

Frank Kelty
43915 Via Granada
Palm Desert, CA 92211
fvkelty@gmail.com

Date: September 24, 2021

To: Erin Reinders, JR Pearson, Michelle Price, Mayor Tutikoff and City Council

From: Frank Kelty, Fisheries Consultant

Re: Fishery Activities and Fishery Articles for the week ending 9-24-21

I been attending the North Pacific Fishery Management Groundfish Plan Team (GPT) meeting for 3 days the GPT team is made of biologist, scientist, from NOAA, ADFG, University of Washington, North Pacific Council staff, and members from other Universities such as UAF. This group analysis the stock assessment survey information and they run the various models. They make recommendations on the Overfishing Limit (OFL and Allowable Biological Catch (ABC) to the North Pacific Fishery Management Scientific Statistical Panel (SSC) this panel has makes the final recommendations on OFL and ABC numbers for the full NPFMC to approve they usually make some minor changes to the recommendations from the GPT. The GPT will meet again in November to finalize their recommendations to the SSC panel which will then be meeting the first week of December to make its final recommendations to the full NPFMC at the December meeting.

Pollock, I wish I had some good news to report but very little good news once again. The preliminary numbers on the Pollock survey show a decline of about 10% from last year 2020 TAC of 1.375MMT a 10% reduction =137,000MT and TAC of 1.237MMT in pounds 2.76 billion pounds if these numbers hold for the 2022 season it is still a very sizeable amount.

Pacific Cod, the 2021 survey preliminary numbers show a continued decline, with a possible 14% reduction for the 2022 season the TAC for the 2021 season 1wqs 111,000MT in pounds 247 million. A reduction of 14% would be a cut of 15,500MT putting a TAC at 95,460MT in pounds 213 million pounds.

Flatfish Species, that are harvested by the Amendment 80 Catcher Processors projected increases projected for Yellowfin Sole, Rock Sole, and some other flatfish species.

Atka Mackerel, Pacific Ocean Perch, and Sablefish are just about status quo for 2022 fishing season.

As I stated earlier these are preliminary numbers, we will have better information when Groundfish Plan team meets in November.

I attended a Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation, meeting on Wednesday September 22nd to we received a recap on the crab plan team meeting. The board strategize on what we can do to on the research side, to help address the complete collapse of the Red King Crab and Snow Crab fisheries in the Bering Sea. The Board discussed grant funding to the organization the foundation is run off revenues provided by the harvesters, processors, and the community of Unalaska. With both most important fisheries basically shut down, the foundation must find outside funding to continue its research work. The Board tasked the Executive Director Goodman to start looking for various grant's resources, including federal and state funding. We also discussed ideas for research projects that could be done very soon such as surveys with pots in the fall or this winter and possibly a trawl survey depending on cost and survey work would including biologists from NOAA and ADFG the Executive Director will report back to the board at the October meeting of costs for additional surveys work.

The last three items discussed was the King Crab and Tanner crab tagging project that is scheduled to be done in late October which was previously budgeted and the Snow crab workshop that is schedules two days be done online with various Snow Crab biologists from ADFG, NOAA. and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans from Eastern Canada. The Board authorized Executive Director Goodman to testify to the SSC panel at the October NPFMC Council meeting on the research foundations take of the Bristol Bay Red King Crab and Snow Crab collapse.

Groundfish Update 9-18-21

The Pollock B season continues winding down with more harvesters and processing companies having completed their B season Pollock allocations, all the large plants in Unalaska have finished, I believe the Northern Victor is just about done. The Pollock harvest ending 9-18-21 came in at 26,658MT (59 million pounds) that is 10,000MT reduction from the last few weeks harvests, which is due to harvesters finishing their allocations and dropping out of the fishery. The Pollock harvest through September 18th 703,325MT of B season Pollock has been harvested (1.57 billion pounds) leaving 34,342MT (76 million pounds) to harvest, 95% of the B season Pollock is complete. The season may be done the last week of September in 1-2 weeks. The 2021 season is 150,000MT a full 3 weeks ahead of 2020 B season Pollock harvest during the same time-period.

Pacific Cod is still slow, last week harvest through 9-18-21 was 2,602MT (5.8million pounds) the decrease from the previous weeks is due to the directed fishery in the Bering Sea closed just leaving the Aleutian Islands open to fish. The major activity was in the freezer longline catcher processors sector which harvested 1,002MT the rest of cod harvest is mostly from the pot boats 874MT and bycatch in other trawl fisheries. The total cod harvest by all sectors stands at 110,111MT (245 million pounds) leaving 5,054MT to harvest (11.2 million pounds) 97.5% of the allocation has been harvested.

The Bottom Trawl Amendment 80 fisheries are moving along a good pace, during the summer most of the activity has been Aleutians on Atka Mackerel and Perch and Rockfish but the Amendment 80 vessels are moving back to the Bering Sea fishing flatfish species. As of 9-18-21 Mackerel is at 48,686MT and Perch and Rockfish at 37,307MT and various Sole species totals for the BSAI 141,006MT down about 30,000MT from last year during the same timeframe.

The overall Groundfish harvest totals through 9-18-21 stand at 1.67MMT harvested (3.7 billion pounds) leaving 312,122MT (697 million pounds) 82% of the annual catch has been harvested, last week harvest was 36,316MT (81 million pounds) down 10,000MT from last week's harvest.

IFQ Halibut, Sablefish and Crab Update 9-24-21

Aleutian Island Golden King Crab, through 9-24-21 the fishery with an allocation of 5.9 million pounds, 5 vessels are registered to participate in the fishery. We had 31 deliveries of Golden King Crab from the Eastern District for 1.8 million pounds harvested leaving 1.8 million pounds to harvest. The Western District has 5 landings for 400,000lbs. leaving 1.6 million pounds still to harvest. The total landing 36 landings for 2.2 million pounds leaving 3.7 million pounds to harvest.

IFQ Fisheries, through 9-24-21, Halibut is at 13.5 million pounds 73% of the allocation has been harvested leaving 5.06 million pounds to harvest. Halibut landings for Unalaska are still held confidential until 3 buyers purchase fish. The CDQ Halibut 78 landings have been posted for Areas-4 CDE 477,000lbs landed leaving 552,000lbs to harvest 46% of the allocation has been harvested.

Sablefish has seen a harvest of 23.5 million pounds leaving 19.8 million pounds to harvest 54% of the fishery is complete. Sablefish landings for Unalaska are still confidential until 3 buyers purchase fish. The State water Sablefish harvest is at 74,843lbs leaving 819,357lbs to harvest 12% of the allocation of 893,000lbs has been harvested.

Regards

Frank Kelty

Attachments:

1. Fishery Outlook 9-24—21
2. Fishing Articles for the week of 9-24-21

