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**Date:** 2-26-2024

**To:** City Manager Bil Homka, Assistant City Manager Marjorie Veeder, Patricia Soule, Karen Magdaong, Michelle Price, Mayor Vince Tutikaoff, and Unalaska City Council Members

**From:** Frank Kelty, Unalaska Fisheries Consultant

**Subject:** Fishery Update Memo for February 19, 2024, Groundfish Harvest Data 2-17-2024 Crab Harvest Data and State Water Pacific Cod 2-26-2024

Fishery activity in Unalaska continues to increase with most of the A season groundfish fish fleets 100% geared up. The third full week of Pollock had a strong week with 54,372MT of harvest (119 million lbs.) for the season 213,547 MT (470 million lbs.) We have harvested 37% of the A season harvest leaving 355,064MT of A season Pollock to harvest Pacific Cod fixed gear and trawl harvested the total cod harvest last week was 7,027MT (15.4 million lbs.) for the A season is 26,345MT (58 million lbs.) 16% of the allocation of 165,658MT has been harvested leaving 146,751MT (323 million lbs.) of Pacific Cod to harvest is including CDQ harvest allocation.

On February 26, 2024, the State water 60' < pot cod fishery opened for 44.4 million pounds. Through February 26<sup>th</sup> 115 landings for 10.7 million lbs. leaving 33.7 million lbs. to harvest 24 % of the allocation has been harvested from the 44.4 million pounds allocation.

The Amendment 80 bottom trawlers harvest, last week's harvest was decreased by 2,000MT to 7,446MT (16.4 million lbs.). The total harvest stands 26,178MT (57.6 million lbs.) of various species.

The Golden King Crab. We had two deliveries last week for Golden King Crab. Golden King Crab harvest is 3.67million lbs. and still has 204,271lbs to harvest. The Tanner Crab harvest of Western and Eastern Districts has harvested 1,698,542 lbs. leaving 378,800lbs. 84% Tanner Crab harvested has been completed.

**Overall Groundfish Harvest 2-17-2024:** The harvest for the last week was 70,738MT (155 million pounds) 2,000MT increase over the previous week's harvest. The season totals are 273,331MT harvested (602 million pounds) leaving 1,729,914MT (3.81 billion lbs.) to harvest; 14% of the overall annual harvest of 2,002,145MMT (4.4 billion pounds) has been completed.

**Pollock 2-17-2024:** The Pollock fishery opened on January 20<sup>th</sup> at noon we had a catch of 54,372MT (119 million lbs.) for the week ending February 17, 2024. The seasonal A season harvest is 213,547MT (470 million lbs.) leaving 355,064MT (782 million lbs.) of A season Pollock 37.7% of the A season has been harvested, from the 568,611MT (1.2 billion lbs.) Pollock A season allocation.

**Inshore CV:** the catcher vessels that deliver shoreside harvest 21,468MT last week for the season 83,119MT (183 million lbs.) leaving 171,509MT (378 million lbs.) of A season Pollock to harvest 33% of the A season has been harvested from 252,000MT allocation.

**At Sea CP:** the catcher processors harvested 22,582MT last week and have harvested 69,856MT (153 million lbs.) for the season, leaving 133,846MT (294 million lbs.) of A season Pollock to harvest 34% of the A season has been harvested.

**Mothership:** this sector harvested 5,591MT last week for the season 20,262MT (44.6 million lbs.) leaving 30,664MT (67 million lbs.) A season to harvest 40% of the A season has been harvested from 50,926MT.

**CDQ:** this sector harvested 4,731MT for the season 40,310MT (88 million lbs.) leaving 19,045MT (41.9 million lbs.) to harvest, 68% of the A season harvest of 58,300MT allocation.

**Pollock Incidental Catch:** the harvest last week was 2,275MT for the season 7,209MT leaving 42,791MT to harvest 14% of the allocation has been harvested.

**Salmon Bycatch 2-17-2024:** Chinook bycatch last week 589 fish for a season total of 1,915fish leaving 43,005fish remaining 4% of the cap has been from the cap of 45,000 fish. Chum salmon bycatch reported last week 267 fish.

**Pacific Cod: 2-17-2024:** The total cod harvest last week was 7,027MT for the A season is 26,345MT (58 million lbs.) 16% of the allocation of 165,658MT has been harvested leaving 139,724MT (307 million lbs.) of Pacific Cod to harvest is including CDQ harvest allocation.

**Hook and Line C/Ps:** This sector harvested 2,064MT (4.5 million lbs.) last week for the season 12,000MT (26million lbs.) Leaving the A season allocation at 22,359MT (49million lbs.) to harvest, 35% of the A season allocation of 34,359MT has been harvested by this sector.

**Pacific Cod Trawl:** The fixed gear fishery will open on January 20,2024, with the A season allocation of 39,144MT. (86.2 million pounds) We had a harvest of 4,094MT for last week (9.7 million lbs.) for the season 7,545MT (16 million lbs.) through February 17, 2024. The Amendment 80 sector, 899MT At Sea 73MT and CV sector 3,123MT A season harvest stands at 7,545MT (16 million lbs.) (leaving 31,644MT (69.7million lbs.) to harvest the season, 19% of the A season allocation have been harvested.

**CV Pot/HL < 60'ft:** harvested 0MT last week for the season 4,118MT (9.1 million lbs.) leaving -251MT cod allocation to harvest, 106% of the seasonal allocation has been harvested.

**C/P Pot CPs 0MT** was harvested last week of A season Cod, for the season 1,058MT. The A season remaining allocation is 1,058MT 0% of the A season allocation of 1,058MT has been harvested.

**Pot Cod 60'>:** harvested 455MT last week for the season 1,841MT (4.0 million lbs.) leaving 4,085MT (9 million lbs.) of A season allocation to harvest 31% of the A season allocation of 5,926MT has been harvested.

**Pacific Cod CDQ:** had a harvest of 389MT last week for the season 622MT (1.3 million lbs.) from an A season allocation of 10,005MT leaving 9,971MT (21.9 million lbs.) 0.6.2% of the CDQ harvest have been taken.

**Pacific Cod Jig:** 0MT harvested last week, for the season 0MT harvested from the jig allocation of 98MT leaving 98MT 0% of the allocation has been harvested.

**State Water Pacific Cod 60'< Pot Boats 2-26-2024:** The state water fishery has had 115 landings for 10.7 million lbs. leaving 33.7 million lbs. to harvest 24% of the allocation has been harvested from the 44.4 million pounds allocation.

**Amendment 80 Bottom Trawl Fishery 2-17-2024** The Amendment 80 bottom trawlers harvest is picking up last week's harvest was increased by 2,000MT to 7,446MT (16.4 million lbs.). The total harvest stands 26,178MT (57.6 million lbs.) of various species. The seasonal harvest totals by species are as follows, Yellowfin Sole 11,390MT, Rock Sole 3,211MT Alaska Plaice, 945MT, Flathead Sole 1,256MT, Arrowtooth Flounder 98MT, Kamchatka Flounder 5MT other Flatfish 231MT other species harvested this season including Perch and Rockfish, 569MT Atka Mackerel 4,123MT, Octopus 44MT Skate 4,305MT Greenland Turbot, 0MT and Sablefish Trawl 1MT.

**Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab 2-26-24:** The fishery opens on Tuesday August 1, 2023, at noon. There were four vessels registered to fish. The Eastern District allocation including CDQ is 3.7 million lbs. the Western District allocation including the City of Adak allocation is 1.8 million lbs. for a total allocation of 5.3 million lbs. We had a total of 61 IFQ landings and CDQ for the season, from the Eastern District and thirty-three IFQ landings from the Western District. The total poundage for the Eastern District is 3.7 million lbs. with CDQ, the total landings with are estimated poundage of 3.60 million lbs. 98% harvested, leaving an estimated 100,000 lbs. to harvest, there were five landing from the Eastern District last week. The Western District IFQ had two landings last week as well. The season total is thirty-three landings for 1.75 million lbs. 98% harvested, leaving 104,271lbs.to harvest.

**Bering Sea Tanner Crab 2-26-24:** The Tanner Crab IFQ allocation is 1.87 million pounds for both the East and Western Districts. The CDQ totals 250,000lbs lbs. for both

the East and West Districts for a total allocation of 2.02 million lbs. There have been fifty-nine IFQ and CDQ landings for 757,342 lbs. all from the Eastern District leaving 2,658lbs to harvest from the Eastern District 100% of the allocation has been harvested. There have been fifty landings of IFQ and CDQ landings from the Western District, 941,200lbs leaving the Western District IFQ and CDQ at 378,800 lbs. to harvest 71% of the allocation has been harvested.

**Misc. Items:** I attended the three-day United Fishermen of Alaska conference which Unalaska is a member of this group, three-day Spring Conference last week they had many great speakers during the conference. The first day of the conference on Tuesday was highlighted by the following speakers, Julie Decker, is the new Executive Director for PSPA association which represents the majority of the shorebased processing plants and the Mothership Pollock Vessels. She discussed the tough market conditions the industry is facing with salmon and groundfish high inventories, strong dollar, high interest and lending rates, and low ex-vessel prices. She expressed the need for the harvesters and processors to continue to work together during these tough times that we will get through this. She was hopeful that the restriction on Russian fisheries product as well as Russian fish reprocessed in China ban will help in clearing out inventories and market prices will improve in the future. We also heard from Jana Singleton of Bank America on interest and lending rates that the banks that work with the fishing industry must deal with at this time they are hopeful of a turnaround in early 2025. With reduced inventory and product moving again market prices increasing, this may to increased lending to harvesters and processors.

We heard from Senator Sullivan most of his talk was on his work on getting the White House and President Biden in getting the executive order in place to ban the imports of Russian Product as well as reprocessed fish products from Russian caught he think this will be critical in helping the seafood industry that is so important to Alaska. He also discussed his support for getting USDA to purchase more finished products from Alaska processors. Senator Sullivan is also working with the Department of Agriculture to change their rules to have seafood included to get the same benefits that farmers get on stock failures. He will continue to work on those issues. We wrapped the first day with a marketing update Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute (ASMI) group on the various products they are promoting.

Wednesday, State of Alaska Rep Louise Stutes of Kodiak, who discussed pending fisheries bills before the Legislature, she mentions her bill on conflict-of-interest issues with the Board of Fisheries and electronic monitoring for bycatch on vessels in state waters proposed by the Governor. Up next was Kristy Clement of Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation. She discussed the Symphony of Seafood event in Juneau that evening and some of the seafood types entered in the event, they also have events schedule for Seattle and Anchorage. United States Representative Mary Peltola, she discussed her work with the salmon collapses in Western Alaska. She hopes NOAA takes action to reduce bycatch of salmon in the Bering Sea. She is also supporting more native representation on the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and is not happy with the substantial number of non-Alaskans on the Council.

After lunch we had a great talk by industry veteran Barry Collier who works for the Bristol Bay Regional Salmon Development Association who discussed the salmon industry in Bristol Bay the large harvest of salmon the impacts to the harvesters of Bristol Bay Red salmon from two years on low ex-vessel values the impacts on repayment of loans and making mortgage payments. Processors are also facing issues on large inventories, getting pre-season bank loans to finance their season. The quality of the salmon is also critical. There are no markets of lower grade salmon threes and fours have no markets even with low prices. Later in the day we heard Trident Seafood Asian marketing expert Kenji Nasu, his opening comment two issues are critical in seafood marketing today they are Quality and Price! These are the two most critical issues, especially in selling fish in Asia. With the lower market prices this will get product moving, especially with high dollar rates overseas. He thinks Pollocks blocks and fillets will continue to do well in domestic markets and in Europe.

He is concerned about the large cheap Russian Surimi moving into Japan and China and its impact on Alaska product. Salmon markets are very tight with massive amounts of farmed fish in all the world markets. He stated that the crab markets are almost gone for US processors until the Snow Crab fishery rebounds in 3 to 4 years. Tanner Crab from the Bering Sea and in Kodiak is a good seller, especially in Japan. Bristol Bay Red King Crab is extremely expensive and with only 1.5 million pounds of finished product from Alaska most that goes to Japan for New Years sales., Norway and Russian have taken over the market for Red King Crab.

Thursday was the final day of the conference the morning session we had a lot of State of Alaska Representatives first up was Rep Vance of Homer, who has a bill to expand state waters from 3 miles to 15 miles reducing federal miles by 12 miles I don't believe it has a chance in hell of being adopted. She also discussed concerns the board of fisheries issues. Another topic she is concerned with Cook Inlet federal waters management which is going to happen this summer. President of the Senate Gary Stevens was up next, before the Senate he discussed fisheries bills such as personal use fishing priority, salmon hatchery permits, Cook Inlet permit buy back bill is still trying to get passed and funded. Gary also announced that he is retiring after almost 30 years in the Senate. We had another seafood market overview by Allen Kimball Chair of ASMI All also worked for Trident for twenty plus years. He covered many of the areas covered by other speakers. He did state that the Russian product ban is already showing promise on Pacific Cod inventories being reduced, he also stated that lower prices on fish products is increasing secondary product development he stated that we are seeing uptick on Sablefish fillet products being development from small lower priced fish.

Regards  
Frank Kelty

Attachments:

1. Fishery Update Memo
2. Harvest Data and NOAA Reports