

TABLE 1.—INTERIM 2004 TAC AMOUNTS FOR GROUNDFISH AND APPORTIONMENTS THEREOF FOR THE BERING SEA AND ALEUTIAN ISLANDS MANAGEMENT AREA¹—Continued

Species and component (if applicable)	Area and/or gear (if applicable)	Interim TAC	Interim CDQ
Total interim TAC	751,709	84,034

¹ Amounts are in mt. These amounts apply to the entire Bering Sea (BS) and Aleutian Islands (AI) management area unless otherwise specified. With the exception of pollock, and for purposes of these specifications, the BS includes the Bogoslof District.

² After subtraction for the CDQ reserve and ICA, the pollock ITAC is allocated as a directed fishing allowance (DFA). Ten percent of the pollock TAC is allocated to the pollock CDQ reserve (§ 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A)). NMFS is allocating 3.5 percent of the pollock as an ICA (§ 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A)(1)). The first seasonal apportionment of pollock for all sectors is 40 percent of the annual DFA.

³ The Steller sea lion conservation area (SCA) limits harvest to 28 percent of each sector's annual DFA until April 1. The remaining 12 percent of the annual DFA allocated to the A season may be taken outside of the SCA before April 1 or inside the SCA after April 1. If 28 percent of the annual DFA is not taken inside the SCA before April 1, the remainder is available to be taken inside the SCA after April 1.

⁴ Under § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A)(4), not less than 8.5 percent of the DFA allocated to listed catcher/processors (C/Ps) shall be available for harvest only by eligible catcher vessels (CVs) delivering to listed catcher/processors. The AFA unlisted catcher/processors are limited from exceeding a harvest amount of 0.5 percent of the DFA allocated to the AFA catcher/processor sector. § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A)(4)(iii).

⁵ Regulations at § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A)(6) require that NMFS establish an excessive harvesting share limit equal to 17.5 percent of the sum of the pollock DFAs. Regulations at § 679.20(a)(5)(i)(A)(7) require that NMFS establish an excessive processing share limit equal to 30.0 percent of the sum of the pollock DFAs.

⁶ After subtraction of the reserves, the ITAC amount for Pacific cod is allocated: 2 percent to vessels using jig gear, 51 percent to hook-and-line or pot gear, and 47 percent to trawl gear. The Pacific cod allocation to trawl gear is split evenly between catcher vessels and catcher/processors (see § 679.20(a)(7)(i)). The Pacific cod allocation to hook-and-line or pot gear is further allocated as an ICA and as the following directed fishing allowances: 80 percent to hook-and-line catcher/processors, 0.3 percent to hook-and-line catcher vessels, 3.3 percent to pot catcher/processors, 15 percent to pot catcher vessels, 1.4 percent to catcher vessels under 60 feet LOA using hook-and-line or pot gear (see § 679.20(a)(7)(i)(c)). The first seasonal allowances of the ITAC gear apportionments are in effect on January 1 as an interim TAC. The first seasonal allocations are 60 percent of the annual TAC, except for vessels using jig gear (40 percent), trawl catcher/processors (50 percent) and trawl catcher vessels (70 percent).

⁷ Sablefish gear allocations are as follows: In the BS subarea, trawl gear is allocated 50 percent, and hook-and-line and pot gear are allocated 50 percent of the TAC. In the AI subarea, trawl gear is allocated 25 percent, and hook-and-line and pot gear are allocated 75 percent of the TAC (see § 679.20(a)(4)(iii) and (iv)). One-fourth of the ITAC amount for trawl gear is in effect January 1 as an interim TAC amount.

⁸ The sablefish hook-and-line gear fishery is managed under the Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) program and subject to regulations contained in subpart D of 50 CFR part 679. Twenty percent of the sablefish hook-and-line and pot gear final TAC amount will be reserved for use by CDQ participants. (see § 679.31(c).) Existing regulations at § 679.20(c)(2)(ii) do not provide for an interim specification for the CDQ nontrawl sablefish reserve or for an interim specification for sablefish managed under the IFQ program. In addition, in accordance with § 679.7(f)(3)(ii), retention of sablefish caught with fixed 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 fixed gear is not authorized under these interim specifications. See subpart D of 50 CFR part 679 and § 679.23(g) for guidance on the annual allocation of IFQ and the sablefish fishing season.

⁹ Regulations at § 679.20 (a)(8) require that up to 2 percent of the Eastern Aleutian subarea and the BS subarea ITAC be allocated to the jig gear fleet. The amount of this allocation is 1 percent. The jig gear allocation is not apportioned by season. The harvest limitation area (HLA) limit refers to the amount of each seasonal allowance that is available for fishing inside the HLA (§ 679.2). In 2004, 60 percent of each seasonal allowance is available for fishing inside the HLA in the Western and Central AI.

¹⁰ "Other flatfish" includes all flatfish species except for Pacific halibut (a prohibited species), flathead sole, Greenland turbot, rock sole, arrowtooth flounder, yellowfin sole and Alaska plaice.

¹¹ Under § 679.20(a)(9), the ITAC of shortraker rockfish and rougheye rockfish specified for the Aleutian Islands subarea is allocated 30 percent to vessels using non-trawl gear and 70 percent to vessels using trawl gear.

¹² "Other rockfish" includes all Sebastes and Sebastolobus species except for Pacific ocean perch, northern, shortraker, and rougheye rockfish.

¹³ "Other species" includes sculpins, sharks, skates, and octopus. Forage fish, as defined at § 679.2, are not included in the "other species" category.

Interim Allocation of PSC Limits for Crab, Halibut, and Herring

Under § 679.21(e), annual PSC limits are specified for red king crab, *Chionoecetes bairdi* Tanner crab, and *C. opilio* crab in applicable Bycatch Limitation Zones (see § 679.2) of the Bering Sea subarea, and for Pacific halibut and Pacific herring throughout

the BSAI. Regulations at § 679.21(e) authorize the apportionment of each PSC limit into PSC allowances for specified fishery categories. Under § 679.21(e)(1)(i), 7.5 percent of each PSC limit specified for halibut, crab, and salmon is reserved as a PSQ reserve for use by the groundfish CDQ program.

Regulations at § 679.20(c)(2)(ii) provide that one-fourth of each

proposed PSQ reserve and PSC allowance be made available on an interim basis for harvest at the beginning of the fishing year, until superseded by the final harvest specifications. The PSQ reserves and fishery specific interim PSC allowances for halibut and crab are specified in Table 2 and are in effect at 0001 hours, A.l.t., January 1, 2004.

TABLE 2.—INTERIM 2004 PROHIBITED SPECIES BYCATCH ALLOWANCES FOR THE BSAI TRAWL AND NON-TRAWL FISHERIES

	Prohibited species and zone					
	Halibut mortality (mt) BSAI	Herring (mt) BSAI	Red King Crab animals Zone 1 ¹	<i>C. opilio</i> (animals) COBLZ ²	<i>C. bairdi</i> (animals)	
					Zone 1 ¹	Zone 2 ¹
Trawl fisheries:						
Yellowfin sole	222	35	4,166	694,245	85,211	447,115
Rock sole/other flatfish/flat. sole ⁴	195	5	14,946	242,283	91,330	149,039
Red King Crab Savings Subarea ³			5,231			