



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, AK 99802-1668

January 30, 2026

Agenda B-2: NMFS Management Report

Progress on Rulemaking

Highlights on progress since the December 2025 meeting include:

- On **December 16, 2025**, NMFS published the 2026 and 2027 Proposed Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Harvest Specifications for Groundfish. The comment period closed on **January 5, 2026**. AKR plans to submit the final harvest specifications for 2026 and 2027 in time for publication in the Federal Register prior to the expiration of the current 2026 specifications on March 18, 2026.
- On **December 16, 2025**, NMFS published the 2026 and 2027 Proposed Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Harvest Specifications for Groundfish. The comment period closed on **January 5, 2026**. AKR plans to submit the final harvest specifications for 2026 and 2027 in time for publication in the Federal Register prior to the expiration of the current 2026 specifications on March 17, 2026.
- On **February 2, 2026**, NMFS published a Notice of Availability for Amendment 57 to the Fishery Management Plan for King and Tanner Crabs of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. Amendment 57 would make a number of non-substantive, administrative changes to the Crab FMP including updates to informational content on the status of crab stocks, fisheries, and communities, as well as reorganizing the structure for clarity and logical sequence. Comments are requested through **April 3, 2026**.
- A final rule to revise and standardize the time limit for assigning a management program to each haul for trawl catcher/processors participating in the groundfish fisheries in the GOA and the BSAI management areas is under review.
- NMFS staff are preparing a proposed rule to implement the Council's April 2025, recommended changes to the halibut vessel use caps in Area 4. Because this action re-implements a vessel use cap in Area 4, this action would need to be in effect at the start of the fishing season and would not be implemented mid-season. We do not expect this to be effective for the 2026 IFQ fishing year.
- Each year, NMFS calculates and publishes fee notices in the Federal Register. NMFS has two 2025 fee notices under review:
 - The cost recovery fee notice for the Central Gulf of Alaska Rockfish Program.
 - The cost recovery fee notice for the Pacific Cod Trawl Cooperative Program.
- **The Status of Actions Report** provides additional detail.



Additional NMFS Documents

In addition to this B2 NMFS Management Report, NMFS also posted the following documents under this agenda item:

- 2026 Annual Deployment Plan for Observers and Electronic Monitoring
- 2025 NMFS Inseason Management Annual Report
- AKR Tribal Engagement Report
- Letter to NPFMC regarding Maximum Retainable Amount Emergency Exemptions
- Status of Actions Report

2026 Annual Deployment Plan Update

The Final 2026 Annual Deployment Plan for Observers and Electronic Monitoring in the Groundfish and Halibut Fisheries off Alaska has been posted on the NMFS Alaska Region website at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/2026-annual-deployment-plan-observers-and-electronic-monitoring-groundfish-and>.

NMFS Inseason 2025 Annual Reports and 2026 Inseason Management Report

NMFS released the GOA and BSAI reports, with a full year of 2025 catch data, on the NMFS Alaska Region website on January 26, 2026 (and they are linked in the Council agenda under the B2 NMFS Management Report). These reports were delayed due to the government shutdown.

Attachment 2 to this B2 report is NMFS's Inseason Management Report for catch during 2026, through January 24, 2026, compared to catch during 2025 which is through January 25, 2025.

Prioritizing Fishery Management Projects

At the December 2025 Council meeting, the Council requested more discussion on priorities for implementing Council recommendations given the reduced staff capacity in the Alaska Region in the context of addressing the GOA Pacific cod harvest specifications out-of-cycle. Each year from December through March, SF staff prioritize managing the A season fisheries, preparing the harvest specifications, completing mandatory tasks to close out the previous fishing year, and completing mandatory tasks to ensure the Catch Accounting System is ready for the next fishing year. Since the new Pacific cod stock assessment was completed in time for the Groundfish Plan Team to review it at an already scheduled meeting on January 21, 2026, and the SSC and Council put the issue on the agenda for this February meeting, NMFS anticipates that we will be able to incorporate this change in the final 2026 and 2027 groundfish harvest specifications, saving considerable work and time compared to publishing separate Pacific cod specifications later. Although this will save work on the harvest specifications process, SF staff will have some additional tasks due to this action in order for participants to take advantage of increased TACs in the A season. While this causes additional work during ongoing fisheries, this action is not anticipated to further reduce AKR's ability to manage fisheries or progress on developing or implementing Council actions. However, without the unique combination of factors and timing that aligned for this specific action, it is unlikely that AKR could reliably complete similar adjustments in the future without more significant operational impacts.

This portion of the B2 report generally explains how SF plans and makes operational decisions as well as the trade-offs in implementing new actions when faced with resource constraints. SF's highest priority is to complete activities that are necessary to support the day-to-day management

and operation of the fisheries. These actions implement MSA's National Standard 1 to promote optimum yield and prevent overfishing. These fisheries management activities include collection of fishery-dependent data for catch estimation, support for our monitoring programs required to determine catch, data analysis in the Catch Accounting System, inseason management, harvest specifications and halibut management measures required to allow fishing, and cost recovery. Our highest priority activities also include those tasks that we are required to complete including: legal mandates, court ordered mandates, and requests for emergency rules.

Work on Council actions for FMP and regulatory amendments is generally our next priority. To prioritize this work, SF considers several factors including Council priorities, conservation concerns, legal considerations (e.g. required by MSA), impacts to data required for management, and proximity to a mandatory deadline. Generally, SF's role is to write the necessary regulations, work with Council staff on the analytical documents, and, importantly, coordinate all of the other facets of implementing a Council action (e.g., programming changes, operational data or workflow changes, communicating to affected Agency offices, and coordinating outreach to the affected public). The complexity of this work is directly dependent on the complexity of the action and the number of different people that need to be involved for implementation. SF works with Council staff to include as much of this advanced planning as possible in the analysis before the Council takes final action. Key things that impact implementation timing:

- (1) Complexity of the action;
- (2) Potential for impacts to ESA species that require consultation;
- (3) Need for changes to existing permits or new permits;
- (4) Need for changes to existing monitoring requirements or new monitoring requirements;
- (5) Need for changes to observer or electronic monitoring coverage;
- (6) Need for changes to existing information collections under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) or new collections;
- (7) Need for programming changes to existing IT systems, like the Catch Accounting System, or new programming, like the Recreational Quota Entity stamp purchase;
- (8) Need for changes by Alaska Department of Fish & Game or other outside agencies;
- (9) Novel or complex legal issues; and
- (10) Controversy.

With reduced staff capacity throughout the region, each of these facets becomes more challenging and time consuming. In addition to rule related implementation tasks, AKR is also working on maintaining current IT systems, major upgrades, new IT systems, and required data migration that affects programming capacity to implement new fishery management programs or modifications. Rule writing and coordination is more difficult when individuals have more projects than are manageable. In SF, we strive to make our process as efficient as possible and have focused on creating efficiencies to reduce the work it takes to accomplish core tasks. However, there are a lot of things outside of our control that we are not able to improve that impact our ability to accomplish all of our work (e.g., process requirements, analytical requirements, review and approval processes).

Recreational Quota Entity (RQE) Funding Implementation

NMFS staff have been collaborating with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to implement the new RQE halibut stamp requirement for the 2026 charter halibut fishing season.

Starting January 2, 2026, Charter halibut permit (CHP) holders can now purchase charter halibut stamps in their eFISH accounts. As required by the RQE funding final rule ([90 FR 29774, July 7, 2025](#)), charter vessel guides will be able to validate stamps in their saltwater charter eLogbook for each charter vessel angler intending to catch and retain halibut beginning on February 1, 2026. Charter business owners will be able to track their stamp validations post-submission using an eLogbook data query, and these validations will be reflected in each CHP holder's eFISH account balance later in 2026. NMFS and ADF&G are also planning outreach activities to alert and educate charter halibut fishery participants.

Economic Data Reporting Requirements for 2026

NMFS is in the process of drafting a proposed rule to remove economic data reporting (EDR) requirements for three catch share programs: BSAI Crab Rationalization Program, AFA Program, and the Amendment 80 Program. **EDR requirements for these programs remain in effect until applicable regulations are removed through publication of a final rule in the Federal Register. Fishery participants should plan to comply with all applicable EDR requirements in 2026.** If approved, it is anticipated that 2027 will be the first year where there are no longer EDR requirements for these programs. Please reach out to stephanie.warpinski@noaa.gov for more information.

Cost Recovery and Fee Updates

Since the December 2025 meeting, AKR has completed the cost recovery process for the Individual Fishing Quota Program and Rockfish Program. In response to growing interest from the Council and public for more timely information, the following tables provide a synopsis of agency costs and resulting proposed fee percentages for all catch share programs in 2025, reflecting our ongoing commitment to transparency and timely communication regarding the cost recovery process. **NMFS will provide a complete annual cost recovery report to the Council at the June 2026 meeting.**

Since the December 2025 Council meeting, NMFS published the Notice of standard prices and fee percentage for the North Pacific Halibut and Sablefish Individual Fishing Quota Cost Recovery Program on December 31, 2025 ([90 FR 61380](#)) and the Notice of North Pacific Observer Program Standard ex-vessel prices for landings of groundfish and halibut in 2026 on December 30, 2025 ([90 FR 61117](#)).

Individual Fishing Quota Program Direct Program Costs by Year and Agency and 2025 Proposed Fee Percentage.

Year	NMFS AKR	NMFS FSD	NOAA OLE	ADF&G	IPHC	TOTAL COSTS	FEE %*
2025	\$768,598	\$16,921	\$2,042,750	\$130,494	\$783,204	\$3,741,967	2.4%
2024	\$1,124,621	\$35,883	\$2,177,901	\$140,733	\$796,106	\$4,275,244	3.0%*
Difference	-\$356,023	-\$18,962	-\$135,151	-\$10,239	-\$12,902	-\$533,277	

*The billed fee percentage was limited by the Magnuson-Stevens Act statutory cap of 3.0 percent of the ex-vessel value of the fishery in a Program Year.

Rockfish Program Direct Program Costs by Year and Agency and 2025 Proposed Fee Percentage.

Year	NMFS AKR	NMFS AFSC	ADF&G	TOTAL COSTS	FEE %*
2025	\$268,809	\$6,627	\$5,891	\$281,327	3.0%*
2024	\$419,048	\$8,048	\$5,898	\$432,994	3.0%*
Difference	-\$150,239	-\$1,421	-\$7	-\$151,667	

*The billed fee percentage was limited by the Magnuson-Stevens Act statutory cap of 3.0 percent of the ex-vessel value of the fishery in a Program Year.

Crab Rationalization Program Direct Program Costs by Year and Agency and Proposed Fee Percentages.

Year	NMFS AKR	NMFS AFSC	NOAA OLE	NMFS FSD	ADF&G	PSMFC	TOTAL COSTS	FEE %*
2025	\$344,9490	\$20,430	\$480,948	\$349	\$706,199	\$107,605	\$1,660,483	1.2%
2024	\$849,544	\$13,153	\$447,681	\$8,187	\$1,367,420	\$160,967	\$2,846,950	3.0%
Difference	-\$504,590	\$7,280	\$33,260	-\$7,838	-\$661,227	-\$53,362	-\$1,186,470	

*The billed fee percentage was limited by the Magnuson-Stevens Act statutory cap of 3.0 percent of the ex-vessel value of the fishery in a Program year.

Pacific Cod Trawl Cooperative Program Direct Program Costs by Year and Agency and 2025 Proposed Fee Percentage.

Year	NMFS AKR	NMFS AFSC	NOAA OLE	ADF&G	TOTAL COSTS	FEE %*
2025	\$217,174	\$2,897	\$145,200	\$4,705	\$369,976	3.0%
2024	\$296,568	\$1,958	\$65,133	-	\$363,659	1.92%
Difference	-\$79,394	\$939	\$80,067	\$4,705	\$6,317	

*The billed fee percentage was limited by the Magnuson-Stevens Act statutory cap of 3.0 percent of the ex-vessel value of the fishery in a Program Year.

Amendment 80 Program Direct Program Costs by Year and Agency and 2025 Proposed Fee Percentage.

Year	NMFS AKR	NMFS AFSC	NOAA OLE	ADF&G	PSMFC	TOTAL COSTS	FEE %*
2025	\$612,990	\$381,000	\$537,681	\$10,721	\$78,030	\$1,620,439	1.55%
2024	\$536,901	\$394,665	\$620,409	\$10,930	\$126,865	\$1,689,760	1.86%
Difference	\$76,098	-\$13,657	-\$82,728	-\$209	-\$53,362	-\$69,330	

American Fisheries Act Program Direct Program Costs by Year and Agency and 2025 Proposed Fee Percentage.

Year	NMFS AKR	NMFS AFSC	NOAA OLE	ADF&G	PSMFC	TOTAL COSTS	FEE %*
2025	\$249,216	\$145,220	\$190,430	\$5,515	\$32,621	\$623,010	0.35%
2024	\$242,094	\$132,916	\$88,509	\$5,950	\$52,968	\$522,430	0.24%
Difference	\$7,122	\$12,300	\$101,921	-\$435	-\$20,347	\$100,577	

Community Development Quota Program Direct Program Costs by Year and Agency and 2025 Proposed Fee Percentage.

Year	NMFS AKR	NMFS AFSC	NOAA OLE	ADF&G	TOTAL COSTS	FEE %*
2025	\$206,262	\$136,770	\$418,124	\$32,124	\$793,287	1.19%
2024	\$309,648	\$128,330	\$497,298	\$35,838	\$971,118	1.38%
Difference	-\$103,386	\$8,442	-\$79,174	-\$3,7140	-\$177,831	

American Fisheries Act (AFA) Vessel Replacement Report

In December 2025, AKR published a new report that details AFA vessels that have been removed or replaced. This report can be accessed on the Alaska Fisheries Management Reports page under the American Fisheries Act heading at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/sustainable-fisheries/alaska-fisheries-management-reports>.

Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation on the BSAI FMP

SFD prepared a Biological Assessment and submitted it to PRD on May 15, 2025, to reinitiate consultation on the groundfish fisheries managed under BSAI FMP, including State of Alaska parallel groundfish fisheries. PRD is completing a Biological Opinion on the effects of the BSAI groundfish FMP on ESA-listed species and designated critical habitat. In accordance with [NMFS Policy Directive 01-117: Integration of Endangered Species Act Section 7 with MSA Processes](#), the Regional Administrator will provide a draft of the BSAI Biological Opinion to the Council Executive Director and Chair for review as discussed at the October 2025 Council meeting. The draft has been delayed due to the recent lapse in appropriations.

Chinook Salmon Endangered Species Act (ESA) Listing Petition Update

NMFS received a petition from the Wild Fish Conservancy on January 11, 2024, asking that we delineate and list one or more evolutionarily significant units of Chinook salmon in southern Alaska as threatened or endangered under the ESA, and that we designate critical habitat concurrently with the listing. On May 24, 2024, NMFS announced a positive 90-day finding on a petition to list Chinook salmon in the GOA as threatened or endangered under the ESA, concluding that the petitioned actions may be warranted. As a result, under the ESA, NMFS must

complete a status review and issue a 12-month finding. We convened a team of federal scientists to review the species' status and extinction risk, and we invited experts from ADF&G and a tribal member to participate as advisors to the team. The SRT's report has undergone external peer review and NMFS is currently developing the 12-month finding. On May 8, 2025, Wild Fish Conservancy filed suit for NMFS' failure to issue a timely 12-month finding on the petition to list.

Personnel Updates

Kaja Brix retired in November, 2025 after a long and distinguished career with the Alaska Region. During her tenure in the Alaska Region she served as the Assistant Administrator for Protected Resources and as an Arctic Policy and Planning Coordinator. In recent years Kaja notably led efforts in Arctic-related issues through her participation on the Steering Committee for the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC), which set direction for the next Biennial Implementation Plan for the 2022-2026 5yr Arctic Research Plan. This new plan was policy driven and supported community-based needs. She also served as a Federal Co-chair on the IARPC Arctic STEM working group to facilitate partnership development, committee meetings, work-plans, engagement with rural and indigenous communities, students, and academic faculty.

Sean McDermott left NMFS Alaska Region for a private sector job after nearly 23 years of federal service. Sean began his career with NMFS in 2002 and has been an advocate of habitat conservation. His work has included the environmental review of coastal development actions, implementing habitat restoration, promoting fish passage, and supporting habitat research. Sean acted as the Hydropower Review Coordinator for the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office Habitat Conservation Division. In 2021, he moved to the Alaska Region's Habitat Conservation Division, supervising the Anchorage field office and its implementation of the Federal Power Act, Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, and Essential Fish Habitat provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Tammy Olson recently retired from the Protected Resources Division after nearly 30 years of federal service. Tammy consistently dedicated herself to wildlife conservation as both a vocation and avocation. During her early years with the National Park Service, she managed bear/human interactions at Brooks Camp in Katmai National Park. Tammy came aboard NMFS to work with the Protected Resources Division in 2009. In this capacity, Tammy has tirelessly crafted multiple status reviews and ESA listing actions. We will greatly miss Tammy for her excellent writing, superior analytical skills, and incredible attention to detail.



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Agenda B-2: NMFS Management Report

Attachment 2 -- Inseason Management Report

Catch during 2026 is through January 24, 2026 compared to catch during 2025 which is through January 25, 2025. All catch amounts are in metric tons. Additional information is available from [daily catch reports and information bulletins](#).

Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands

Bering Sea Pollock

The 2026 Bering Sea pollock TAC is the same as the 2025 Bering Sea TAC of 1,375,000 mt. The fishery began on January 20, 2026 and these data represent 4 days of fishing.

Bering Sea	2026 A season allocation	2026 A season catch	Percent taken
Inshore	270,715	10,730	4%
CP	216,572	15,082	7%
Mothership	54,144	4,433	8%
CDQ	62,730	5,272	8%
Total	604,161	29,577	6%

Salmon in the Bering Sea Pollock Fisheries

The 2026 Chinook salmon PSC limit is 45,000 Chinook salmon, and is allocated to each sector as specified in 50 CFR 679.21(f)(3)(iii)(A).

Species	Chinook				Non-Chinook				
	Year	2026		2025		2026		2025	
Amount		#	Rate ¹	#	Rate ¹	#	Rate ¹	#	Rate ¹
CDQ	166	0.03		128	0.03	2	0.001	4	0.001
AFA	1,078	0.04		1,788	0.05	27	0.001	49	0.001
Total	1,244	0.04		1,916	0.05	29	0.001	53	0.001

¹Rate is total salmon per groundfish in the pollock target.



BSAI Pacific Cod by Sector

The 2026 Pacific cod TAC is 123,077 mt in the Bering Sea and 8,951 mt in the Aleutian Islands compared to the 2025 Bering Sea TAC of 133,602 mt and Aleutian Islands TAC of 8,694 mt.

BSAI Sector	2026				2025			
	A season allocation ¹	Catch	A season closed	% Taken	A season allocation ¹	Catch	A season closed ²	% Taken
CDQ	8,476	168	na	2%	9,135	109	na	1%
Hook-and-line CP	29,079	4,045	na	14%	31,356	3,913	na	12%
Pot CP	896	0	na	0%	966	0	na	0%
Pot CV >= 60 ft	5,016	2,481	na	49%	5,408	3,336	Feb 6	62%
Hook-and-line CV >= 60 ft	119	0	na	0%	129	0	na	0%
Hook-and-line/Pot CVs < 60 ft	3,272	1,625	na	50%	3,525	3,447	Jan 21	98%
Jig	60	0	na	0%	67	0	na	0%
Trawl CV	19,282	55	na	<1%	20,781	136	na	1%
AFA CP	2,034	49	na	2%	2,192	102	Jan 20	5%
Amendment 80 CP	11,849	270	na	2%	12,771	349	na	3%
Total	80,083	8,693		11%	86,330	11,392		13%

¹In 2026, NMFS reallocated 930 mt of the A season jig allocation to the hook-and-line or pot gear less than 60 ft length annual allocation.

²For 2025 the fishery “closed” date is the date NMFS advised the fleet that the TAC would be reached. Closures in the Federal Register may have occurred after these dates.

Gulf of Alaska

Pacific Cod - Western GOA

The jig gear allocation decreased from 3.5 percent in 2025 to 2.5 percent in 2026. The below table includes harvest of both directed and incidental catch of Pacific cod.

Sector	2026				2025			
	A season allocation	Catch	A season closed	% Taken	A season allocation	Catch	A season closed ¹	% Taken
Hook-and-line CP	565	112	na	20%	641	0	na	0%
Hook-and-line CV	36	0	Jan 1	0%	41	0	Jan 1	0%
Jig	80	10	na	12%	128	3	na	2%
Pot CV/CP	1,027	860	Feb 1	84%	1,165	551	Feb 7	47%
Trawl CV	1,635	0	na	0%	1,856	0	na	0%
Trawl CP	47	0	Jan 20	0%	53	0	Jan 20	0%
Total	3,390	982		29%	3,884	554		14%

¹For 2025 the fishery “closed” date is the date NMFS advised the fleet that the TAC would be reached unless otherwise closed in the harvest specifications. Closures in the Federal Register may have occurred after these dates.

Pacific Cod - Central GOA

The jig gear allocation increased from 3 percent in 2025 to 4 percent in 2026, and the other sectors decreased in 2026 to account for the jig gear allocation increase. The below table includes harvest of both directed and incidental catch of Pacific cod.

Sector	2026				2025			
	A season allocation	Catch	A season closed	% Taken	A season allocation	Catch	A season closed ¹	% Taken
Hook-and-line CP	570	258	na	45%	613	0	na	0%
Hook-and-line CV <50 ft	1,292	499	na	39%	1,389	286	na	21%
Hook-and-line CV >=50 ft	778	48	na	6%	836	c	na	c%
Jig	347	0	na	0%	277	0	May 6	73%
Pot CV/CP	2,473	2,443	Jan 20	99%	2,660	1,738	Feb 7	65%
Trawl CV	3,508	7	Jan 20	1%	3,773	0	Jan 21	0%
Trawl CP	278	0	Jan 20	0%	299	0	Jan 20	0%
Total	9,246	3,254		23%	9,847	2,024		21%

¹For 2025 the fishery “closed” date is the date NMFS advised the fleet that the TAC would be reached unless otherwise closed in the harvest specifications. Closures in the Federal Register may have occurred after these dates.

Pollock

There has been very little effort in the GOA pollock fisheries at this time. There are also no estimates of Chinook salmon at this time due to limited fishing by trawl vessels.

Halibut PSC Data

There are limited data of halibut PSC in the BSAI and GOA at the time this report was generated. For 2026, a total of 27 mt of halibut PSC in the BSAI has been harvested compared to 60 mt in 2025. In the GOA, there has been 13 mt of halibut PSC compared to 4 mt in 2025.