

Gary Isaksen's amazing models

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Salmon preview

- Togiak herring wrapup
- Bristol Bay's cool catch

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Certifying the certifiers

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ON THE COVER: Scott McAllister rolls pink salmon into the hold of the F/V Owyhee in Alaska's Chatham Strait. Chris Miller photo

VOLUME XXXVIII, NO. 6 • JUNE 2017

Pacific Fishing (ISSN 0195-6515) is published 12 times a year (monthly) by *Pacific Fishing Magazine*. Editorial, Circulation, and Advertising offices at 1028 Industry Drive, Seattle, WA 98188, U.S.A. Telephone (206) 324-5644. □ Subscriptions: One-year rate for U.S., \$18.75, two-year \$30.75, three-year \$39.75; Canadian subscriptions paid in U.S. funds add \$10 per year. Canadian subscriptions paid in Canadian funds add \$10 per year. Other foreign surface is \$36 per year; foreign airmail is \$84 per year. □ The publisher of *Pacific Fishing* makes no warranty, express or implied, nor assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the information contained in *Pacific Fishing*. □ Periodicals postage paid at Seattle, Washington. Postmaster: Send address changes to *Pacific Fishing*, 1028 Industry Drive, Seattle, WA 98188. Copyright © 2017 by *Pacific Fishing Magazine*. Contents may not be reproduced without permission. POST OFFICE: Please send address changes to *Pacific Fishing*, 1028 Industry Drive, Seattle, WA 98188

A major trend in our industry in recent years has been the advent of seafood certification programs. Such programs are designed to identify fisheries that are sustainable and well-managed.

The biggest name in the certification business is the Marine Stewardship Council, based in London. Fisheries such as Alaska salmon, halibut, and pollock hold MSC certification, which is regarded as vital for sales in certain markets.

Lots of other certification schemes have emerged, including the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute's Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) program.

To the extent that good fishing practices are encouraged, the certification programs are good. But as a November 2016 article in the *Financial Times* observed, the multitude of programs and ecolabels has led to confusion and frustration for seafood consumers, retailers, and others.

Recently, a new organization has emerged to sort out the certifiers. It's called the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI).

This is a super certifier that aims to "identify and recognize robust and credible certification schemes."

GSSI was incorporated as a foundation in September 2015 in the Netherlands. It calls itself a partnership of seafood companies, nongovernmental organizations, experts, and government agencies.

Some of the world's biggest seafood and retail companies are among GSSI's 34 "funding partners," including Bumble Bee, Gorton's, High Liner Foods, Seattle-based Trident Seafoods, restaurant operator Darden, Dutch retail food giant Ahold Delhaize, and French conglomerate Sodexo. GSSI also counts among its "affiliated partners" the likes of the World Wildlife Fund and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization.

It appears the fast-rising GSSI has captured the respect of seafood certifiers, including the MSC - which we know regards itself very highly.

On March 14, the MSC announced it had become "the first global sustainable seafood certification program to achieve recognition" from GSSI.

"Recognition from GSSI reaffirms the rigor and credibility of MSC certification," said Rupert Howes, MSC chief executive.

Last year, the Alaska and Iceland RFM certification schemes also won GSSI recognition.

So, what does all this certification stuff mean for North Pacific commercial fishing?

Why are these certification schemes, now stacked one upon another, necessary when we know - and customers know - that our salmon, halibut, and other fish are of high quality and stringently managed?

This is just the world we live in today. Seafood certification is now an industry, with a payroll to meet, and it's here to stay.

But as we've observed before in this space, the real value of wild-caught North Pacific seafood is in the product itself, not an ecolabel.

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It's the best commercial fishing news digest available in the North Pacific. Here's some of what you missed by not reading Fish Wrap.

Sea Grant in jeopardy: The director of Alaska Sea Grant urges action to save the program from proposed federal budget cuts. – seagrant.uaf.edu

Is Chitna project dead? The company behind the controversial coal mine proposed for the west side of Cook Inlet is suspending all permitting efforts. – adn.com

Permits for lease: A bill pending in the Alaska Legislature would make a big change in how people gain entry to the state's commercial fisheries. – deckboss.blogspot.com

Relief requested: Seventeen members of Congress sign a letter urging disaster funds for several West Coast and Alaska fisheries. – times-standard.com

New hatchery chief: Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corp. has named Timothy Joyce as interim general manager. – deckboss.blogspot.com

Heads of state: During a stop in Alaska, Chinese President Xi Jinping talked fish, among other topics, with Gov. Bill Walker. – yahoo.com

Sardines in the can: The Pacific Fishery Management Council votes to keep the West Coast sardine fishery closed for a third straight year. – montereyherald.com

Juneau watch: A legislative committee on Thursday will consider a bill to allow "regional fisheries trusts" to hold and lease fishing permits. – akhouse.org

'No trespassing': Alaska officials are refuting claims of exclusive Native fishing rights at Kodiak. – adfg.alaska.gov

Togiak herring watch: Last year's early spawn caught the industry by surprise, but no one seems too worried about a repeat this season. – kdlg.org

State hunts revenue: The Alaska House of Representatives has voted to impose an income tax. – juneauempire.com

Togiak herring watch: The season's first aerial survey finds the fish have not yet arrived. – kdlg.org

Companies combine: Marco Global announces a deal to sell its assets and inventory to Smith Berger Marine. – scribd.com

Alaska pollution case: The EPA has reached a settlement with Westward Seafoods to resolve alleged Clean Air Act violations at its Dutch Harbor processing plant. – epa.gov

No go for Alaska dam: After strong public outcry, an electric utility is halting work toward a new dam on the Kenai Peninsula. – adn.com

Upper Cook Inlet salmon outlook: The projected commercial catch of 1.7 million sockeye would be more than a million fish below the recent 10-year average. – adfg.alaska.gov

Togiak watch: The wait for fish continues at the remote site of a top Alaska herring fishery. – adfg.alaska.gov

Opinion: What Trump's budget means for the Filet-O-Fish. – nytimes.com

Air announcement: PenAir is suspending freight service to and from Dutch Harbor. – kucb.org

Togiak herring start: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game announces the fishery will open at 6 tonight. – adfg.alaska.gov

Togiak herring update: Purse seiners have taken 2,280 tons of herring thus far. – adfg.alaska.gov

Togiak herring update: The seine harvest has surged to 7,980 tons, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game reports. – adfg.alaska.gov

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Two new reports detail progress in sustainably managing U.S. fisheries

U.S. commercial and recreational fishing generated \$208 billion in sales, contributed \$97 billion to the gross domestic product, and supported 1.6 million full-time and part-time jobs in 2015 – above the five-year average, according to a NOAA Fisheries report, “Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2015,” released May 9.

A second report, “Status of Stocks 2016,” shows that the number of domestic fish stocks listed as overfished or subject to overfishing remain near all-time lows, with two new stocks rebuilt in 2016.

The reports highlight the collaborative role of NOAA Fisheries and many partners in making continued progress towards ending overfishing, rebuilding stocks, and realizing significant benefits to the U.S. economy.

“U.S. fisheries are big business,” said Samuel Rauch, acting assistant administrator for NOAA Fisheries. “Sustainable management of our nation’s fisheries, supported by sound science, opens up economic opportunities to Americans along the supply chain – from buying bait at a local marina to enjoying a seafood dinner.”

Sales decline: The U.S commercial fishing and seafood industry (including imports) generated \$144 billion in sales in 2015, a 6 percent decline from the previous year, and supported 1.2 million jobs, a 15 percent decline from 2014, although this is still above the five-year average.



Factors such as the “warm blob,” marine toxins, and El Niño affected the Pacific marine environment in 2015, and West Coast fishermen saw lower landings and revenue for several key commercial species.

Market forces affected fisheries in other regions, such as in the Gulf of Mexico, where revenue for shrimp landings decreased due to high inventories, dampening prices for both domestic harvest and imports. Seafood imports were also lower in 2015 – \$1.4 billion less than in 2014.

Saltwater angling generated \$63 billion in sales across the economy in 2015, up 5 percent from 2014. Job impacts in the marine recreational fishing industry remained steady from 2014 at 439,000 jobs. Mississippi, Connecticut, South Carolina, Washington, and Alaska had the greatest recreational fishing sector job growth in 2015.

Rebuilding progress: In 2016, U.S. fisheries continued to rebuild, with the number of stocks on the overfishing and overfished lists remaining near all-time lows. Four stocks came off the overfishing list, while six stocks were added to the overfishing list. There were no changes to the list of overfished stocks in 2016.

Two additional stocks – barndoor skate in Georges Bank/Southern New England and albacore in the North Atlantic – were rebuilt in 2016, bringing the total stocks rebuilt since 2000 to 41.

A stock is on the overfishing list when the catch rate is too high. A stock is on the overfished list when the population size of a stock is too low, whether because of fishing or other causes, such as environmental changes.

“These reports show that the U.S. is on the right track when it comes to sustainably managing our fisheries,” Rauch said. “Rebuilding and keeping stocks at sustainable levels will help us address the growing challenge of increasing our nation’s seafood supply and keep us competitive in a global marketplace.”

View the two reports – “Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2015” and “Status of Stocks 2016” – at tinyurl.com/l2t2fbsl.

– NOAA Fisheries

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Council advances electronic monitoring for West Coast groundfish

The Pacific Fishery Management Council has recommended an electronic monitoring program for certain West Coast groundfish fisheries.

The action is subject to National Marine Fisheries Service approval. "For many fishing operations, electronic monitoring will provide a more cost-effective way to meet 100 percent monitoring requirements," council member Dorothy Lowman said. "This will allow fishermen the flexibility to choose the monitoring method that makes the most sense for them while maintaining full accountability."

Under the council's catch share program, every vessel must carry a human observer to help monitor catch that is allocated to each vessel owner, including discards that happen at sea. Each owner has a share of the total catch allocation and the program requires that each vessel have "quota pounds" to cover its catch of nearly all groundfish species.

The catch share program relies on at-sea monitoring to ensure that discards are accurately identified with an estimated weight so that vessel quotas are properly tracked.

However, fishermen must pay as much as \$500 per day for an observer, and must schedule deployment of an observer when a vessel is ready to fish.

The electronic monitoring program is expected to increase flexibility while reducing operating costs for fishermen.

How it works: An electronic monitoring system collects video images of fishing activity with cameras, uses gear sensors to trigger recording and monitor use, and includes a Global Positioning System to collect location data. It then stores this information on a computer hard drive for review at a later date at a mainland facility, where a person reviews the video to monitor the fishing activity.

Under the West Coast electronic monitoring program, the video images will be used to verify the species and amount of discarded fish that is recorded in a fisherman's logbook. Observers may still be deployed on vessels to collect scientific data such as fish length measurements, interactions with protected species (marine mammals and seabirds), and other data to support fisheries management.

The use of electronic monitoring systems would be voluntary, and could apply to the midwater trawl fishery for whiting (hake), the midwater trawl fishery for rockfish, the bottom trawl fishery, and the fixed-gear fishery (which uses long-lines with hooks and lines or pots).

Industry collaboration: The council's decisions were informed by several years of collaborative work with the fishing industry, managers, and others to test electronic monitoring systems using "exempted fishing permits." An exempted fishing permit allows exemptions from some regulations in order to study the effectiveness, bycatch rate, or other aspects of experimental fishing methods.

"I want to thank the industry and other stakeholders, NMFS West Coast Region, Northwest Fisheries Science Center, and Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission for their help in developing and testing this



Purse seiners took 16,475 tons, almost their full quota, in the herring sac roe fishery at Togiak, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game reported. Gillnetters took another 1,428 tons. The season ended May 16, and no price was immediately available. The seine harvest in 2016 was 15,171 tons. This year's fishery attracted four buyers: Icicle, North Pacific, Silver Bay, and Trident. Nineteen seiners (compared to 17 last year) and 15 gillnetters (up from only three in 2016) took part in the fishery, said Tim Sands, area biologist with the Department of Fish and Game. Chris Miller photo

program, and especially NMFS headquarters for their policy and financial support for establishing the first large-scale electronic monitoring regulatory program for U.S. fisheries," said council Executive Director Chuck Tracy.

The Pacific Council helps manage fisheries off California, Oregon, and Washington. ↓

– Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Alaska's commercial salmon harvest is projected to be much larger this year. Chris Miller photo

Here come the salmon

Alaska's catch could top 200 million fish, while the outlook farther south ranges from ho-hum to horrible

Here's our preview of the 2017 Pacific salmon season, from Alaska down to California.

ALASKA

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is projecting a statewide commercial catch this season of more than 204 million salmon.

If the forecast proves accurate, it would mark the third time in five years for a harvest exceeding 200 million fish.

This year's tally will depend, as usual, on the strength of the pink salmon run.

Last year's pink returns were dreadful, resulting in a statewide, all-species catch of only 112.5 million salmon. The state is seeking

federal disaster relief for the 2016 pink salmon bust.

Pink salmon are expected to rebound this year, with a projected catch of 142 million fish. Last year yielded 39.2 million pinks.

Sockeye is the state's main money fish, and last year's catch of 53 million sockeye paid about \$253 million ex-vessel, compared to \$155 million for Chinook, chum, coho, and pink salmon combined, according to state figures.

Unfortunately, the projected sockeye catch this season is significantly lower at 40.9 million fish.

As for sockeye and pink markets, the outlook is "pretty strong for both," said Andy Wink, a Juneau seafood analyst with McDowell Group.

Among the indicators: Russia's pink salmon harvest is expected to fall this year, sockeye inventory isn't a problem, and farmed salmon prices are at record levels.

Here are some notes on key salmon harvest areas around the state:

Southeast Alaska: The region is expected to produce 43 million pink salmon and 8.6 million chums, compared to last year's 18.4 million pinks and 9.1 million chums.

Prince William Sound: Copper River sockeye harvest is projected at a very poor 889,000 fish. Gillnetters face added restrictions to reduce catches of Chinook salmon, returns of which were forecasted to be quite weak.

Prince William Sound is projected to have combined natural and hatchery production of 56 million pink salmon this season, compared to last year's 13 million.

Upper Cook Inlet: The projected commercial catch of 1.7 million sockeye is far below the recent 10-year average of 2.9 million.

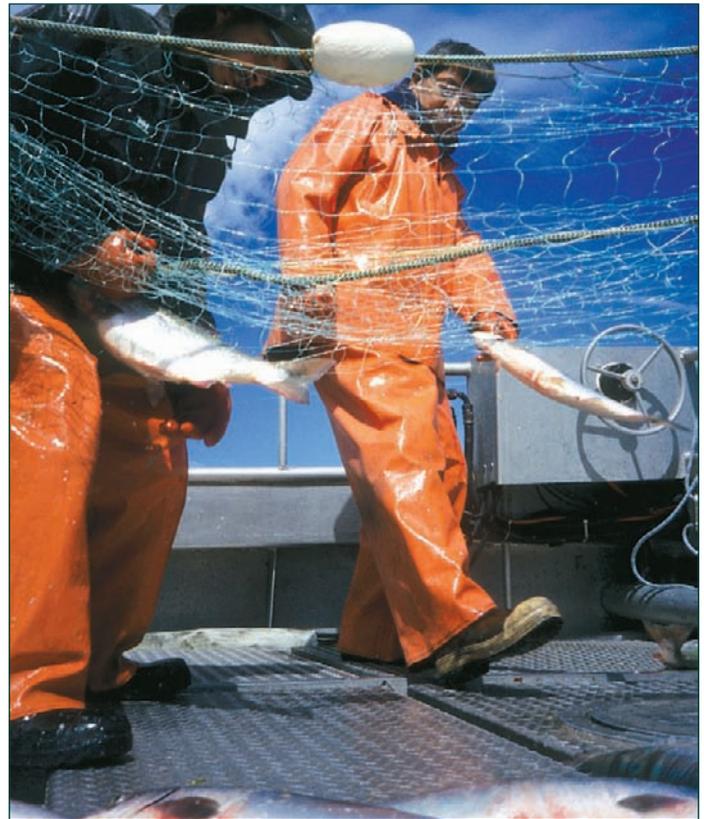
Kodiak: The area is expected to tally 31.5 million salmon of all species this year, compared to only 5.9 million in 2016.

Chignik: A catch of nearly 1.2 million sockeye is forecast for this year, down from last year's catch of almost 1.4 million.

Alaska Peninsula: The south and north peninsula fisheries are expected to combine for 4.2 million sockeye, compared to last year's catch of nearly 6 million.

Bristol Bay: The state's top-producing sockeye fishery is looking at a harvest forecast of 27.5 million fish this season. Last year's catch of 37.6 million sockeye paid \$153 million ex-vessel, according to the latest state estimate.

Yukon-Kuskokwim: Once again, no commercial fishery for Yukon River Chinook salmon is expected due to continuing weak returns. Kuskokwim fishermen are hoping for a buyer this season.



A good catch of 27.5 million sockeye is forecast at Alaska's Bristol Bay. Wesley Loy photo

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) projects the 2017 sockeye return to the Fraser River has a 50 percent chance of reaching about 4.4 million fish.

Forecast returns are dominated by summer-run stocks.

DFO cautions that Fraser River forecasts are highly uncertain, largely due to the wide variability in annual survival rates and lack of indicators to predict this variation.

Fraser River sockeye survival for most stocks went through a period of decline, with record low survival in the 2009 return year. There were improvements from 2010 to 2014 and declines again in 2015 and 2016.

The Pacific Salmon Commission reported that in 2013, the brood year for the 2017 Fraser sockeye run, returns of adult sockeye totaled about 4.2 million fish, more than 2½ times the brood year abundance in 2009 but otherwise the lowest return on this cycle since 1965.

Catches of Fraser River sockeye in all fisheries in 2013 totaled 531,000 fish, including 411,000 caught by Canada, 20,000 by the United States, and 100,000 by test fisheries.

In 2016, only 130,600 Fraser River sockeye

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Alaska's pink salmon harvest is expected to be much higher this year, while the sockeye catch figures to be significantly lower. Chris Miller photo

were caught, mostly by Canadian First Nations food, social, and ceremonial fisheries and U.S. treaty Indian commercial, ceremonial, and subsistence fisheries.

Overall last year, commercial seiners and gillnetters in British Columbia caught a combined 618,623 sockeye.

In other coastwide salmon fisheries, about 3.2 million chums, 1.8 million pinks, 258,340 coho, and 207,953 Chinook were caught.

WASHINGTON, OREGON

The ocean salmon season off Washington and Oregon will be a balance of providing some harvest opportunity on Chinook and coho stocks while addressing "the severe conservation needs we are facing on salmon stocks, both north and south of Cape Falcon."

That's the word from the Pacific Fishery Management Council, which set West Coast salmon season dates on April 11.

Stocks of concern include Washington coastal coho, Puget Sound Chinook, and Klamath River fall Chinook, the council said.

A council press release offered these details on fisheries north of Cape Falcon (in northern Oregon):

"Tribal and non-Indian ocean commercial fisheries are designed to provide harvest opportunity on strong Chinook returns primarily destined for the Columbia River while avoiding coho stocks of concern. Coho retention is allowed in commercial fisheries north of Cape Falcon this year, which is an improvement over the nonretention regulations from last year; however, the coho quotas are very low in 2017.

"Non-Indian ocean commercial fisheries north of Cape Falcon include traditional, but reduced, Chinook seasons in the spring (May-June) and summer season (intermittent openings during July through September). The Chinook quota of 27,000 in the spring is greater than the 2016 quota of 19,100. The summer season quotas include 18,000 Chinook and 5,600 coho.

"Tribal ocean fisheries north of Cape Falcon are similar in structure to past years, with quotas that include 40,000 Chinook and 12,500 coho."

With respect to fisheries south of Cape Falcon, the council said:

"Commercial fisheries from Cape Falcon to the Florence South Jetty, Oregon, open on April 15 and will run through July 31 with intermittent closures to reduce impacts on Klamath fall Chinook. This area will also be open in September and October. Fisheries from the Florence South Jetty to Horse Mountain, California, will be closed for the entire season to reduce impacts on Klamath River fall Chinook."

Washington and Oregon were to decide on state waters fishery regulations at their respective commission hearings.

CALIFORNIA

California's salmon season started in May and is already being described as a disaster fit for federal relief funding.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council decided on a final Chinook salmon season alternative in mid-April. Responding to predictions of record low runs of Klamath River fall-run Chinook and concerns about impacts to endangered winter-run Sacramento River salmon, the council chose to stagger fishing times and completely close the fishery in the crucial month of July.

The season began May 1 in the Monterey area, which will see fishing through June.

Then the coastwide closure takes effect, wiping out July fishing - a month that usually sees much of the total catch landed.

Fishing reopens for the less productive month of August and the

Continued on Page 30



Thanks to Petersburg Vessel Owner's Association and the fishermen of Petersburg whom we met on our, "Alaska tour".

Our sincere thanks to Comfish Alaska, the city of Kodiak, and all the great people who visited our booth as well.



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Gary and Heidi Isaksen with a model in progress. Jeff Kahrs photo

The model maker

A Bristol Bay fisherman and his wife build a worldwide following for their finely crafted miniatures

During summers, Gary Isaksen is a hard-working Bristol Bay fisherman.

The other three seasons of the year, he's an internationally renowned maker of model boats and ships.

His careers as fisherman and model boat builder were intertwined from the start.

In Isaksen's first Bristol Bay season at age 9, he played with the local Native kids when he wasn't on the boat during an opening.

He quickly realized the kids didn't have toys, so he started carving them small boats out of pieces of 2-by-4s found lying around.

"I just carved them a little boat and they were happy," Isaksen said. "It just blossomed from that."

He had a lot more fun carving small boats than fishing those first years. His dad, Burt Isaksen, was a highliner for Peter Pan and one of the best in Bristol Bay before he retired.

"Dad didn't like when you slept too much," Isaksen laughed.

The boy soon was old enough to realize his fishing could allow him to buy things, such as a car for high school. Before long, Isaksen was fishing during the summers and working for an architectural modeling firm in Seattle the rest of the year.



Gary Isaksen, with salmon, and crew aboard his Bristol Bay gillnetter, the Heidi of Norway. Photo courtesy of Gary Isaksen

First model: The first model Isaksen built was of the Neptune, a crab boat his father and a partner had built at the Nichols Bros. shipyard on Whidbey Island.

While visiting the shipyard one day, Isaksen fell in love with a model of a beautiful, red fiberglass crab boat that was in the Nichols office.

Matt Nichols offered it to Isaksen, but he said no. "I can't have your model, but I'm going to build one," Isaksen said.

It took him 2½ months of trial and error to make the model Neptune.

Undeterred by the time it took to make a model and inspired by the joy he felt, Isaksen went on to model other crab boats such as the Royal Viking and the American Beauty.

Soon, Isaksen was making models of Delta's new boats, including yachts.

Except for the first few months working at Delta, when he had a more experienced model maker to work with, Isaksen had to learn everything on his own.

"You would get the drawings, cut them out of the blueprints, and use them as templates," Isaksen said, recalling the hard work. Seven or eight boats a year was typical at the time.

Advancing the craft: Isaksen started in wood but then began using hard, dense foam - the same foam Boeing uses to insulate airplanes. It was easier to work with and helped bring down production time.

About 10 years ago, Isaksen began to equip his boats with LED lighting systems.

Working with a Boeing engineer, he developed an intricate wiring system for the deck, running, and mast lights aboard his models.

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A model of the cod freezer longliner Blue North. Gary Isaksen photo

Isaksen's wife, Heidi, would join the model-making partnership. At first, she bought supplies, did the billing, helped deliver the models, and cleaned the shop. Then she started helping Isaksen with the templates.

She now also helps with the technical side, whether it's roughing out a boat for Isaksen's finishing touches or maintaining the 3-D printer used to manufacture model parts.

"Now I'm out there full-time," Heidi said. "Unless the grand-kids stop by."

Isaksen's shop is located at his home in Lake Stevens, Washington.



"I never want to stop building models," says Gary Isaksen. The images in the background show his Bristol Bay boat, the Heidi of Norway. Jeff Kahrs photo

With the 3-D printer, the couple can now complete upwards of 25 to 30 model boats a year.

But model making is still very challenging. Though a boat can be roughed out in as little as four days, each project involves gluing, putty work, sanding, and painting. The curve of every boat and the line of every rail must be perfect.

From order to delivery, your favorite vessel normally can be had in two to three months. That is, when Isaksen's not fishing.

Global clientele: Isaksen's models go all over the world. They start at \$6,000 but often go much higher.

Recently, he had a client in Dubai who had him send the model back and forth three times to ensure that it was just right. The effort was worth it, as the client went on to order three boats.

Friends ask the Isaksens how they can stand working and living together.

It isn't a problem because their skills and personalities are so complementary. Gary Isaksen may be the master model maker, but Heidi is the indispensable deckhand.

"First we fire each other," Heidi joked. "Then we hire each other."

Gary Isaksen's love for model making started with his desire to make people happy.

"I never want to stop building models," he said. "I never want to retire." ↴

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Duke study reinforces the case for catch shares

A detailed analysis of 39 U.S. fisheries by Duke University economists offers strong new evidence that catch shares curb the “race to fish” that compresses fishing seasons.

Slowing competition with catch shares allows fishermen to time their catches to match market demand and capitalize on changing profit opportunities throughout the season. And it can reduce occupational hazards and improve the quality of the fish sent to market.

Catch shares are a type of management system in which individual fishermen or groups of fishermen receive secured rights to an allotted portion of a fishery’s total allowable catch, regardless of when they land their portion during the year.

“These results across 39 different fisheries underscore the broad applicability of catch shares and can inform the debate about expanding the use of market-based regulation in fisheries worldwide,” said Martin D. Smith, professor of environmental economics at Duke’s Nicholas School of the Environment.

Smith is particularly hopeful that the findings may help resolve differences in competing versions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act reauthorization bill currently proposed – and stalled – in Congress. The House version would restrict the use of new catch shares; the Senate version would not.

Smith and his colleagues published their peer-reviewed analysis April 5 in the journal *Nature*.

Comprehensive evidence: Scientists and economists have long theorized that catch shares reduce the economic waste, safety risks, and ecological damage that can result when fishermen race to fill seasonal catch quotas. But doubts have persisted among some policymakers and fishery associations because, until now, evidence supporting the theory has come from selected fisheries only.

“One alternative is no management, which leads to both overfishing and economic waste,” Smith said. “There are also various forms of command and control regulation that may curb overfishing, but fail to solve the economic problem. These, for example, limit types and amounts of fishing gear, limit sizes and types of fishing vessels, limit days at sea, or set an industrywide quota and shut down fishing when the quota is met. Some simply close large areas off to fishing altogether.”

“By systematically comparing monthly data from 39 catch share fisheries to those of 39 similar fisheries without catch shares, our study presents the first comprehensive evidence that catch shares slow the destructive race to fish and lead to improved fishing conditions,” said Anna M. Birkenbach, a doctoral candidate in Duke’s University Program in Environmental Policy (UPEP).

Lingering negatives: While most outcomes were overwhelmingly positive, there were a few exceptions.

“In fisheries where multiple species are caught, we found that fishermen may speed up their catch of minor species to leave time for more careful pursuit of other, higher-value species,” noted David Kaczan, also a UPEP doctoral candidate, who conducted the study with Smith and Birkenbach. “Overall, the benefits still outweighed the negatives, but policymakers need to consider this potential tradeoff when deciding on new catch shares.”

Among the fisheries included in the new study were Pacific halibut, Atlantic cod and sea scallops, Gulf of Mexico red snapper, and Alaska sablefish. The study did not include state fisheries, such as Alaska salmon, or those that lacked monthly catch data, such as Alaska crab. ↴

– Duke University



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Puget Sound canary rockfish delisted based on new findings

NOAA Fisheries has removed Puget Sound canary rockfish from the federal list of threatened and endangered species after a recent collaborative study found the fish are not genetically distinct from other canary rockfish on the West Coast.

Although many state rockfish populations have declined in abundance, the agency determined that the canary rockfish population in Puget Sound and the inland waters of British Columbia does not qualify for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) because it is not “discrete from” the species as a whole.

“The recent genetic findings show that canary rockfish of the Puget Sound/Georgia Basin are actually part of the larger canary rockfish population along the Pacific Coast,” said Dan Tonnes, of

NOAA Fisheries. “Coastal canary rockfish were determined to be rebuilt under the Magnuson-Stevens Act in 2016.”

NOAA’s action does not affect state fishing restrictions on rockfish in Puget Sound, which prohibit anglers from targeting, possessing, or retaining any rockfish species, because yelloweye rockfish and bocaccio remain listed under the ESA. State regulations also prohibit recreational fisheries from targeting rockfish in the Sound, and do not allow recreational bottom fishing below 120 feet.

Initial presumption: In 2010, NOAA listed canary rockfish, yelloweye rockfish, and bocaccio in the Puget Sound/Georgia Basin under the ESA as “distinct population segments,” presuming that they were genetically discrete from the rest of the species. Without species-specific genetic studies to draw on, this presumption was based on genetic variation among populations of other rockfish species.

To test that premise, the agency’s Northwest Fisheries Science Center in Seattle launched a cooperative study in 2015 to gather and study samples from listed rockfish in the Puget Sound/Georgia Basin and from reference areas outside that area to better understand their genetic diversity. Canadian authorities also provided biological samples of rockfish from the inland waters of the Georgia Strait.

The study drew on the expertise of local fishing guides, along with members of the Puget Sound Anglers and Kitsap Poggie fishing clubs to catch enough canary and yelloweye rockfish to conduct the genetic analysis using small tissue samples taken from the fins of each fish.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), another partner in the study, compiled data on ESA-listed rockfish in the area from previous surveys and deployed a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) below the surface of the Sound to locate rockfish and guide test fishers to their location.

“By combining the at-sea experience of long-time bottomfish anglers with the scientific knowledge of the WDFW, we were successfully able to locate and sample hundreds of fish,” said Dayv Lowry, WDFW senior research scientist. “It was a perfect example of collaboration and cooperation in search of actionable knowledge for rockfish management.”

Careful release: Rockfish caught for the study were handled carefully and released using a special descending device to avoid barotrauma, which is caused by the change in air pressure when a fish is brought from deep waters to the surface. Fish were also marked for identification with an external tag, and several of those fish were sighted by the WDFW during subsequent ROV surveys. ↴

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Aleutian villagers in Southeast Alaska canneries during WWII



Seventy-five years ago, the United States entered World War II, leading to transformations that shaped the entire Pacific Coast but particularly impacted Alaska.

Nearly six months after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, the Japanese sent fighter planes to bomb the significantly less balmy Pacific islands of Kiska, Attu, and Unalaska. In early June 1942, the village and military base at Dutch Harbor/Unalaska were attacked and the islands of Kiska and Attu were invaded and wrested from American control. Attu villagers became Japanese prisoners of war, and the Axis forces had a foothold on American soil.

The panicked military, Alaska territorial government, and Department of the Interior determined to evacuate civilians who were one-eighth Native or more from the Aleutians. Gen. Simon B. Buckner ordered the evacuation. Nine villages on the islands of Akutan, Atka, Umnak, St. George, St. Paul, and Unalaska were hastily evacuated, precipitating one of the greatest injustices in modern Alaska history.

The military torched the homes and church at Atka and gave the residents one hour to leave. The USAT Delarof arrived at St. Paul on June 15 and departed the next day to St. George with the entire village on board. No more than one suitcase per person was allowed, and no one knew where the villagers were headed, not even the captain of the vessel.

The priest at St. Paul, Father Michael Lestenkof, recalled packing, stating, "For myself, I did not take anything except I took apart my 5-horse Johnson and put every part I can into one suitcase ... as I would make more use out of my motor than clothing."

had no insulation, indoor plumbing, or heating stoves. At Funter Bay, just a single out-house was built over the beach. In addition to lacking the basic infrastructure required for wintertime occupation, the sites had been abandoned years before and were either in need of serious repairs or actively rotting away.

The Delarof arrived at Funter Bay six days after leaving the Pribilofs. Five hundred and sixty people disembarked with little food, bedding, tools, or anything beyond that which they stuffed in one suitcase. The villagers arrived at the former complex of the Thlinket Packing Co. The cannery processed its first pack of salmon in 1902. It was sold to the Alaska Pacific Salmon Corp. in 1926 and then sold to P.E. Harris Co. It hadn't operated since 1931. The government leased the abandoned cannery from P.E. Harris to be used for the "duration village," as the relocation sites were termed.

Makeshift home: The Pribilof residents got to work, fortifying structures, cleaning out the Chinese bunkhouse to turn it into the communal kitchen, and attempting to wire the buildings for electricity. But winter came quicker than building supplies, tools, and proper provisions, including ample blankets, soap, and more. The children were sent to the Wrangell Institute for school, which was difficult for the families but at least meant that the kids had proper medical care and enough food.

In the spring of 1943, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials informed those at Funter Bay that the men were to be sent back to the Pribilofs, but just for the annual fur seal harvest. During the forced relocation, the government continued to profit by selling the Unangan-harvested fur seal pelts to furriers. The Unangan hunters were falsely told the fur was needed for military uniforms, in order to coerce them to return.



These images from the National Archives show Pribilof villagers aboard the Delarof as they depart for Southeast Alaska, and evacuated Unangan children at an unnamed Southeast relocation camp.

Only in 1945, two years after American forces had retaken Attu and Kiska, were the Aleutian villagers permitted to return home. Yet at the Funter Bay cannery alone, 32 had died, mostly from pneumonia and tuberculosis. In total, 74 people died while in Southeast Alaska, nearly one in 10 of those who were evacuated.

Voyage to Southeast: It was only when the boat was underway that a destination was determined. The evacuees would be kept at abandoned camps and canneries in Southeast Alaska.

Quarters and provisions aboard the Delarof were poor. A baby girl was born on board and promptly contracted pneumonia. She was buried at sea near Kodiak Island, just the first of many villagers who were to die from preventable illnesses over the next two years.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other Interior Department employees were sent to assess the conditions of the derelict canneries and camps that were to soon house the 881 displaced villagers. The old herring plant at Killisnoo, an old mine and cannery at Funter Bay on Admiralty Island, an abandoned cannery at Burnett Inlet southwest of Wrangell, and the Ward Lake Civilian Conservation Corps camp near Ketchikan were in varying states of decrepitude.

The canneries were constructed for just summertime use and

The village of Atka had been totally destroyed by the military, and the homes and churches within the other villages had been vandalized or worse by U.S. military troops. The villages of Biorka, Kashoga, and Makushin were never resettled. President Roosevelt authorized no more than \$12 per person to assist in resettlement.

The Aleut Restitution Act of 1988 acknowledged that only an act of Congress could help remedy these injustices. A community trust was established to assist in cultural preservation and education and for elder services. Those evacuees who were still living received \$12,000 each.

Today few buildings remain at the old canneries and camps that housed the Unangan villagers, but the Aleut cemetery at Funter Bay continues to be maintained.

Anjuli Grantham is a public historian, writer, and producer based in Alaska. Read more of her work at anjuligrantham.com.

Chilling revolution continues for Bristol Bay salmon

Bay watch: Bristol Bay’s salmon industry has long worked to improve the quality of the catch, chiefly by chilling more of the fish delivered to processing plants.

So, how is this effort going?

“The harvest in 2016 was the second-largest in the last 20 years and harvesters, both set and drift, responded by chilling the largest amount of raw product ever in the history of the fishery.”

That’s the main finding from a survey of processors conducted for the Bristol Bay Regional Seafood Development Association.

The association uses revenue from a tax on the driftnet fleet to pursue projects to improve the quality of the catch and better market the bay’s huge sockeye resource.

For many years, Bristol Bay sockeye didn’t have the best reputation for quality, as a great deal of salmon would languish for hours aboard boats without ice or chilling systems.

Now the industry is working steadily to improve fish quality and, hopefully, value.

Last year’s big Bristol Bay salmon harvest weighed almost 212 million pounds, the processor survey noted.

Product chilled prior to delivery reached 137 million pounds overall, with the driftnet fishery accounting for nearly 123 million pounds.

“Both of these numbers are records,” the report said.

The survey “punctuates the drastic shift in chilling practices over the past nine years,” with chilled fish in the drift fleet going from 24 percent in 2008 to 71 percent in 2016.

“These increases in chilling percentage and poundage appear to be driven by new processor requirements and bonuses for chilled fish,” the report said.

The average chilling bonus was 16 cents per pound in 2016.

The processor survey revealed other interesting trends in 2016. The year saw “a notable shift away from canned product” and more of a focus on fillet and head-and-gut fresh products.

See the processor survey report at tinyurl.com/lxssyyg.



Pebble watch: The Trump administration figured to be friendlier than Obama to the proposed Pebble mine, and we saw evidence of that in May with a legal settlement that gives new hope to the project.

The Environmental Protection Agency entered into a settlement agreement resolving litigation over Pebble, which many commercial salmon fishermen oppose as a threat to the Bristol Bay watershed.

The settlement provides the Pebble Limited Partnership a chance to apply for a key permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Under the Obama administration, the EPA in 2014 moved to block the Pebble mine.

“We are committed to due process and the rule of law,” EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt said in a May 12 news release. “The agreement will not guarantee or prejudge a particular outcome, but will provide Pebble a fair process for their permit application.”

Despite the government’s more receptive posture toward Pebble, the mine remains a long way from reality. The mine site is remote, and investment needs are huge.

Pebble opponents expressed outrage over what they termed the Trump EPA’s “backroom deal” with Pebble.



Washington watch: Congressman Don Young, R-Alaska, has introduced the Young Fishermen’s Development Act (H.R. 2079) to try to reverse the “graying of the fleet.”

U.S. Rep. Seth Moulton, D-Massachusetts, is cosponsoring the bill.

“Young commercial fishermen are facing bigger challenges than ever before – new barriers to entry, limited training opportunities, and a lack of support,” Young said in a press release. “This legislation is about supporting the livelihoods of fishing communities in Alaska and across the nation.”

The bill would authorize up to \$200,000 in competitive grants through the Sea Grant program to support new and established local and regional training, education, outreach, and technical assistance initiatives for young fishermen, the press release said.

Focus areas would include seamanship, navigation, electronics, and safety; vessel and engine maintenance and repair; fishing gear engineering and technology; entrepreneurship and good business practices; direct marketing and traceability; and financial and risk management with respect to vessel, permit, and quota purchases.

Wesley Loy is editor of **Pacific Fishing** magazine and producer of **Deckboss**, a blog on Alaska commercial fisheries.





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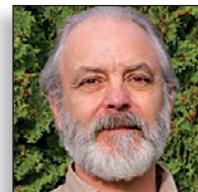
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Whales and yelloweye plague B.C. halibut fishermen



Low effort, fine fishing: I had a chat with halibut fisherman Wes Erikson about the season so far in British Columbia. Erikson is holding off going fishing until July or August but told me what other fishermen have been reporting to him.

The B.C. fishery opened on March 11, but there hadn't been a huge amount of effort by the end of April, primarily because of adverse weather. The Area 2B (Canadian waters) catch limit for 2017 is 7,450,000 pounds of halibut, up slightly over last season.

When boats could get out, however, the fishing was no less than fantastic, Erikson said, with an average size of 22 pounds reported off the north end of 2B. So both biomass and size are looking good.

The opening price was between \$10 and \$11 a pound, similar to last year, until a window of good weather allowed the tribes in 2A to get out on the water, Erikson said. Then, with more fish on the market, prices dropped to \$9 a pound.

But there are threats to the B.C. halibut fishery - one in the water and others in Ottawa.

Whale depredation has become an issue, with sperm whales gobbling up halibut off the north end of Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands) and killer whales basically monitoring halibut fishing territory off the south end of the islands.

"Last year we saw them by the flagpoles, waiting for us to pull the strings," Erikson said. "We're going to have to figure out a way to mitigate whale depredation and factor it into the stock assessment."

Bycatch management is another issue of concern to halibut fishermen. The halibut fleet is in the process of participating in a three-year yelloweye catch reduction program but is caught in a typical fisheries management Catch-22, Erikson said.

"It is a classic thing that occurs between fisheries managers and fishermen. As we get better at avoiding these species of concern, managers presume abundance is decreasing. If you just look at the commercial catch data, it would reflect a decrease in abundance," he said. "It is very difficult to quantify selectivity improvements."

"The yelloweye TAC (total allowable catch) has been cut substantially, so every year it gets harder and harder to avoid those things," he added. "Fisheries managers believe yelloweye are a species of concern; fishermen think they are the cockroaches of the sea."

The proposed Scott Islands marine national wildlife area and other commercial fishing exclusion zones are alarming fishermen.

With areas like the Scott Islands closed to fishing, it is forcing fishermen into smaller and smaller areas.



Prawn overview: B.C.'s prawn season opened May 11. Before the season opened, I asked prawn fisherman Guy Johnston what the expectations were for 2017.

In 2016, Johnston said, landings dropped by 25 percent - from 4 million to 3 million pounds - following a downward trend the past few years.

"Hopefully with the colder winter and more storms, things will be better this year," he said. "The season was only 37 days last year, so there is a lot of pressure on fishermen. Lease costs for stacking licenses have come a long way down as a reflection of the uncertainty in the fishery."

As far as the markets go, Johnston reported that the situation with China banning the import of chemical-dipped prawns has been

resolved, and since last fall China is back in the market looking for prawns.

"We now have Japan, China, and the United States plus local markets looking for prawns, so the market appears strong for prawns and from what I hear for seafood in general," he said.

There are no new management measures this year, but of concern to the prawn fleet are the marine protected areas (MPAs) that will be vastly expanded on this coast, Johnston said.

"The Pacific Prawn Fishermen's Association and the prawn fishermen's advisory caucus to DFO (Fisheries and Oceans Canada) are looking at ways we can influence where the MPAs are established," he said. "With nonmigratory species like prawns, if we lose productive areas we will not see any benefit, only a loss. So we will be looking for compensation from the government buying out licenses that represent the productivity of the areas closed."



Dogfish and sea slugs: B.C. trawler Ian Garnier, captain of the 59-foot Miss Tatum, reports that the trawl fishery has been good this spring, with favorable currency exchange conditions creating an added benefit to Canadian fishermen.

Garnier said he and his crew were the only B.C. trawlers going for live lingcod this winter, delivering to a small niche market. Garnier said that worked out quite well.

There is an alarming abundance of dogfish off Vancouver Island, he told *Pacific Fishing* on April 26.

"Dogfish seems to have infested the lower West Coast the last couple weeks," he wrote in a Facebook message. "Huge bodies of them like I haven't seen in many years."

Also appearing in abundance was a strange creature Garnier identified as a "sea slug." He said they have infested offshore waters from the surface to way down deep.

"Our nets have one stuck in every mesh when we haul them," he wrote. "I have seen them sporadically in the past, but now they are very dense everywhere."

Hake started moving in during the last three weeks of April. The stock and biomass look very promising, Garnier said, but prices continue to be marginally viable for the fishermen.

"Fuel is around a buck per liter for us now, give or take," Garnier added. "On a small boat like the Miss Tatum, fuel doesn't really influence the way we fish."

Michel Drouin has covered British Columbia's fishing industry since 1990. He lives in Vancouver, B.C.

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Courtesy of the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation

Price negotiations delay Oregon's shrimp season



On hold: Price negotiations delayed the Oregon pink shrimp season, which technically opened April 1.

Last year, fishermen saw a price of 71 cents per pound, with a total ex-vessel value for the season of \$25.1 million.

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife reported that though 2016 “fell short of recent measures,” it was “an excellent season relative to the long-term history of the fishery.”

Fishermen landed 35.5 million pounds of pink shrimp into Oregon, ending a five-year streak of about 50 million pounds each season – a turn that didn’t surprise fishery managers or fishermen.

Last year’s landings were still above the 20-year average of 29.4 million pounds from 1996 through 2015.



Plant sale: A major deal appeared in the offing between two titans of the North Pacific processing industry.

In an April 10 announcement, Pacific Seafood Group said Trident Seafoods Corp. approached the company about buying Trident’s surimi processing plant on the Newport, Oregon, waterfront.

The Trident facility has been “financially unprofitable” since 2011, Pacific said.

“This facility is an important part of the Newport community and provides access to a major international market,” said Pacific spokesperson Tim Horgan in the announcement. “We’re uniquely able to turn things around financially and keep the facility open.”

The Trident plant uses Pacific whiting, or hake, to make surimi, a versatile protein paste sold mainly into Asian markets.

According to Pacific, the Trident facility is the only onshore pro-

cessing plant in Oregon that produces surimi.

The Newport plant operates seasonally from June through October, and during peak season it employs as many as 150 people.

Pacific is prepared to continue operations at the plant but is “proceeding cautiously as a result of frivolous lawsuits.”

This is an apparent reference to antitrust litigation the company has been dealing with in its efforts to buy Ocean Gold Seafood, a major whiting processor in Westport, Washington. That case is scheduled to go to trial in April 2018. A loss in court could affect the purchase of the Trident plant, the Newport News Times reported.

“Pacific Seafood and Trident plan to meet with fishermen, community stakeholders, and government regulators to gauge support for the proposed sale, with hopes of saving the 2017 whiting season,” Pacific said. “Whether the plant opens or not, Pacific Seafood will offer jobs to all of Trident’s current employees.”

The sale still had not been finalized as of May 10.



Pollution cases: Oregon officials in April fined Trident Seafoods \$37,400 for wastewater violations at its Newport surimi plant.

It’s not the first time Trident has faced a state fine at this location. In 2015, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality fined the company \$14,309, also for a wastewater violation.

The most recent fine stems from 26 violations such as exceeding daily and monthly limits on discharges of oil, grease, and total suspended solids, DEQ said.

In another pollution case, the agency fined Da Yang Seafood \$54,600 for wastewater violations at its facility at the Port of Astoria.

It’s the second such fine for the company. In 2015, Da Yang was fined more than \$85,000 for discharging wastewater without a permit.

Da Yang has appealed both fines.

The company also was penalized \$60,000 by the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries for violating rest period, meal, and overtime rules.



Halibut time: Halibut fishing in Area 2A (Washington, Oregon, and California) is set to begin at the end of June.

Seven 10-hour fishing periods for the non-treaty directed commercial fishery south of Point Chehalis, Washington, are set for June 28, July 12, July 26, Aug. 9, Aug. 23, Sept. 6, and Sept. 20.

Treaty Indian tribes landed 261,716 pounds of commercial halibut during openings from March 20 to April 16, the International Pacific Halibut Commission reported.



Cutters coming: The U.S. Coast Guard plans to homeport two of its new Sentinel class 154-foot fast-response cutters in Astoria starting in 2021.

The two ships have not yet been named.

The new cutters will feature improved command and control capability as well as increased sea-keeping, operational range, a larger crew, and higher transit speeds compared to the Coast Guard’s legacy 110-foot Island class patrol boats such as the cutter Orcas, homeported in Coos Bay.

The Orcas will continue to operate from Coos Bay until replaced by the first of the Astoria-based fast-response cutters in 2021, the Coast Guard said.

Katie Frankowicz reports from Astoria, Ore.



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Disaster funding sought for California's hard-hit fisheries



Chasing relief: No one is expecting much from this year's Chinook salmon season, and a disaster declaration is already being requested by two members of Congress who are also pushing for Dungeness crab disaster relief funding.

The severely restricted salmon season follows last year's truncated Dungeness season, which gained a federal disaster designation in January along with several other West Coast and Alaska fisheries.

Actual relief funding is in limbo, however, as a five-month federal spending bill President Trump signed in early May did not include it.

But at press time, U.S. Reps. Jared Huffman and Jackie Speier, both California Democrats, co-sponsored a bill that seeks \$117 million for Dungeness disaster relief. Another bill sponsored by the pair asks for state and federal disaster declarations for the salmon season.

"Hardworking fishermen and coastal economies along the North Coast are experiencing real economic hardship from several disastrous fishing seasons in a row, causing these fishermen to miss boat payments or even decide to leave their fishing business altogether," Huffman said in a press release.

Adding that "Congress has fallen down on the job" on relief funding, Huffman vowed to "keep up the fight until Congress delivers the money."



Copious crab catch: As the wait continues for federal disaster relief for last season's delayed and disappointing Dungeness harvest, the current season is matching the high performance levels seen in years prior.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife data released in late April show that about 20 million pounds of crab had been landed in the state, valued at about \$62 million.

The catch was almost evenly split between the central and northern regions, with Crescent City being the leading port with a haul of 6.3 million pounds.

The months of March and April are incompletely tallied in the latest round of data, so updates will drive up the totals somewhat.

Last year's total catch weighed in at only 12.3 million pounds, but that season was dramatically delayed due to domoic acid contamination.

Catches in 2014 and 2015 totaled 17.2 and 16.3 million pounds, respectively.

Prior to that, a three-year Dungeness boom peaked in 2011 with 31.8 million pounds landed.



Sustainability planning: The federal Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program is geared to meeting the needs and promoting the economic sustainability of fishing communities. A dozen grant proposals for the West Coast were approved in 2016, ranging from analyzing the impacts of the "graying of the fishing industry" to forecasting the effects of ocean acidification on groundfish populations.

But the grant award gained by Humboldt State University is unique among the West Coast approvals - its scope is specific, focusing on two fishing communities in Northern California.

The \$271,225 grant is for developing "fishing community sustainability plans" for Eureka, one of the region's main ports, and for the smaller fishing hub of Shelter Cove.

At an April 11 meeting of Humboldt County's Board of Supervisors, Lori Richmond, a professor at the university, described the goals of the plans and the status of the region's fishing industry.

On the positive side, she said, commercial fishing has public support, as shown by the Humboldt County Harbor, Recreation,

and Conservation District's improvements to the Shelter Cove jetty and the city of Eureka's waterfront revitalization plan.

But Richmond added that the industry is "really facing some threats that we have to think about and plan for."

North Coast fishing industry participation is in what Richmond described as "a pattern of decline," with numbers of fishermen and vessels dropping over time.

A decline in "support industries and infrastructure" has stemmed from the fleet reduction, and "there are some worries about over-reliance on a few fisheries," Richmond said.

Salmon and Dungeness crab are the region's staple fisheries, and both have been dramatically impacted by changes in climate and ocean conditions.

Richmond added that fewer younger fishermen are coming into the industry. The average age of a North Coast fisherman is 54, and a third of the region's commercial fishermen are over 60, she said.

The plans will analyze those issues, and local advisory committees will make recommendations for addressing them.

The sustainability plans will be completed in the summer of 2019. Richmond said having them in place is a means of drawing funds for community development projects.

Ken Bates, of the Humboldt Fishermen's Marketing Association, said the plans can have lasting value.

"I look forward to this process. Fishermen look forward to it," he said.

Daniel Mintz reports from Eureka, Calif.

APRIL 2017

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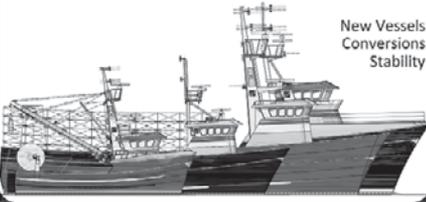
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Alaska Entry Permit Prices

(as of 6-1-17)

Species	Fishery	Asking Price*	Offer*	State Value*
SALMON	S SE DRIFT	87-	85	84.5+
	S PWS DRIFT	150-	145-	156.1+
	S COOK INLET DRIFT	48	45+	38.9+
	S AREA M DRIFT	108-	106+	103.8+
	S BRISTOL BAY DRIFT	125-	123-	133.7+
S	SE SEINE	220	185-	175.9+
	PWS SEINE	175	160	157.5+
	COOK INLET SEINE	59	50	68.3
	KODIAK SEINE	26-	25-	27-
	CHIGNIK SEINE	140-	130	167.2
	AREA M SEINE	55-	50	57.4
S	YAKUTAT SET	16	12	16.6
	COOK INLET SET	18	16	15.6-
	AREA M SET NET	57	50	56.3-
	BRISTOL SET NET	39	39+	38.6+
S	LOWER YUKON	9	8	10.1+
	POWER TROLL	32	32+	35+
	HAND TROLL	10	9.5	10.3+
HERRING	H SE GILLNET	10-	N/A	13.4
	H KODIAK GILLNET	5	3	5
H	SITKA SEINE	325	240	248.8+
	PWS SEINE	20	16	30.9
	COOK INLET SEINE	10	8	16.8
	KODIAK SEINE	21	20	30.3
	SE POUND SOUTH	25	24	27.6
H	SE POUND NORTH	30	25	43.1
	PWS POUND	5	3	3.5
SHELLFISH	S SE DUNGY 75 POT	18	17	17+
	S SE DUNGY 150 POT	39	36	37.8-
	S SE DUNGY 225 POT	55	50	55.3
	S SE DUNGY 300 POT	80	70	56.9
	S SE POT SHRIMP	22	20	18.4
	S KODIAK TANNER <60	24	22	29.7
	S PUGET SOUND DUNGY	165	160-	N/A
	S WASHINGTON DUNGY	2,500-6,500/FT	2,000-4,500/FT	N/A
	S OREGON DUNGY	2,500-6,500/FT	2,000-4,500/FT	N/A
	S CALIFORNIA DUNGY	300-800/POT	250-700/POT	N/A
SE ALASKA DIVE	SE AK Dive URCHIN	4	4	3.4+
	SE AK Dive CUCUMBER	28	23	25.3-
	SE AK Dive GEODUCK	70	50	62.5

Prices in JUNE vary in accordance with market conditions. *In thousands
+ denotes an increase from last month. N/A denotes No Activity.
- denotes a decrease from last month.

By Mike Painter and the Permit Master

Gillnet: Bay permit prices were dropping back into the \$120s going into May. Emergency transfer leases were holding steady at \$18-19k. Not much going on in SE where permits are available starting in the high \$80s. PWS permits were down to as low as \$150k. Cook Inlet permits were moving in the mid \$40s. Area M permits were seeing a little activity at just above \$100k.

Seine: SE permits were still available starting at around \$220k. Current offers are below \$200k. Buyers are still looking for PWS permits at around \$160k, but listings have dried up below \$175k. Kodiak permits are available in the mid to upper \$20s.

Troll: Power troll permits are moving steady in the low \$30s. Nothing new with Hand troll permits, with listings starting at around \$10k.

Halibut & Sablefish IFQ Prices

Recent market activity in halibut and sablefish quota shares

Species	Regulatory Area	Vessel Category*	Poundage (thousands)	Status (blocked/unblocked)	Ask (per pound) Low High	Offer (per pound) Low High
H	2C	D	1-10	B	60.00-70.00	58.00-62.00
H	2C	C/B	1-3	B	66.00-70.00	65.00-68.00
H	2C	C/B	4-10	B	70.00-75.00	68.00-70.00
H	2C	C/B	ANY	U	72.00-75.00	68.00-72.00
H	2C	A		B/U	75.00	72.00
H	3A	D		B/U	52.00-58.00	50.00-54.00
H	3A	C/B	1-5	B	52.00-56.00	50.00-55.00
H	3A	C/B	5-10	B	56.00-60.00	54.00-58.00
H	3A	C/B	>10	U	65.00-70.00	65.00-66.00
H	3A	A		B/U	70.00	68.00
H	3B	D		B	30.00-36.00	30.00-35.00
H	3B	C/B	1-10	B	44.00-48.00	44.00-46.00
H	3B	C/B	>10	U	48.00-50.00	48.00-49.00
H	3B	A	B/U	N/A	50.00	
H	4A	D		B/U	16.00-24.00	14.00-18.00
H	4A	C/B	1-10	B	23.00-26.00	23.00-25.00
H	4A	C/B	>10	B	26.00-28.00	24.00-26.00
H	4A	C/B	>10	U	30.00-32.00	24.00-26.00
H	4B/C/D	C/B	1-10	B	12.00-18.00	10.00-15.00
H	4B/C/D	C/B	>10	B/U	20.00-25.00	15.00-16.00
S	SE	C/B	1-10	B	26.00-30.00	26.00-28.00
S	SE	C/B	>10	U	35.00	32.00-33.00
S	SE	A		B/U	35.00	33.00
S	WY	C/B	1-10	B	26.00-30.00	24.00-28.00
S	WY	C/B	>10	U	30.00-34.00	30.00-32.00
S	WY	A		B/U	35.00	32.00
S	CG	C/B	1-10	B	22.00-25.00	20.00-22.00
S	CG	C/B	>10	U	25.00-28.00	23.00-24.00
S	CG	A		B/U	30.00	30.00
S	WG	C/B	1-10	B	12.00-13.00	9.00-12.00
S	WG	C/B	>10	B	13.00-15.00	10.00-12.00
S	WG	C/B/A	>10	U	15.00-18.00	12.00-16.00
S	AI	C/B/A		B/U	1.00-4.00	.50-2.00
S	BS	C/B		B/U	1.50-5.00	.75-3.00
S	BS	A		B/U	4.00-6.00	3.00-4.00

*Vessel Categories: A = freezer boats B = over 60' C = 35'-60' D = < 35'

NOTE: Halibut prices reflect net weight, sablefish round weight. Pricing for leased shares is expressed as a percentage of gross proceeds. ** Too few to characterize.

By Mike Painter and the Permit Master



The little 2C that is listed is taking a while to move at the \$70+ price. So \$70/lb is not a real popular price. 3A unblocked is still moving at north of the mid \$60s. There is getting to be a decent inventory of 3A blocks and they are moving in the mid \$50s. No change in 3B, where blocks are in the mid \$40s and unblocked closer to \$50. 4A blocks still moving in the low to mid \$20s. A couple of price drops in 4C & 4D, no other activity.

New listings of SE Sablefish coming on the market at \$35/lb. Offers just under that. Same listings in WY as a month ago. New unblocked CG listing at \$25/lb. No change in WG. Slightly lower prices in AI. Nothing new in BS.

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- 7,000# "B" AI BCOD BLKD @ \$3
- 75,000# "B" AI BCOD UNBLKD @ \$3.10
- 18,000# "B" BS BCOD UNBLKD @ \$5
- ANY# "B/C/D" 2C HALIBUT BLKD/UNBLKD @ WANTED
- 1500# "C" 2C HALIBUT AVAL CH/LSE @ \$7
- ANY# "B/C" 3A HALIBUT UN/BLKD @ WANTED
- 1000# "C" 3A HALIBUT BLKD @ \$52
- 1100# "D" 3A HALIBUT BLKD @ \$53
- ANY# "B/C" 3B HALIBUT UNBLKD @ WANTED
- 2,900# "C" 4A HALIBUT BLKD @ \$25

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KODIAK GILLNET.....	\$5K
NORTON SOUND.....	\$2K
HOONAH POUND.....	N/A
CRAIG POUND.....	WANTED
PWS POUND.....	N/A
SALMON	
S.E. DRIFT.....	\$90K
PWS DRIFT.....	
\$170K.....	
COOK INLET DRIFT.....	N/A
COOK INLET SET.....	\$50K/PKG
AREA M SEINE.....	\$60K
AREA M DRIFT.....	
\$108K.....	
AREA M SET.....	N/A
BBAY DRIFT.....	\$135K
BBAY SET.....	\$45K
SE SEINE.....	\$220K
PWS SEINE.....	\$175K
COOK INLET SEINE.....	\$87K
KODIAK SEINE.....	\$40K

CHIGNIK SEINE.....	\$230K
AREA M SEINE.....	\$60K
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KODIAK TANNER <60".....	\$28K
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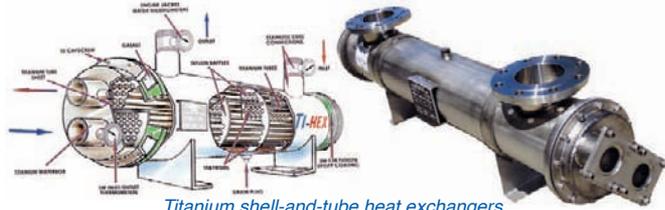
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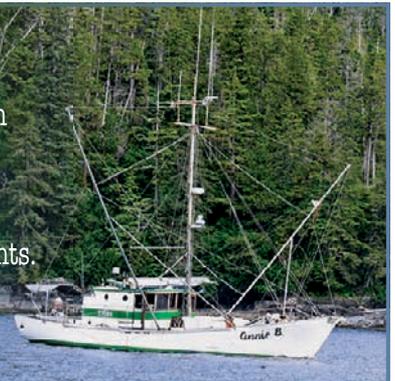
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Alaska seafood in the global marketplace

Editor's note: The following is taken from the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute's 2016 annual report.

- As of December 2016, the U.S. Dollar Index was 8.5 percent stronger (greater) than January 2015, and is up 30 percent since January 2012.
- Currencies of major competitors such as Russia, Norway, and Chile have been especially weak, and the euro is currently at its weakest point versus the dollar since 2003, making Alaska seafood relatively more expensive to foreign buyers and greatly improving the position of foreign competitors.
- Salmon runs outside of Bristol Bay were generally well below forecast volumes in 2016. Pink salmon harvests were especially low.
- Harvests either fell or remained historically low for high-value species: halibut, black cod, and crab. These species accounted for a quarter of ex-vessel value in 2014-15.
- Terrorist attacks led to lower industry participation and resulting sales at Seafood Expo Global in Brussels, Belgium, one of the world's largest international seafood trade shows.
- Seafood consumption continues to decline in Japan, a key export market for Alaska.
- The Russian embargo continues to negatively impact Alaska through increased competition from farmed salmon suppliers, such as Norway, in important global markets and restricts key market access for Alaska pink salmon roe.
- Russia posted a large pink and chum salmon harvest in 2016 and increased pollock production.
- The highest Gulf of Alaska pollock harvest since 1985 resulted in oversupplied pollock markets, particularly for roe in Japan and fillets in Europe.
- Surimi values remained high, buoyed by less supply pressure from tropical surimi producers.
- Americans increased their seafood consumption to 15.5 pounds of fish and shellfish per person in 2015, up nearly a pound from the previous year. This is the biggest increase in seafood consumption in the United States in 20 years.
- After years of higher growth, farmed salmon production declined in 2016, contributing to increasing salmon prices during Alaska's 2016 season.
- Bristol Bay posted the second-largest sockeye harvest since 1995 and the average base ex-vessel price increased to 76 cents per pound after falling to 50 cents per pound in 2015.
- Lower crab production in Alaska and elsewhere has led to record high crab prices, somewhat offsetting the lower total allowable catch levels.
- There is a growing groundfish biomass in the Bering Sea. However, harvests are limited by the 2 million metric ton harvest cap. Fishery managers estimate the region could

sustainably harvest 3.2 million metric tons.

- Despite an increase in total allowable catch, halibut prices increased in 2016.
- Exports to Japan increased 15 percent in 2015, partly due to a stronger yen.
- Spain, the fourth-largest importer of all seafood in the world, is officially out of its long recession.
- Despite the recent increase in per capita seafood consumption in the United States, seafood consumption has generally trended down in the United States, Europe, and Japan over the past decade. With lower grain prices, prices of competing proteins like beef, pork, and chicken are also generally trending lower in the United States. ↓

Alaska seafood on top!

Alaska seafood is now, for the first time, the No. 1 most commonly named protein brand called out on restaurant menus, surpassing Angus beef. New ASMI research demonstrates that 94 percent of consumers are more likely to order a fish or seafood dish when the word "Alaska" is used on the menu.





The U.S. Coast Guard commissioned the new cutter John McCormick on April 12 in Ketchikan, Alaska. It's the first of six fast-response cutters to be homeported in Alaska. The 154-foot vessels boast flank speed of 28 knots and feature the latest command, control, communications, and computer technology. The John McCormick is named for Boatswain John F. McCormick, who received a medal for a heroic rescue on the Columbia River bar in 1938. USCG photo

Salmon preview *continued from Page 10*

marginal month of September in the San Francisco Bay region.

Fishing in the Shelter Cove to Fort Bragg area – which has been an important contributor to the catch in past seasons – is limited to the month of September and/or a 3,000-fish quota.

In the Klamath Management Zone (KMZ) from southern Oregon to the Humboldt South Jetty, fishing is closed for the entire season to protect Klamath fall-run Chinook. The run for that stock is expected to hit a record low level of about 11,000 fish.

The low runs are the outcome of conditions seen about three years ago, when drought peaked, river flows decreased, and water temperatures rose. Juvenile salmon, including those reared in hatcheries and trucked to estuaries, were met with challenging warm ocean conditions.

Eureka fisherman Dave Bitts, the council's troll salmon adviser and the president of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations, said this year's season is "very

likely" to meet the standards for a federal disaster declaration.

With the closure of the KMZ, the season hinges on the abundance of Sacramento River fall-run Chinook, a stock that makes up the majority of the coastal catch.

The ocean abundance forecast for Sacramento River Chinook is 230,700 fish. Bitts said a good season will generally result from a Sacramento abundance level of 500,000 fish.

He believes the best hope for a salvageable season is a higher than predicted ocean population.

"I'm hoping there will be some fish and enough opportunity to allow some people to get through the year – but there may not be," Bitts said.

He offered one "bright note" for the next season and perhaps the one after – he said that when sport fishermen began fishing in April, they reported seeing more young, sublegal fish than they've seen in many years. ↴

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