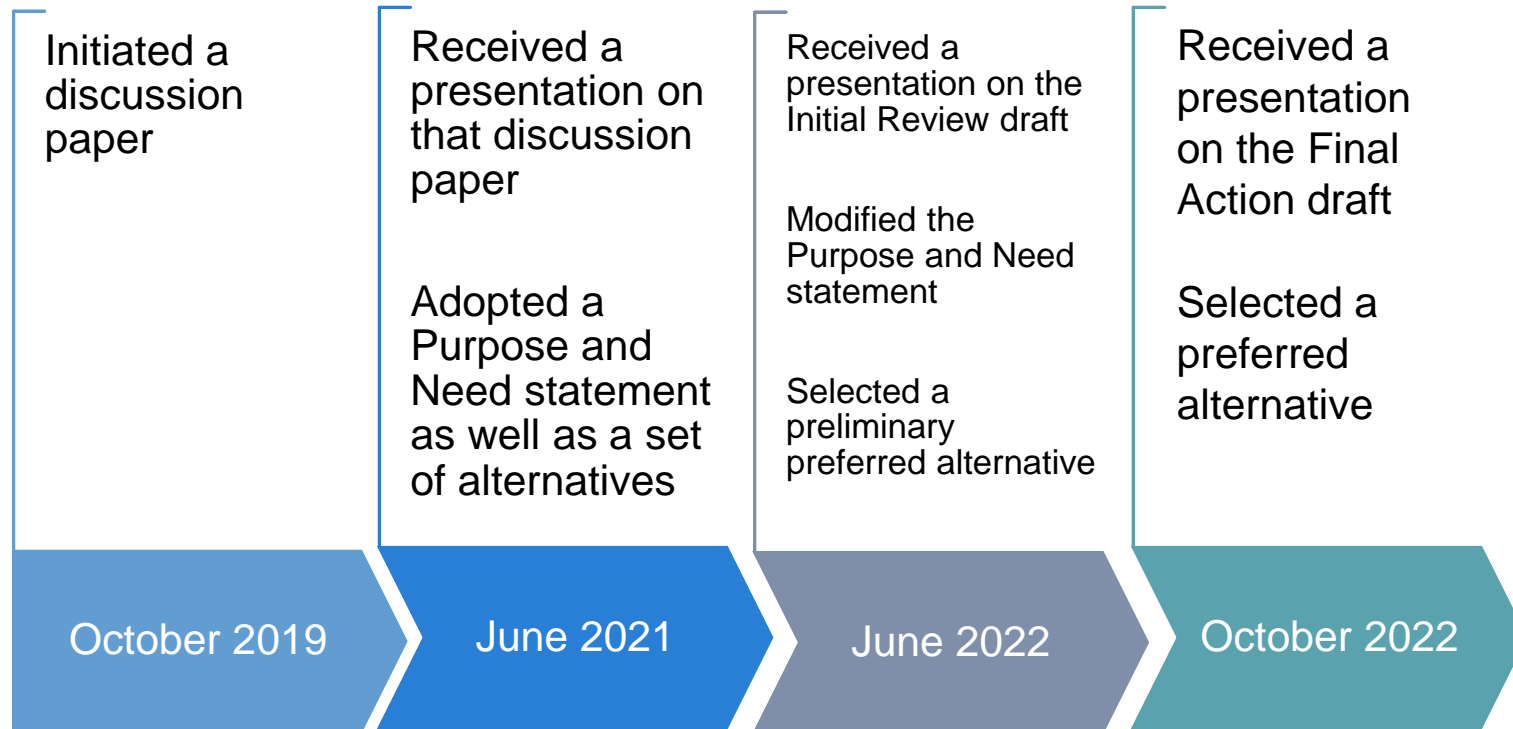
# ACTION UNDER CONSIDERATION



A proposed amendment to the Bering Sea Aleutian Island (BSAI) groundfish fishery management plan that would require smaller vessels operating in the <60' H&L/pot CV sector to harvest Pacific cod from the jig sector's allocation.



# HISTORY OF COUNCIL ACTION



# COUNCIL'S PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT

*Increased participation, reduced Pacific cod TACs, and fewer reallocations from other Pacific cod sectors, have resulted in shortened seasons for the <60 ft hook-and-line and pot catcher vessel Pacific cod sector. Due to their size, smaller vessels in this sector are particularly affected by these shortened seasons because vessel operators have less flexibility to fish when the weather is poor and typically fish waters closer to port which may be less productive. The jig sector allocation has not historically been fully utilized, particularly in the A and C seasons. Allowing these smaller catcher vessels using hook-and-line and pot gear to harvest Pacific cod from the jig sector allocation may increase stability for current fishery participants and potential new entrants with smaller catcher vessels without negatively impacting catcher vessels using jig gear.*

*Adopted June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022*



# DESCRIPTION OF IMPACTED FEDERAL SECTORS

## <60' H&L/pot CV sector

- All CVs that are <60' LOA using H&L or pot gear
- 2% allocation of Federal BSAI Pacific cod
  - Receive full allocation on January 1
- 94 unique vessels have participated in this sector, the majority of which (57) have a registered LOA of 58' (2008-2021)
- Vessels in this sector primarily participate in Federal BSAI Pacific cod, State waters Pacific cod, IFQ, and salmon fisheries
- 76% of the vessels that participate in this sector have a registered ownership address in an Alaska community
  - The majority of vessels >56' registered in Kodiak while the majority of vessels ≤56' are registered in Dutch Harbor/Unalaska



Photo credit: Anna Henry



# DESCRIPTION OF IMPACTED FEDERAL SECTORS

## Jig sector

- All CVs and CPs using jig gear
- 1.4% allocation of Federal BSAI Pacific cod
  - Allocation is apportioned on a trimester basis: A-season is 60% (Jan 1 – April 30); B-season is 20% (April 30—August 31); C-season is 20% (August 31—December 31)
- 33 unique vessels have participated in this sector, the annual average level of participation is four vessels (2008-2021); participation has been low in recent years
- Vessels in this sector primarily participate in Federal BSAI Pacific cod, State waters Pacific cod, IFQ, and salmon fisheries
- 87% of vessels that participate in this sector have a registered ownership address in an Alaska community







# COUNCIL ACTION AT THE OCTOBER 2022 MEETING

- The Council recommended the following as its preferred alternative:
  - **Alternative 2:** Redefine the current BSAI Pacific cod jig sector to include H&L or pot vessels less than or equal to:
    - **Option 1:** 55' LOA
  - **Suboption:** B- and C-season fishery would remain a jig only fishery. After the jig sector's A-season ends, all H&L or pot CVs less than or equal to 60' LOA would be in the same sector.

# DESCRIPTION OF COUNCIL ACTION IN OCTOBER

- The Council's action redefines the BSAI Pacific cod jig sector during the A season (January 1 – April 30) to include H&L or pot CVs  $\leq 55'$  LOA:
  - A-season gear types: H&L, jig, and pot
  - B- and C-season gear types: jig
- All harvest from the redefined jig sector would be deducted from the jig sector's 1.4% allocation of Federal Pacific cod
- At the same time, the  $<60'$  H&L or pot CV sector would be redefined during the A-season so that only the harvest from H&L or pot CVs with a reported LOA  $>56'$  (i.e., 56-59' LOA) would be deducted from the current sector's 2% allocation of Federal Pacific cod
- After the jig A-season ends on April 30, all H&L or pot CVs  $<60'$  LOA would be in the same sector and be eligible for reallocations of Federal BSAI Pacific cod later in the year (typically September – December)





# POINTS OF CONSIDERATION FOR THE BOF

- The Council's preferred alternative would redefine the current <60' H&L/pot CV sector
- Currently, the State uses the <60' H&L/pot CV sector's closure date as the trigger to open the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict (DHS) State-waters Pacific cod fishery seven days after the sector's closure date
- Under the Council's preferred alternative, the BOF would need to address the trigger for opening the DHS pot fishery
- Analytical staff presentations to the Council in June and October 2022 highlighted it is uncertain what future action the BOF would take to open the DHS State-waters Pacific cod fishery
  - The BOF could choose the new small vessel sector closing date, the redefined <60' H&L/pot CV sector closing date, or some other trigger (e.g., hard date)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) rule-making would take approximately two years
  - Look to have regulations implemented at the start of the calendar/fishing year, likely 2025



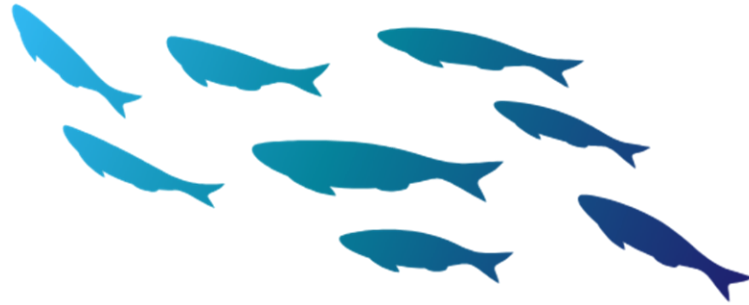
# DHS STATE WATERS POT FISHERY

- Under current State regulations, each year the DHS pot fishery is set at 8% of the Bering Sea ABC with an annual 1% increase if 90% of the GHL is harvested until the GHL reaches 15% of the BS ABC.
  - The 2022 GHL season for pot gear was set at 11% of the estimated Pacific cod ABC for the Federal Bering Sea subarea (37,196,000 pounds)
  - The 2023 GHL season for pot gear will be set at 12% of the estimated Pacific cod ABC for the Federal Bering Sea subarea

## **Federal vessel participation in the DHS State-waters pot fishery**

- 11 pot vessels  $\leq 56'$  have participated in the Federal BSAI Pacific cod fishery and five have also participated in the DHS State waters fishery (2014-2021)
  - For these five vessels, the DHS State waters fishery has contributed \$1.51 million in annual average ex-vessel revenue (2014-2021)
- 42 pot vessels  $>56'$  LOA have participated in the Federal BSAI Pacific cod fishery and 38 have also participated in the DHS State waters fishery (2014-2021).
  - For these 38 vessels, the DHS State waters fishery has contributed \$7.27 million in annual average ex-vessel revenue (2014-2021).





Questions?

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