

# Salmon Bycatch Management in the Bering Sea Pollock Fishery

Yukon River Panel Meeting  
December 2009

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Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association

*Promoting healthy, wild salmon fisheries on the Yukon River*

# Salmon Bycatch in the Pollock Fishery: Background

- The pollock fishery catches Chinook salmon as bycatch.
- Salmon caught in the pollock fishery is a “prohibited species” and must be counted and then discarded or donated to food banks.
- The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC or “the Council”) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) manage federal fisheries off Alaska (3-200 miles), including the pollock fishery.



Walleye pollock (*Theragra chalcogramma*)

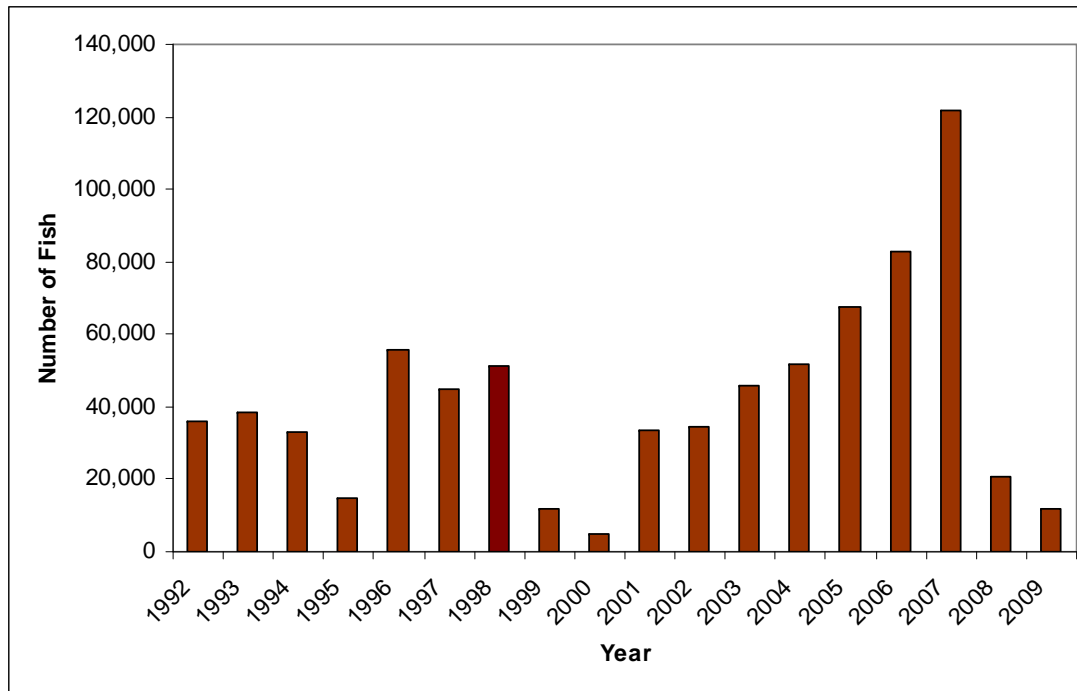


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# Chinook Salmon Bycatch BSAI Pollock Fishery

Chinook Salmon Bycatch 1992-2009



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# NPFMC Chinook Salmon Action

## April 2009

### Pollock Industry Choices

under the  
North Pacific Fishery  
Management Council's  
action

#### OPTION 1:

#### Hard Cap

Fish under a hard cap  
of 47,591

#### OPTION 2:

#### Hard Cap +

#### Incentive Programs\*

Fish under a hard cap of 60,000  
if you're participating in the  
incentive program, or 28,496 if  
you're not

*\*Developed by pollock fishery to reduce bycatch  
in all levels of salmon and pollock abundance*

Hard cap  
is allocated by  
season and sector

&

When each sector reaches  
their portion of the hard  
cap they have to  
stop fishing

**BUT**

if any sector's  
bycatch is more than their  
portion of 47,591 in three  
out of any seven years,  
that sector's hard cap  
automatically drops down  
to their portion  
of 47,591



# NPFMC Chinook Salmon Action

## April 2009

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### Benefits:

- This action establishes an absolute limit of 60,000 Chinook salmon.
- Performance standard creates incentive to stay below 47,591, even if operating under the higher cap.
- Increased observer coverage.



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# NPFMC Chinook Salmon Action

## April 2009

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### Problems:

- Bycatch cap far above the recommendations of Western Alaskan salmon interests.
- Incentive plans operate outside of agency and Council control.
- The pollock fishery can catch 60,000 Chinook salmon as bycatch in two out of every seven years with *no consequence*.



# Chinook Salmon Bycatch: Timeline

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Action</b>
December 2009- February 2010	60-day public comment period on the proposed rule
March 2010	Secretary must approve or deny within 30 days of close of comment period.
August 2011	Final rule published
January 1, 2011	Regulations take effect



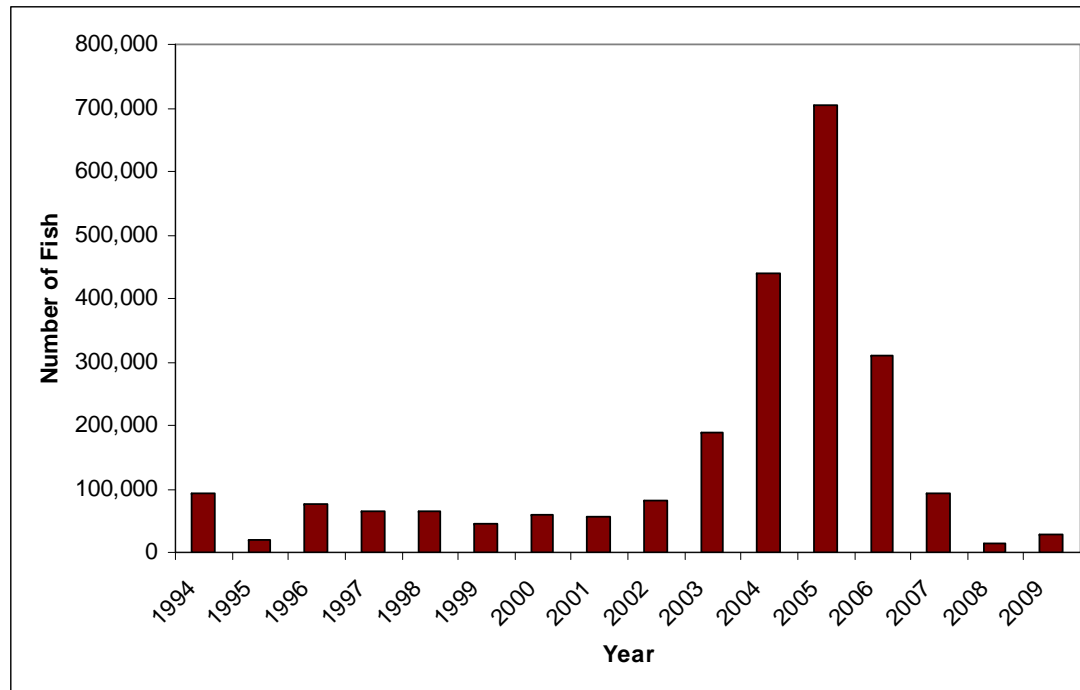
# Chinook Salmon Bycatch: How to Provide Input

- **Comment** on proposed regulations when published;
- **Write a letter or pass a resolution** directed to the Secretary of Commerce asking that he reject the Council's approved Chinook salmon management action and uses his emergency regulation authority to implement a hard cap of 32,500 effective immediately.



# Chum Salmon Bycatch BSAI Pollock Fishery

Chum Salmon Bycatch 1994-2009



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# NPFMC Chum Salmon Bycatch: Process

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- Salmon Bycatch Workgroup met October 29, 2009;
- At December Council meeting (this week), Council reviews workgroup's recommendations and refines their alternatives for analysis.



# NPFMC Chum Salmon Bycatch: Current Alternatives

- **Hard caps**
  - current range from 58,000 to 488,000
- **Triggered area closures**
  - Current range of trigger caps is 45,000-488,000
  - Areas to close under development
  - Option for VRHS exemption from triggered closures
- **Options** for sector allocations and transfers under both types of caps.



# Chum Salmon Bycatch: Timeline

*\*Tentative \**

<b>Dates</b>	<b>Action</b>
December 2009	Council refines alternatives: Anchorage, Alaska
June 2010	Council finalizes alternatives: Sitka, Alaska
January 2011	Initial review draft analysis available
February 2011	Council Initial Review, selection of Preliminary Preferred Alternative: Seattle, Washington
Feb./March 2011	Council Outreach Meetings
June 2011	Final Action: Nome, Alaska



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# Chum Salmon Bycatch: How to Provide Input

- **Testify** at a Council meeting. Agendas are posted on the Council's website:

<http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/npfmc/>

- **Write a letter** to the Council. Send letters by mail or fax to:

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

605 W. 4th Ave Suite 306

Anchorage, AK 99501

Fax: (907) 271-2817



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# MSC Process

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- BSAI pollock fishery is currently certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC);
- Fishery is currently in reassessment (every 5 years);
- Once draft report is released, opportunity for public comment;
- After final report is released formal appeals process is available.

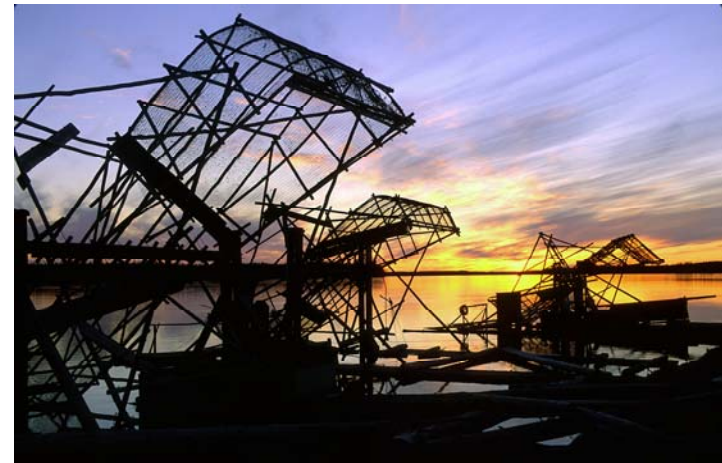




Pollock spills from a trawl net onto the deck of the Saga Sea, a factory trawler fishing in the Bering Sea, Alaska.  
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## Questions?



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