

TABLE 1.—INTERIM 2004 TAC AMOUNTS OF GROUNDFISH FOR THE COMBINED WESTERN/CENTRAL (W/C), WESTERN (W), CENTRAL (C), AND EASTERN (E) REGULATORY AREAS AND IN THE WEST YAKUTAT (WYK), SOUTHEAST OUTSIDE (SEO), AND GULFWIDE (GW) DISTRICTS OF THE GULF OF ALASKA (GOA) ^{1,2}—Continued

[The first seasonal allowances of pollock in the Combined W/C Regulatory Areas, the first seasonal allowances of Pacific cod. Interim sablefish TAC apportionments to hook-and-line (H/L) and trawl (TRW) gear. Interim TAC amounts have been rounded to nearest metric tons]

Species	Area	Interim TAC	Total
	E	200
Total			500
Atka mackerel	GW	150
Other species ¹⁸	GW	2,712
GOA Total Interim TAC			68,921

¹ Reserves have been reapportioned back to each species TAC and are reflected in the interim TAC amounts (see § 679.20(a)(2)).

² See § 679.2 for definitions of regulatory area and statistical area. See Figure 3b to part 679 for a description of regulatory districts.

³ The first seasonal allowance of pollock TAC in the W/C combined area is set at 25% of the annual TAC for the area which is 11,703 mt. Within the W/C area pollock is apportioned between Statistical Areas 610, 620, and 630 based on adjusted estimate of the relative distribution of pollock biomass in the area which is approximately 25% in Area 610 (2,894 mt), 56% in Area 620 (6,535 mt), and 19% in Area 630 (2,274 mt). In the Eastern Regulatory Area, pollock is not divided into less than annual allowances, and one-fourth of the TAC is available on an interim basis.

⁴ The pollock TAC in all regulatory areas will be allocated 100 percent to vessels catching groundfish for processing by the inshore component after subtraction of amounts that are determined by the Regional Administrator, NMFS, to be necessary to support the bycatch needs of the offshore component in directed fisheries for other groundfish species. At this time, these bycatch amounts are unknown and will be determined during the fishing year (see § 679.20(a)(6)(i)).

⁵ The Pacific cod TAC in all regulatory areas is allocated 90 percent to vessels catching groundfish for processing by the inshore component and 10 percent to vessels catching groundfish for processing by the offshore component (see § 679.20(a)(6)(ii)). The first seasonal apportionment of Pacific cod in the GOA is 60% of the annual TAC.

⁶ "Deep-water flatfish" means Dover sole, Greenland turbot and deepsea sole.

⁷ "Shallow-water flatfish" means flatfish not including "deep-water flatfish", flathead sole, rex sole, or arrowtooth flounder.

⁸ Sablefish TAC amounts for each of the regulatory areas and districts are assigned to hook-and-line and trawl gear. In the Central and Western Regulatory Areas, 80 percent of the TAC is allocated to hook-and-line gear and 20 percent to trawl gear. In the Eastern Regulatory Area, 95 percent of the TAC is assigned to hook-and-line gear. Five percent is allocated to trawl gear and may only be used as bycatch to support directed fisheries for other target species (see § 679.20(a)(4)).

⁹ The sablefish hook-and-line (H/L) gear fishery is managed under the Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) program and is subject to regulations contained in subpart D of 50 CFR part 679. Annual IFQ amounts are based on the final TAC amount specified for the sablefish H/L gear fishery as contained in the final specifications for groundfish. Under § 679.7(f)(3)(ii), retention of sablefish caught with H/L gear is prohibited unless the harvest is authorized under a valid IFQ permit and IFQ card. In 2004, IFQ permits and IFQ cards will not be valid before the effective date of the 2004 final specifications. Thus, fishing for sablefish with H/L gear will not be authorized under these interim specifications. Nonetheless, interim amounts are shown in parentheses to reflect assignments of one-fourth of the proposed TAC amounts among gear categories and regulatory areas in accordance with § 679.20(c)(2)(i). See § 679.40 for guidance on the annual allocation of IFQ.

¹⁰ Sablefish caught in the GOA with gear other than hook-and-line or trawl gear must be treated as a prohibited species and may not be retained.

¹¹ "Pacific ocean perch" means *Sebastes alutus*.

¹² "Shortraker/rougheye rockfish" means *Sebastes borealis* (shortraker) and *S. aleutianus* (rougheye).

¹³ "Northern rockfish" means *Sebastes polypsinis*.

¹⁴ "Other rockfish" in the Western and Central Regulatory Areas and in the West Yakutat District means slope rockfish and demersal shelf rockfish. The category "other rockfish" in the Southeast Outside District means slope rockfish.

¹⁵ "Slope rockfish" means *Sebastes aurora* (aurora), *S. melanostomus* (blackgill), *S. paucispinis* (bocaccio), *S. goodei* (chilipepper), *S. crameri* (darkblotch), *S. elongatus* (greenstriped), *S. variegatus* (harlequin), *S. wilsoni* (pygmy), *S. proriger* (redstripe), *S. zacentrus* (sharpchin), *S. jordani* (shortbelly), *S. brevispinis* (silvergrey), *S. diploproa* (splitnose), *S. saxicola* (stripetail), *S. miniatus* (vermillion), *S. babcocki* (redbanded), and *S. reedi* (yellowmouth).

¹⁶ "Pelagic shelf rockfish" includes *Sebastes ciliatus* (dusky), *S. entomelas* (widow), and *S. flavidus* (yellowtail).

¹⁷ "Demersal shelf rockfish" means *Sebastes pinniger* (canary), *S. nebulosus* (china), *S. caurinus* (copper), *S. maliger* (quillback), *S. helvomaculatus* (rosethorn), *S. nigrocinctus* (tiger), and *S. ruberrimus* (yelloweye).

¹⁸ "Other species" includes sculpins, sharks, skates, squid, and octopus. The TAC for "other species" equals 5 percent of the TAC amounts of target species.

Interim 2004 Halibut PSC Mortality Limits

Under § 679.21(d), annual Pacific halibut PSC mortality limits are established for trawl and hook-and-line gear and may be established for pot gear. The Council recommended and NMFS proposed to reestablish the 2003 halibut mortality limits for 2004 because no new information was available. Consistent with 2003, the Council recommended and NMFS proposed exemptions for pot gear, jig gear and the sablefish hook-and-line fishery from halibut PSC limits for 2004. The fishery specific interim PSC allowances for halibut are in effect at 0001 hours, A.l.t.,

January 1, 2004, and remain in effect until superseded by the final 2004 harvest specifications. The interim halibut PSC limits are: (1) 500 mt to trawl gear, (2) 72.5 mt to hook-and-line gear for fisheries other than demersal shelf rockfish, and (3) 2.5 mt to hook-and-line gear for the demersal shelf rockfish fishery in the Southeast Outside District.

Regulations at § 679.21(d)(3)(iii) authorize apportionments of the trawl halibut PSC limit as bycatch allowances to a deep-water species complex, comprised of rex sole, sablefish, rockfish, deep-water flatfish, and arrowtooth flounder; and a shallow-water species complex, comprised of

pollock, Pacific cod, shallow-water flatfish, flathead sole, Atka mackerel, and "other species." The interim 2004 apportionment for the shallow-water species complex is 409 mt and for the deep-water species complex is 91 mt.

Interim 2004 Non-Exempt AFA Catcher Vessel Groundfish Harvest and PSC Limitations

The AFA regulations implemented groundfish harvesting and processing limitations, also called sideboards, on AFA catcher/processors and catcher vessels in the GOA. These limitations are considered necessary for fishermen and processors who have received an exclusive harvesting and processing