

Pacific Cod Fisheries Overview

Report to the Alaska Board of Fisheries

October 30-31, 2025

Oral Report: RC 3

Staff Comments: RC 2



Pacific Cod Fisheries Overview

- List of Fishery Terms
- Jurisdiction Terms and Map
- Pacific cod Fisheries
 - Federal, Parallel, State
- Pacific cod Harvest Allocations
- State-waters Pacific cod Fisheries
 - South Alaska Peninsula Area
 - Dutch Harbor Subdistrict
- Overview of Proposals

List of Fishery Terms

- **NPFMC** = North Pacific Fishery Management Council
- **NMFS** = National Marine Fisheries Service
- **ABC** = Acceptable Biological Catch
- **TAC** = Total Allowable Catch (Federal/parallel catch limit)
- **GHL** = Guideline Harvest Level (State-waters catch limit)
- **Sectors** = Different gear types or processing capabilities used to allocate federal/parallel TAC
- **FFP** = Federal Fisheries Permit
- **LLP** = License Limitation Program (equivalent to state's limited entry program)
- **SSL** = Steller Sea Lion
- **VMS** = Vessel Monitoring System

List of Fishery Terms - Jurisdiction

- **Federal Waters** = Waters from 3–200 nmi offshore under federal management jurisdiction

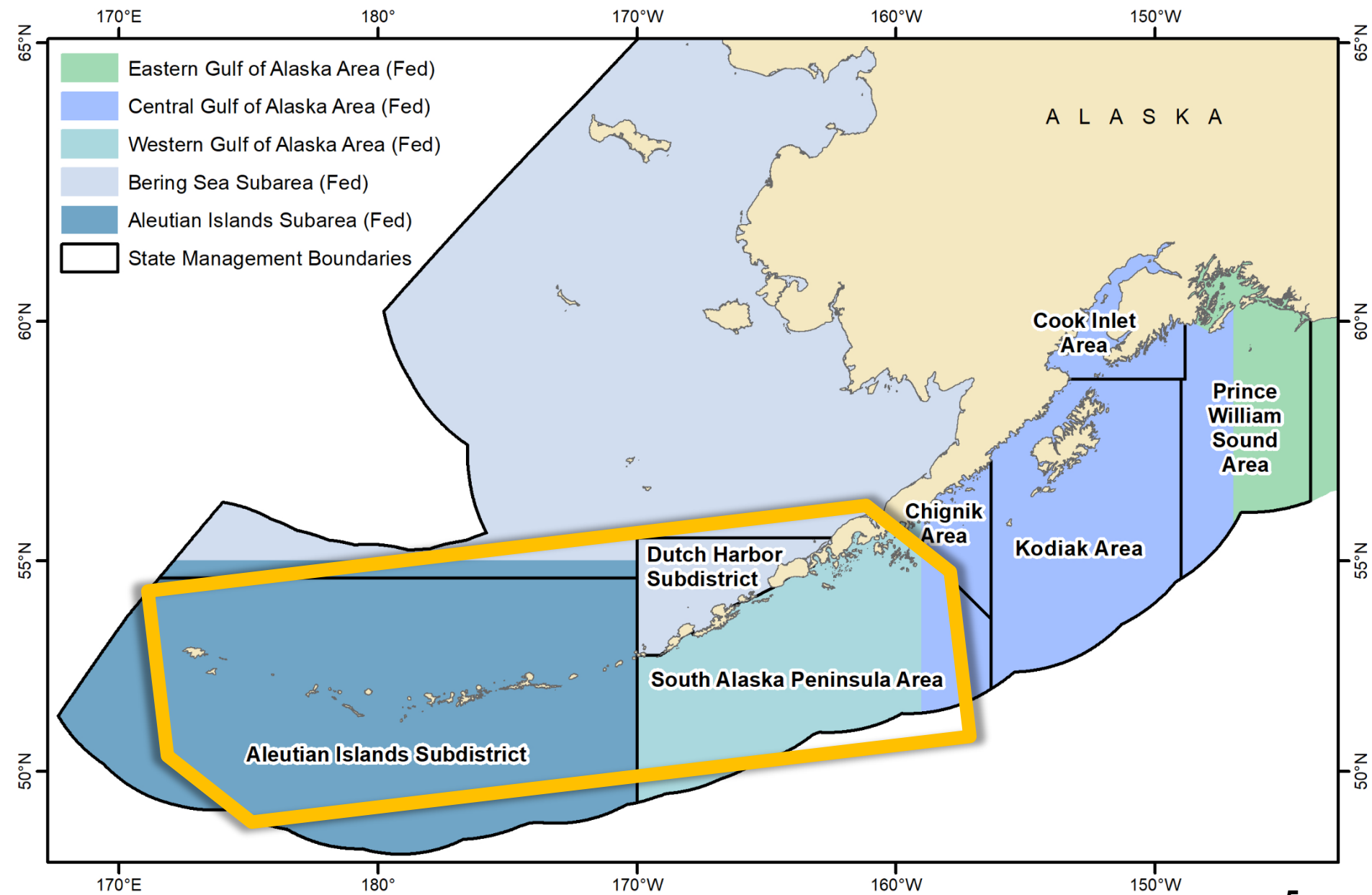
Federal Pacific Cod Groundfish Management Areas (5)

- **EGOA** = Eastern Gulf of Alaska
- **CGOA** = Central Gulf of Alaska
- **WGOA** = Western Gulf of Alaska
- **BS** = Bering Sea
- **AI** = Aleutian Islands

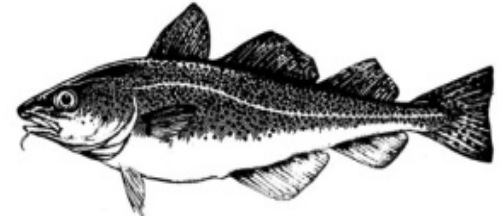
- **State Waters** = Waters from 0–3 nmi offshore under state management jurisdiction

State Pacific Cod Groundfish Management Areas (8)

- Eastern Gulf of Alaska (Southeast Alaska)
- Prince William Sound
- Cook Inlet
- Kodiak
- Chignik
- South Alaska Peninsula (SAP)
- Dutch Harbor Subdistrict (DHS)
- Aleutian Islands Subdistrict (AIS)



Alaska Pacific Cod Fisheries:

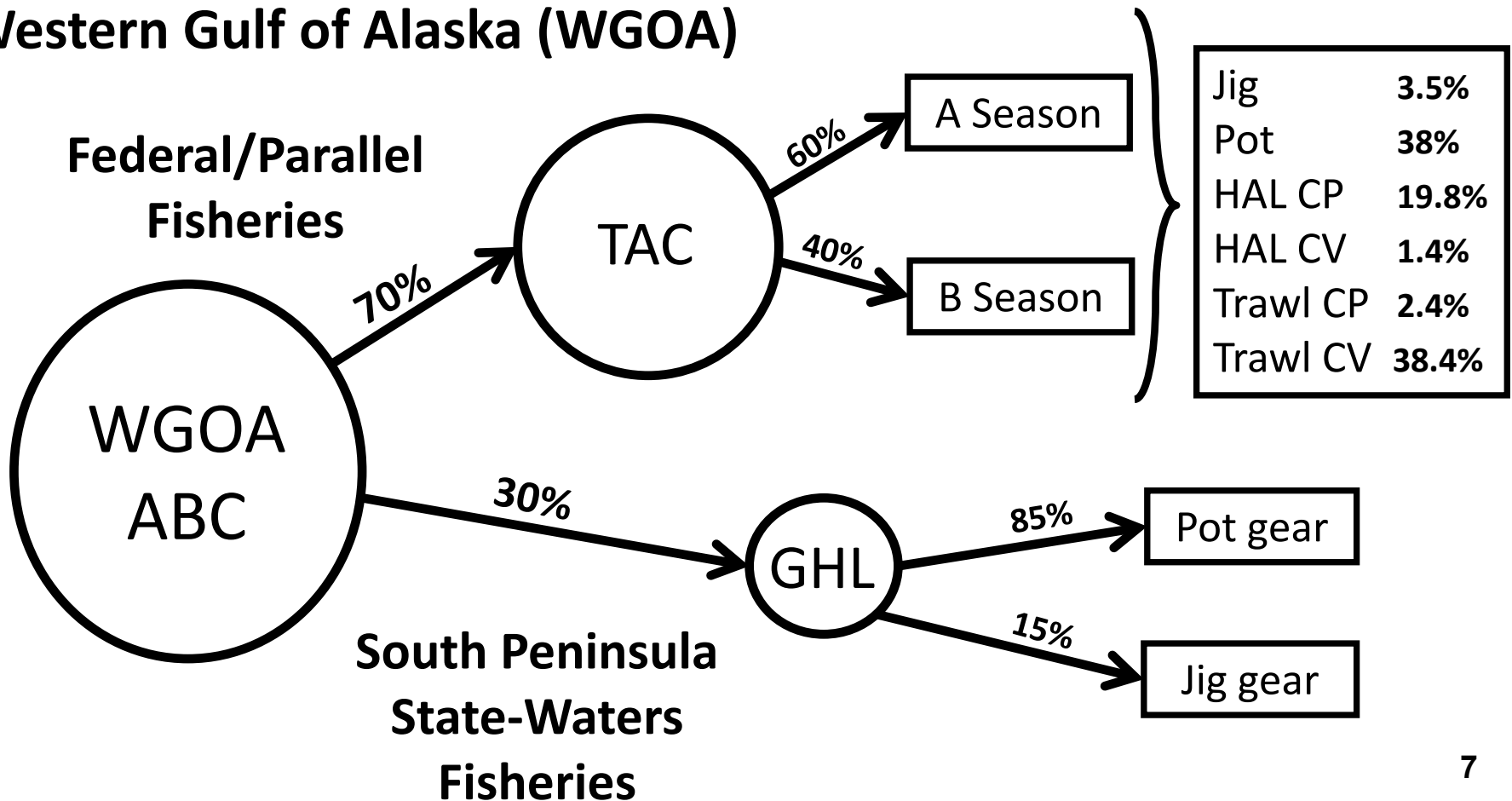


- **Federal:** Federal waters (3–200 nmi) guided by NPFMC process. Harvest deducted from federal TAC
- **Parallel:** State waters (0–3 nmi) concurrent with adjacent federal fishery and generally adopt federal regulations and management measures as guided by the board process. Harvest deducted from federal TAC
- **State-Waters (GHL):** State waters (0–3 nmi) guided by the board process. Harvest deducted from state GHL

Harvest Limits

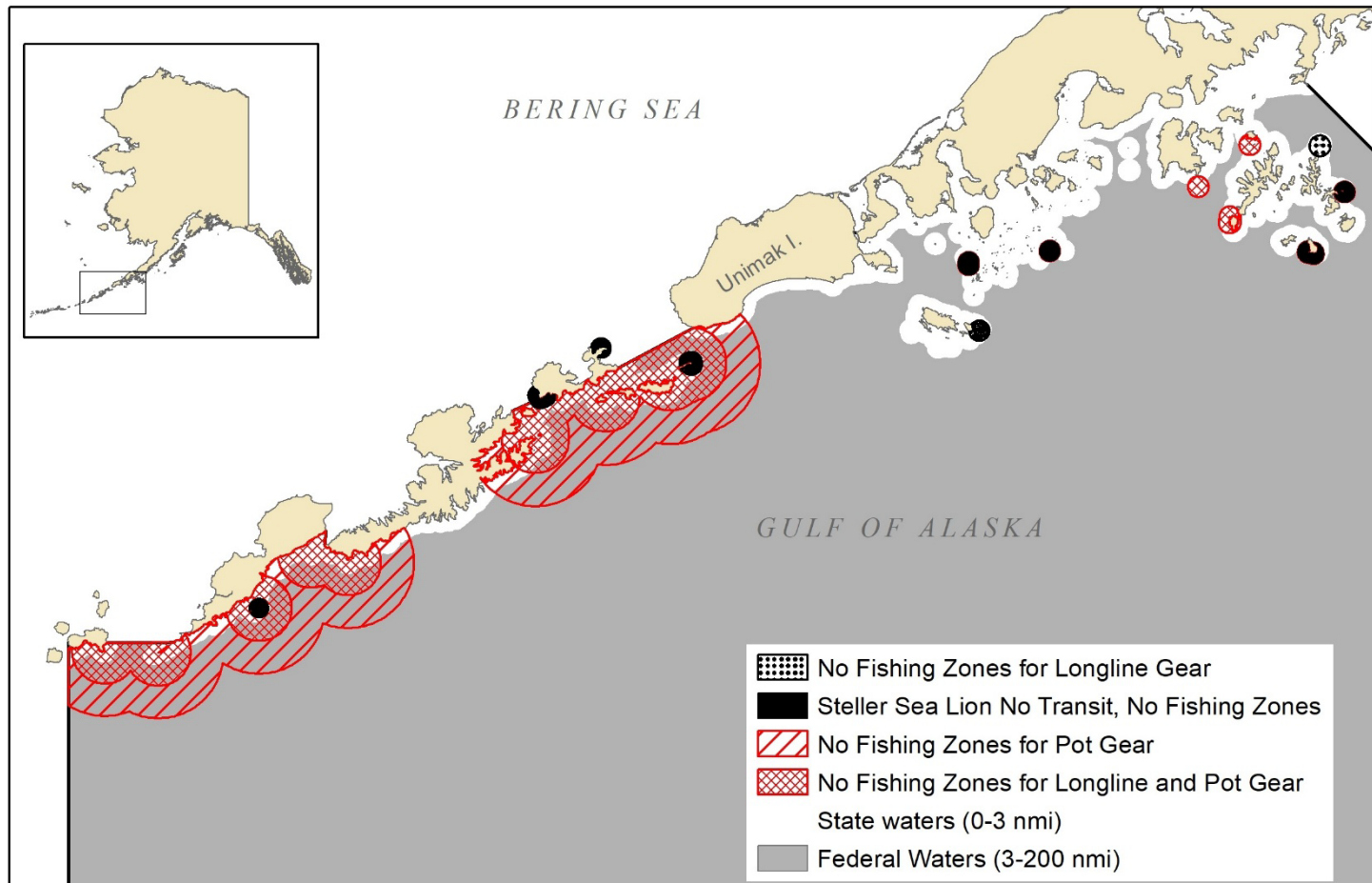
- **ABC** – Acceptable Biological Catch (Federal: EGOA, CGOA, WGOA, BS, AI)
- **TAC** – Total Allowable Catch (Federal/Parallel Fisheries)
- **GHL** – Guideline Harvest Level (State-Waters Fisheries)

Western Gulf of Alaska (WGOA)



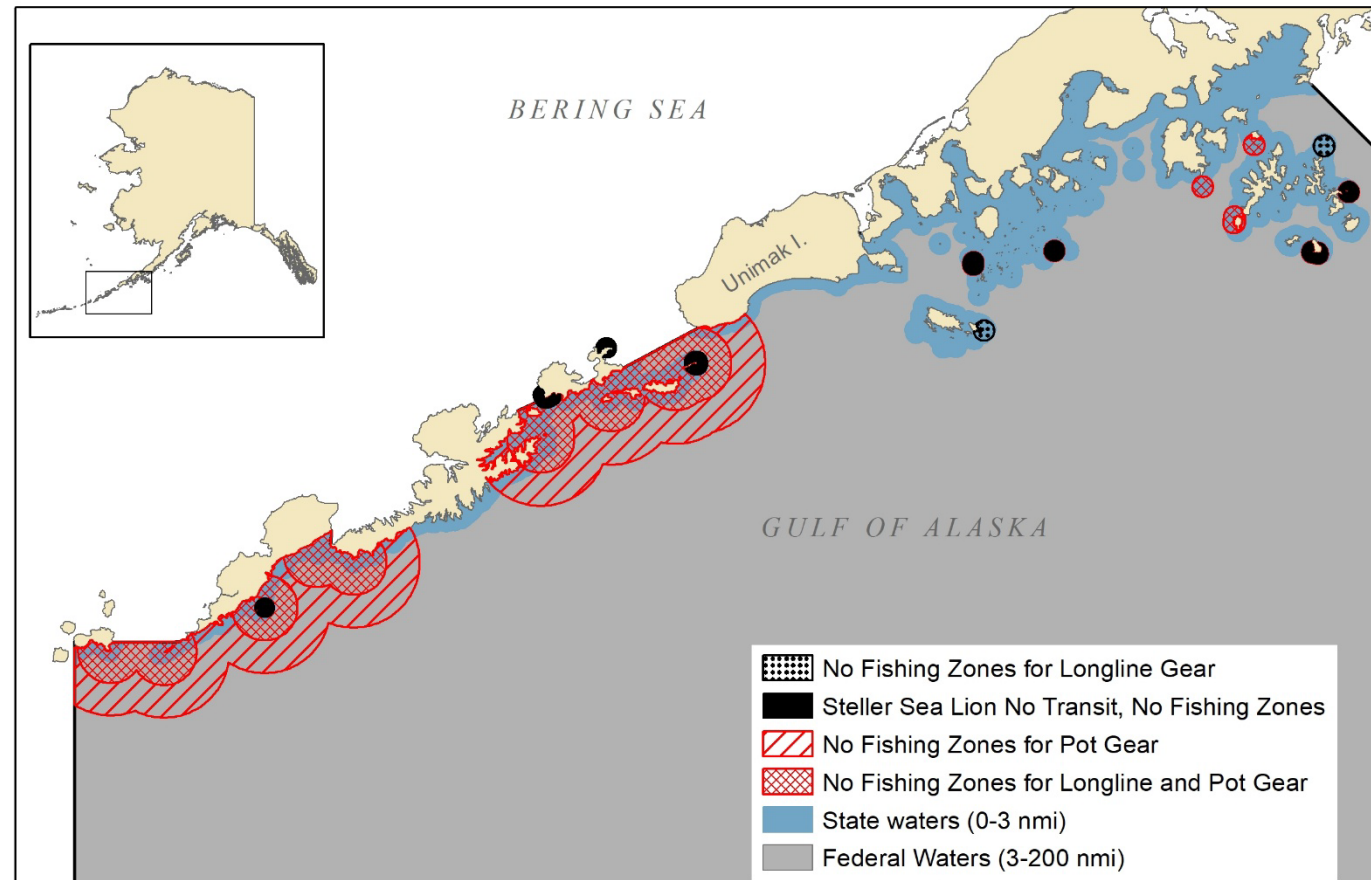
WGOA Federal Pacific Cod Fishery

- Federal waters 3–200 nmi
- Harvest limit (TAC) based on 70% of federal Pacific cod ABC
- Gear sectors: trawl, longline, pot, and jig gear (CV and CP)
- A and B seasons (Jan 1 and Sep 1)
- No gear limits
- Limited access (FFP and LLP required)
- Vessel length limited by LLP
- Steller sea lion (SSL) protection measures (no fishing zones and VMS)
- Observer requirements



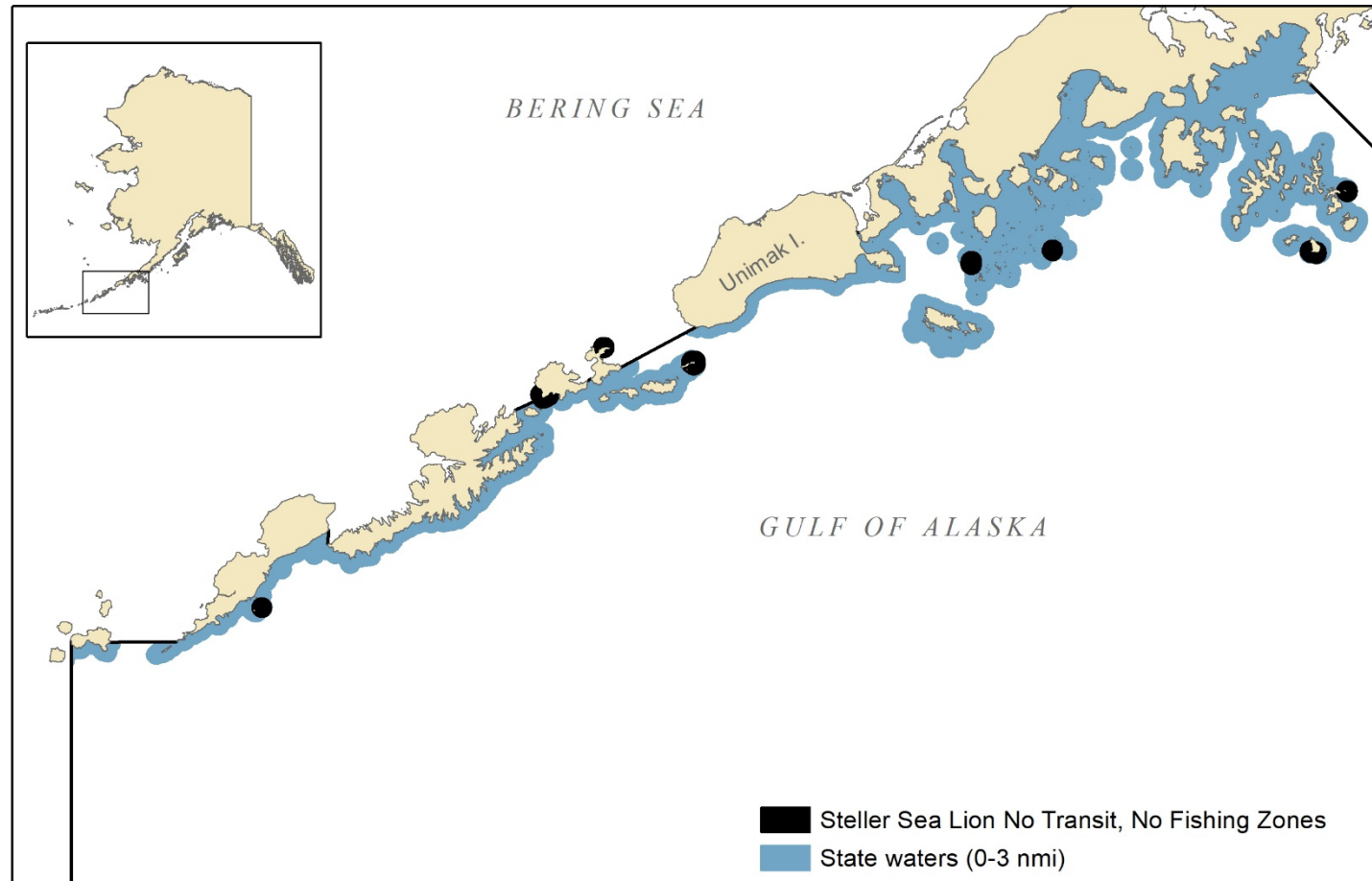
South Alaska Peninsula Area Parallel Pacific Cod Fishery

- State waters 0–3 nmi
- Opened concurrent to federal fishery by state Emergency Order
- Harvest deducted from federal TAC
- Gear sectors:
pot, jig, longline,
and trawl
(Nonpelagic trawl
restrictions in most
state waters)
- A and B seasons
(Jan 1 and Sep 1)
- No gear limits
- Vessel length
limited to 58 ft
- Open access
(FFP/LLP not required)
- Most SSL protection measures adopted
(no fishing zones and VMS)
- Observer requirements only for
federally permitted vessels



South Alaska Peninsula Area State-Waters Pacific Cod Fishery

- State waters 0–3 nmi
- Harvest limits (GHL) based on 30% of federal Pacific cod ABC
- Seasons open after federal/parallel fisheries close
- Pot and jig gear only
- Gear limited to 60 pots or 5 jig machines
- Vessel length limited to 58 ft
- Open access – exclusive registration
- SSL rookery protection only
- No observer requirements

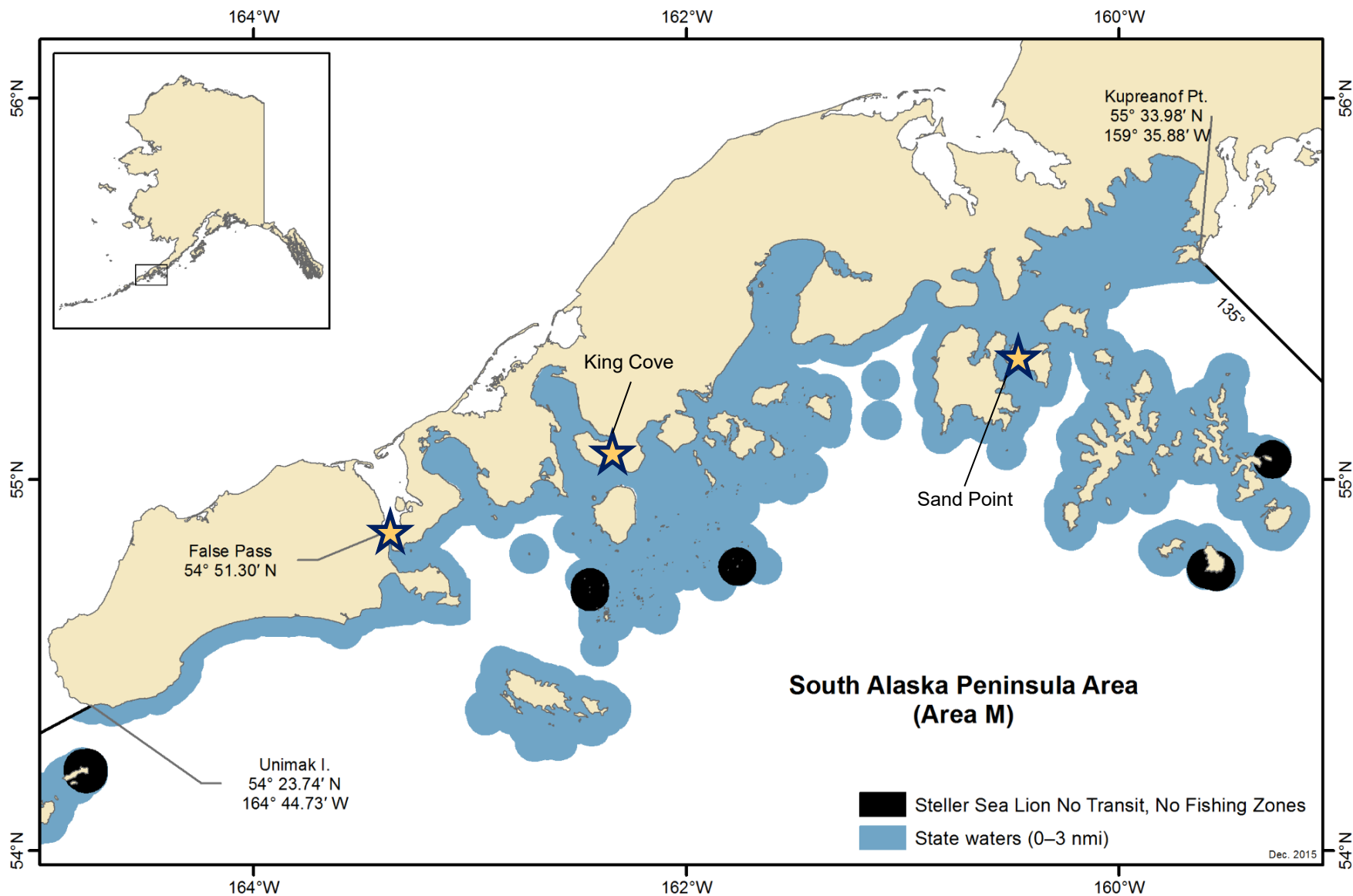


Pacific Cod Fisheries Overview

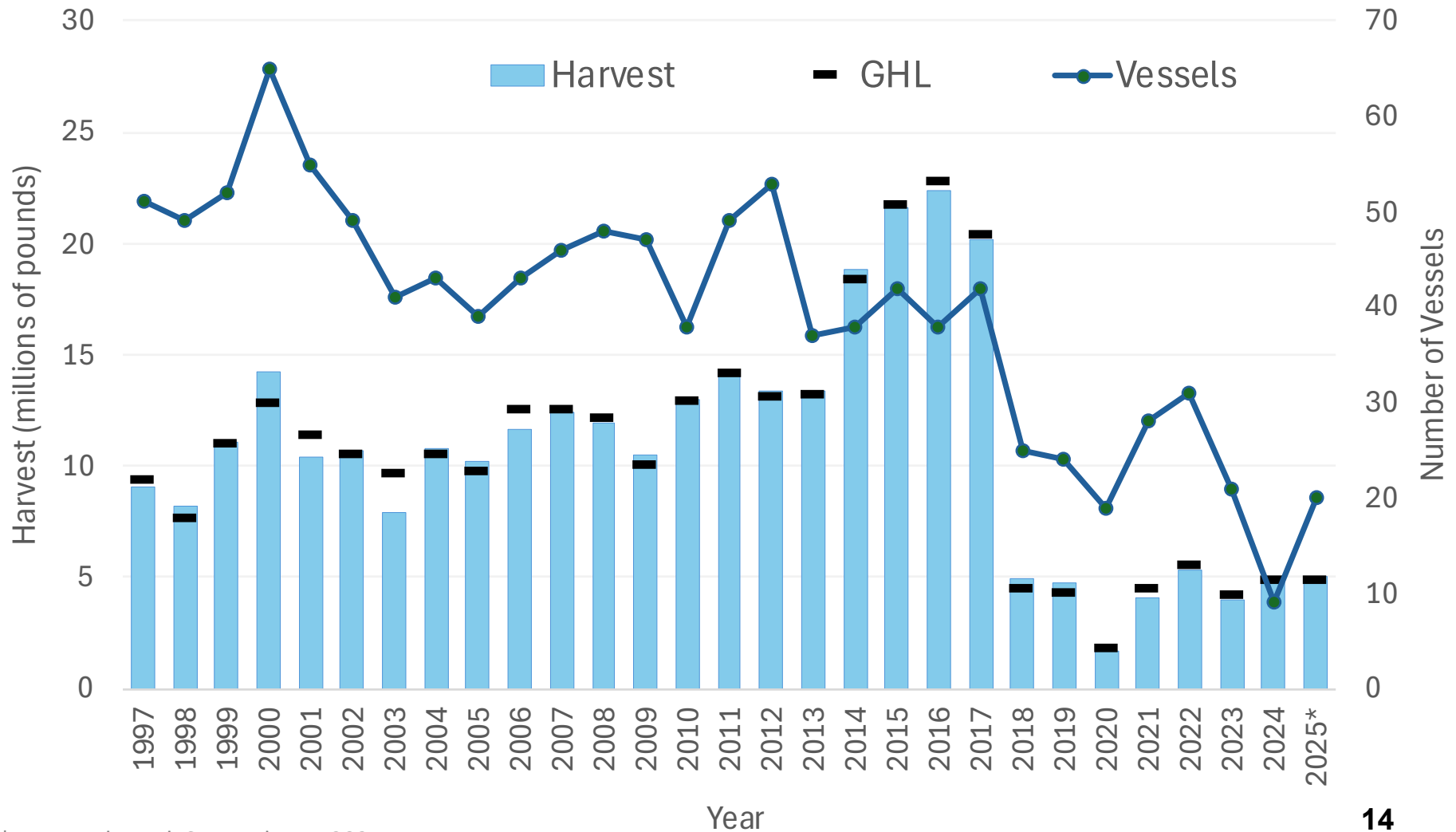
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Overview of Current State-Waters Fisheries		
	South Alaska Peninsula Area	Dutch Harbor Subdistrict
% ABC	30% (WGOA)	10–15% (Bering Sea Subarea)
Step Up/Step Down	None	1% every 2 years
2025 GHL	5.8 million lb	44.0 million lb
Gear Types	Pot and jig	Pot
GHL Allocations	Pot: 85% (4.9 mil) Jig: 15% (864,000)	Pot: 100% (44.0 mil)
Opening date	Pot: 7 days after WGOA pot close or March 7, whichever is later Jig: 2 days after WGOA jig close or March 15	Pot: 7 days after BSAI hook-and-line and pot catcher vessel ≤60 feet OAL sector close
GHL rollover date	After close of WGOA pot B season	None
Registration	Exclusive	Exclusive
Maximum vessel length	58 ft	58 ft
Vessel count (2016–2025 average)	Pot: 26 Jig: 14	Pot: 29 12

South Alaska Peninsula Area

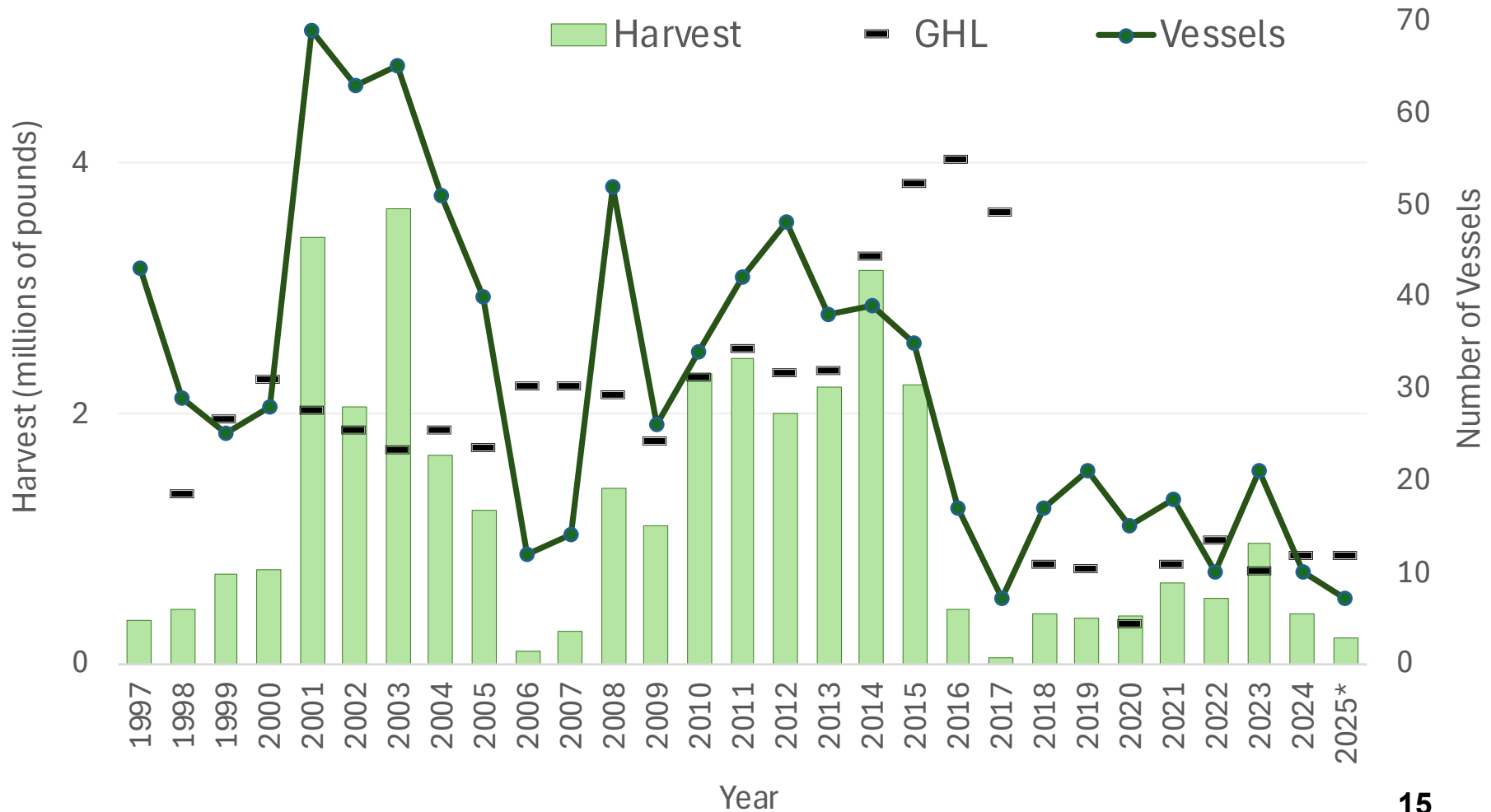


South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear effort, guideline harvest level (GHL) and harvest, by year, 1997–2025



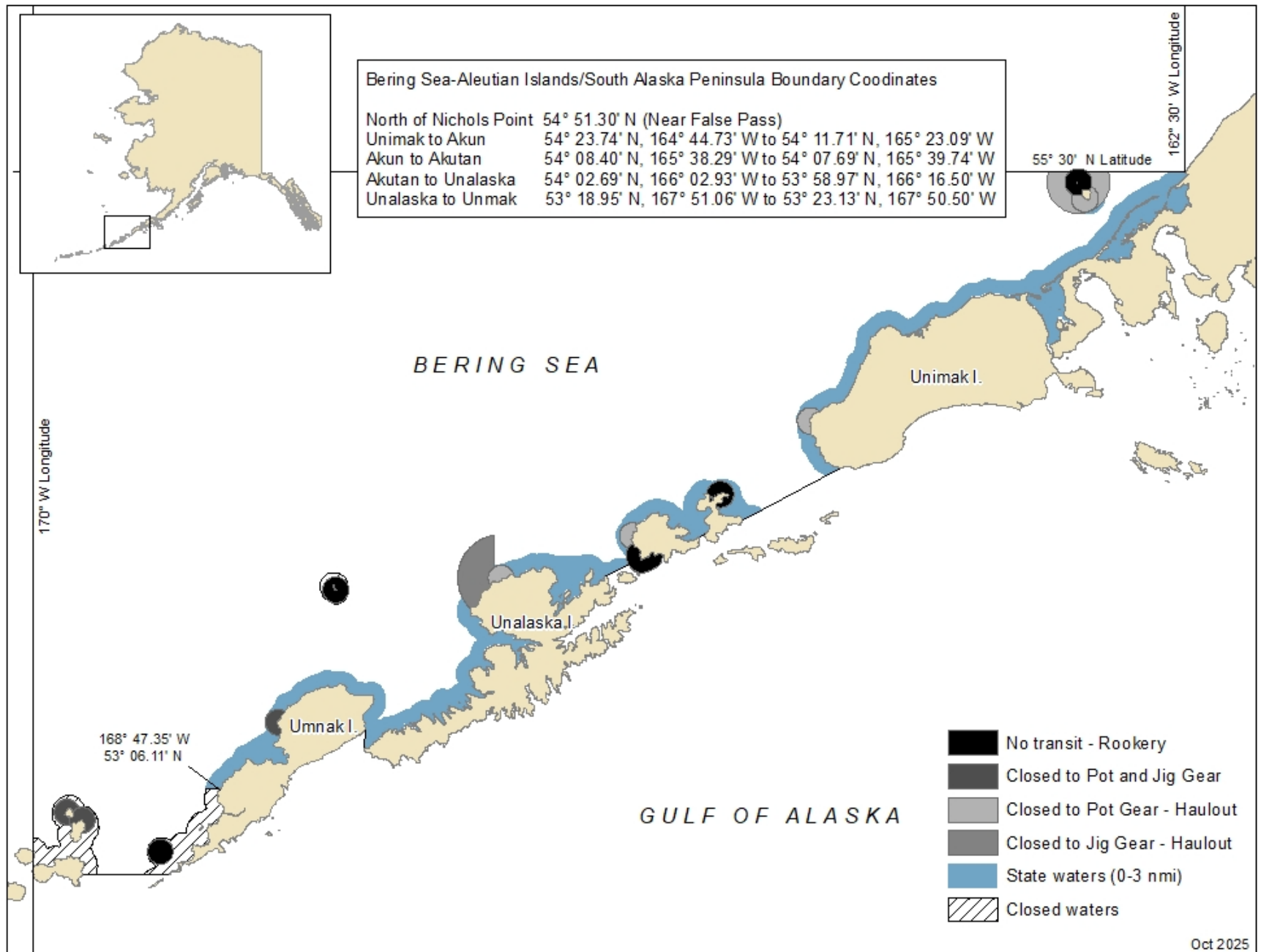
*Harvest through September 1, 2025

South Alaska Peninsula Area state-waters Pacific cod jig gear effort, guideline harvest level (GHL) and harvest, by year, 1997–2025

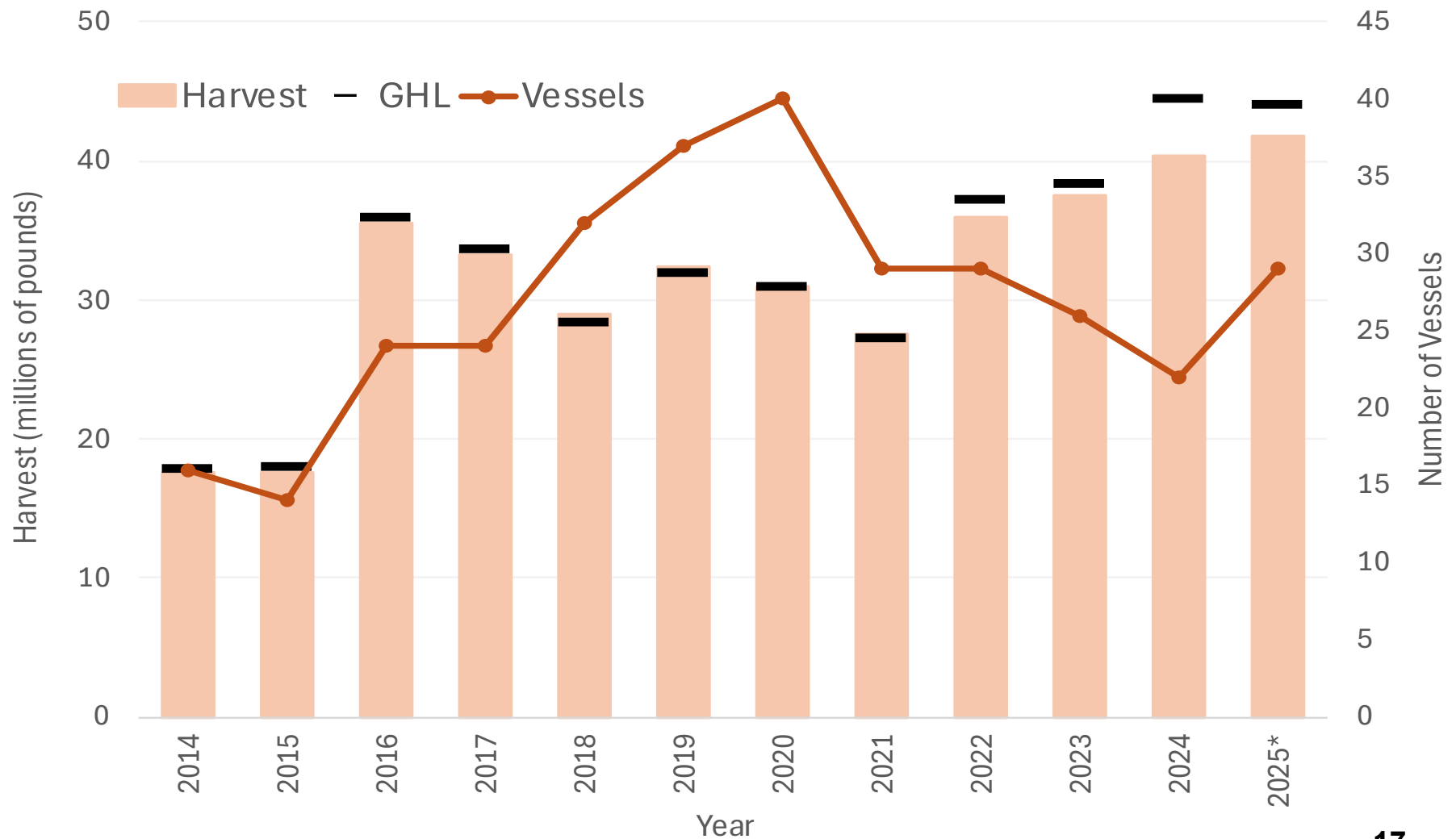


*Harvest through September 1, 2025

Dutch Harbor Subdistrict



Dutch Harbor Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod pot gear effort, guideline harvest level (GHL) and harvest, by year, 2014–2025



*Harvest through September 1, 2025

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2025 Pacific cod Meeting – 11 Proposals

South Alaska Peninsula GHL Allocation Increase – 8 Proposals

Proposals 1–2 – GHL allocation 50%

Proposals 3–4 – max GHL 50% with step up based on total harvest

Proposals 5–6 – max GHL 50% with step up based on pot gear harvest

Proposals 7–8 – max GHL 60% with step up based on total harvest

Dutch Harbor Subdistrict – 2 Proposals

Proposal 9 – Close DHS and SAP state waters adjacent to Unimak Island to Pacific cod fishing

Proposal 10 – Open the DHS Pacific cod fishery 7 days after the federal BSAI fishery closure or March 7, whichever is later

Aleutian Islands Trawl Gear Restrictions – 1 Proposal

Proposal 11 – Close AI state waters to groundfish fishing with trawl gear

Proposals 1–2

Increase the SAP Pacific cod GHL from 30% to 50% of the WGOA Pacific cod ABC

Proposal	Base GHL %	Max GHL %	GHL Step Up	GHL Step Up Basis
1	50%	50%	No	-
2	50%	50%	No	-
3	40%	50%	5% per year	Total harvest
4	40%	50%	5% per year	Total harvest
5	40%	50%	5% per year	Pot gear harvest only
6	40%	50%	5% per year	Pot gear harvest only
7	50%	60%	5% per year	Total harvest
8	50%	60%	5% per year	Total harvest

Proposals 3–4

Increase the SAP Pacific cod GHL from 30% to 40% of the WGOA Pacific cod ABC with a 5% step up to occur annually, not to exceed 50% of the WGOA Pacific cod ABC

Proposal	Base GHL %	Max GHL %	GHL Step Up	GHL Step Up Basis
1	50%	50%	No	-
2	50%	50%	No	-
3	40%	50%	5% per year	Total harvest
4	40%	50%	5% per year	Total harvest
5	40%	50%	5% per year	Pot gear harvest only
6	40%	50%	5% per year	Pot gear harvest only
7	50%	60%	5% per year	Total harvest
8	50%	60%	5% per year	Total harvest

Proposals 5–6

Increase the SAP Pacific cod GHL from 30% to 40% of the WGOA Pacific cod ABC with a 5% step up to occur annually if the pot gear GHL is achieved by May 31, not to exceed 50% of the WGOA Pacific cod ABC

Proposal	Base GHL %	Max GHL %	GHL Step Up	GHL Step Up Basis
1	50%	50%	No	-
2	50%	50%	No	-
3	40%	50%	5% per year	Total harvest
4	40%	50%	5% per year	Total harvest
5	40%	50%	5% per year	Pot gear harvest only
6	40%	50%	5% per year	Pot gear harvest only
7	50%	60%	5% per year	Total harvest
8	50%	60%	5% per year	Total harvest

Proposals 7–8

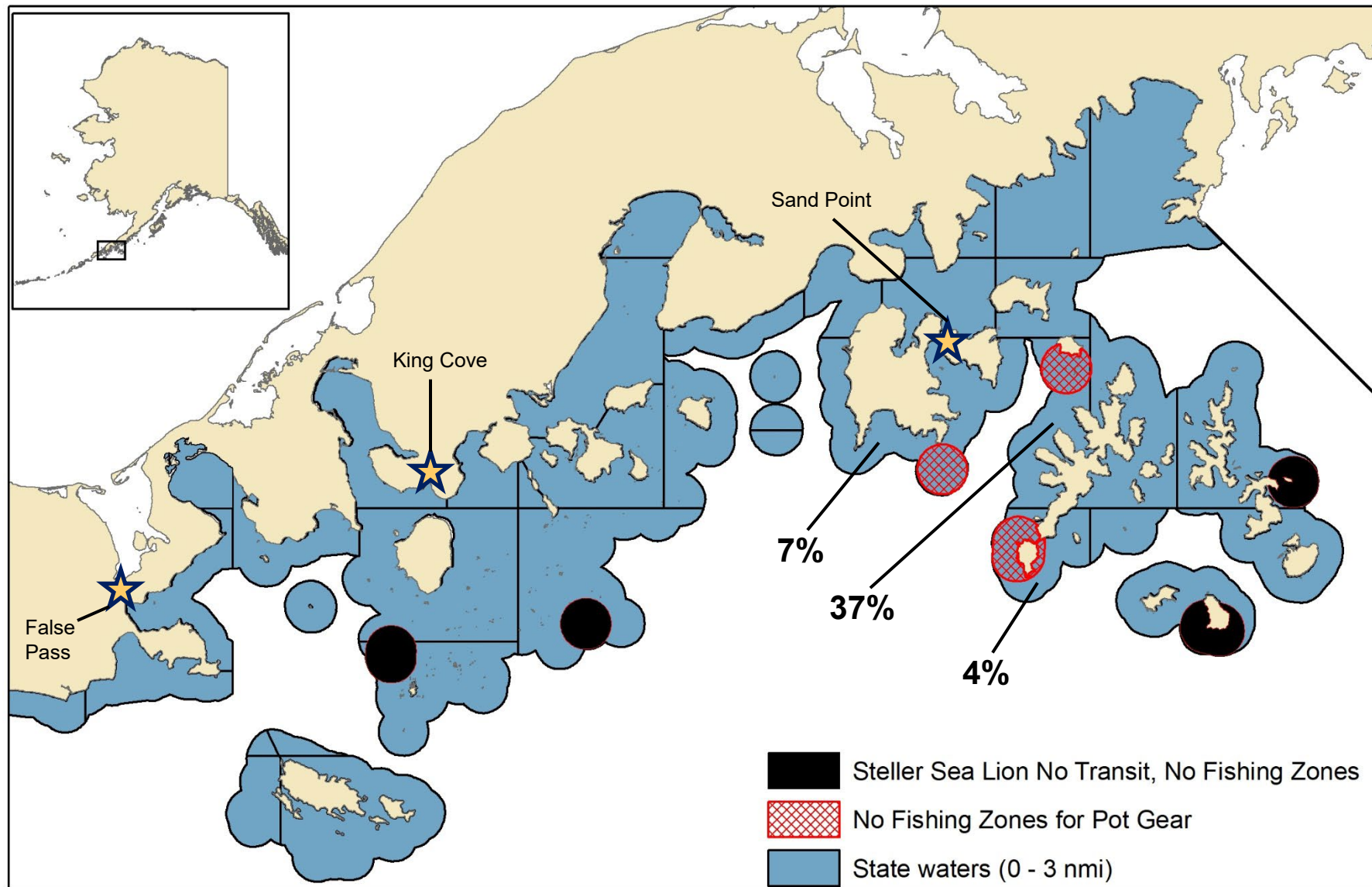
Increase the SAP state-waters Pacific cod GHL from 30% to 50% of the WGOA Pacific cod ABC with a 5% step up to occur annually if the GHL is achieved, not to exceed 60% of the WGOA Pacific cod ABC

Proposal	Base GHL %	Max GHL %	GHL Step Up	GHL Step Up Basis
1	50%	50%	No	-
2	50%	50%	No	-
3	40%	50%	5% per year	Total harvest
4	40%	50%	5% per year	Total harvest
5	40%	50%	5% per year	Pot gear harvest only
6	40%	50%	5% per year	Pot gear harvest only
7	50%	60%	5% per year	Total harvest
8	50%	60%	5% per year	Total harvest

Considerations for Proposals 1–8

- An increase in state-waters GHL may benefit
 - Vessels $\leq$ 58 ft
 - Vessels that do not participate in federal/parallel fisheries
- May adversely effect vessels that fish in federal/parallel fisheries
 - Vessels $>$ 58 ft
 - Gear type:
 - Pot and jig gear are allocated both state GHL and federal TAC
 - Longline and trawl allocated federal TAC only
- May result in SSL reconsultation under the ESA

Stellar Sea Lion restrictions for pot and jig gear in the South Alaska Peninsula Area



Considerations for Proposals 1–8

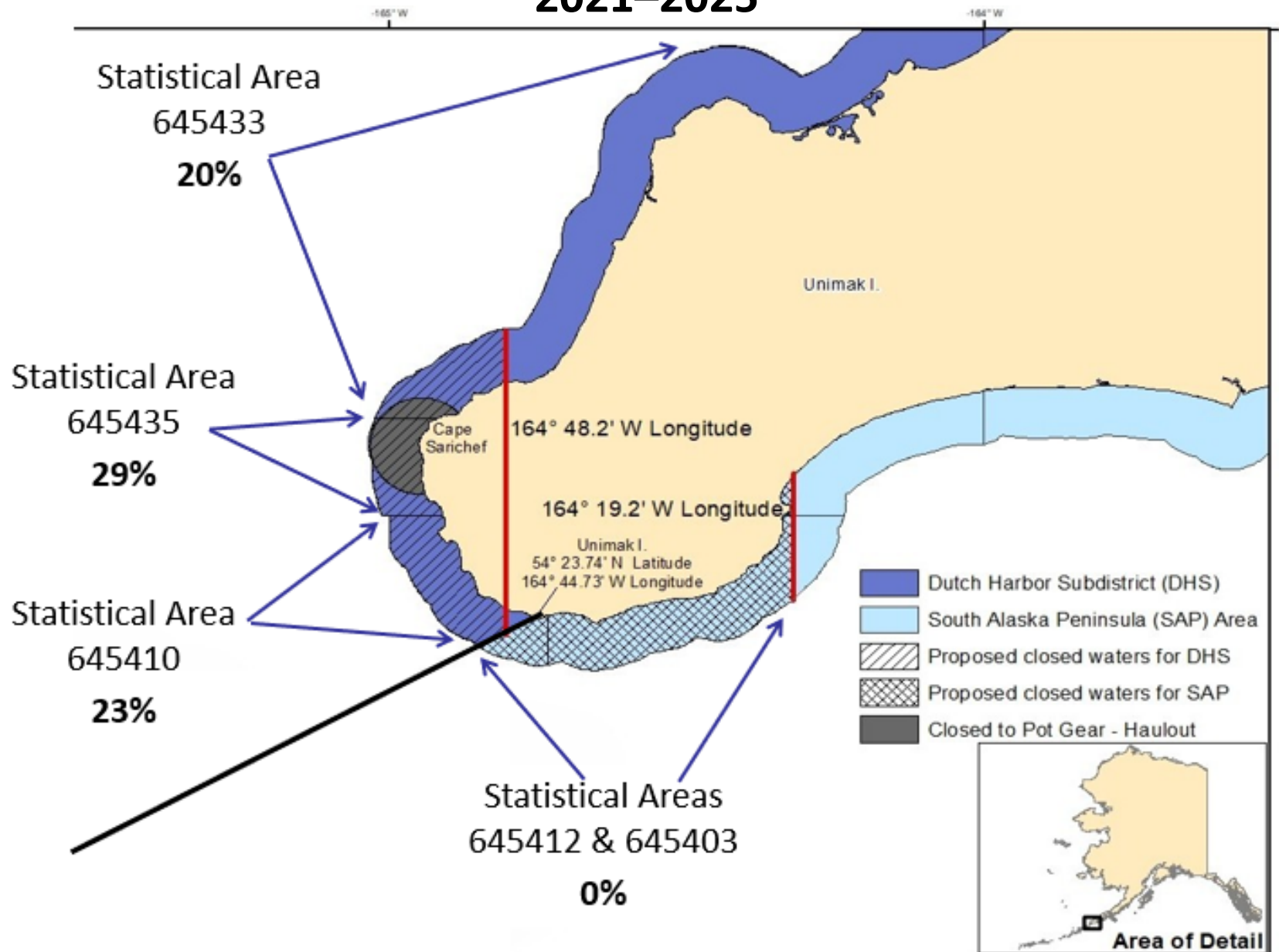
- Co-management Considerations
 - No step-down provision if annual state-waters GHs are not achieved during a calendar year
 - Federal sector allocations may become too small to support directed fisheries
 - Ongoing research and potential changes to the BSAI and GOA Pacific cod stock assessments and ABC area apportionments

Gear/Sector		2025 allocations (%)	2025 allocations (pounds)	
SAP state waters GHL = 30% ABC	Jig	15%	867,565	
	Pot	85%	4,916,203	
WGOA federal TAC = 70% ABC			A season	B season
	Jig	3.5%	282,712	187,739
	Pot	38.0%	2,568,095	2,360,883
	Longline CP	19.8%	1,413,092	1,155,165
	Longline CV	1.4%	90,797	90,797
	Trawl CV	38.4%	4,090,478	890,384
	Trawl CP	2.4%	117,015	194,289

Proposal 9

Create state-waters Pacific cod no fishing zones east and west of the boundary line on Unimak Island that separates the SAP and DHS state-waters Pacific cod fisheries.

Proposed No Fishing Zones and Average Harvest by Statistical Area, 2021–2025



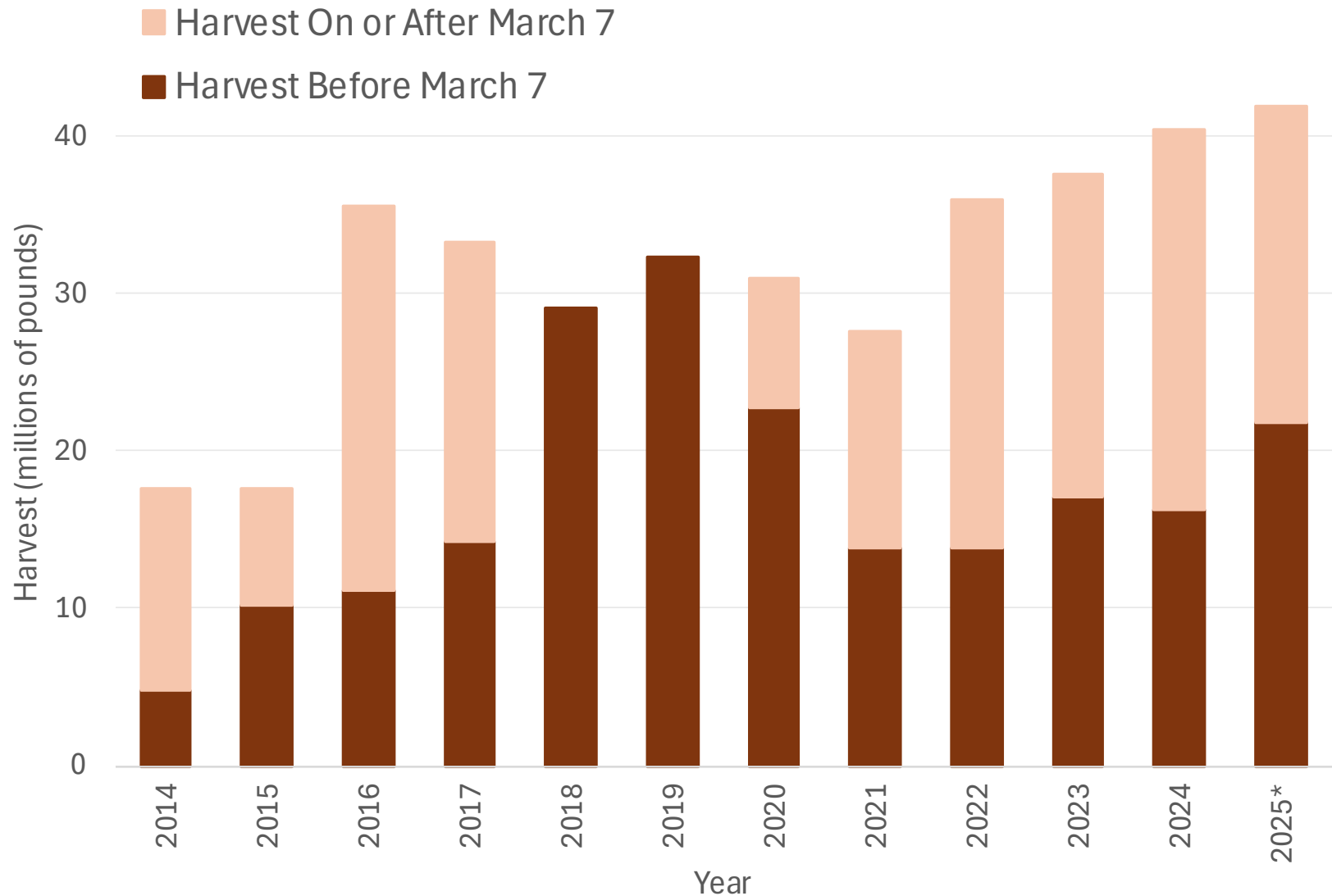
Proposal 10

Amend the season open date for the DHS state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery to open 7 days after the federal BSAI fishery closure or March 7, whichever is later

Current season opening dates:

South Alaska Peninsula Area	Dutch Harbor Subdistrict
In regulation: 7 days after WGOA pot sector close or March 7, whichever is later	In regulation: 7 days after BSAI hook-and-line and pot catcher vessel ≤ 60 feet OAL sector close
Average opening date: March 7	Average opening date: February 4

Dutch Harbor Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery harvest before and after March 7, by year, 2014–2025



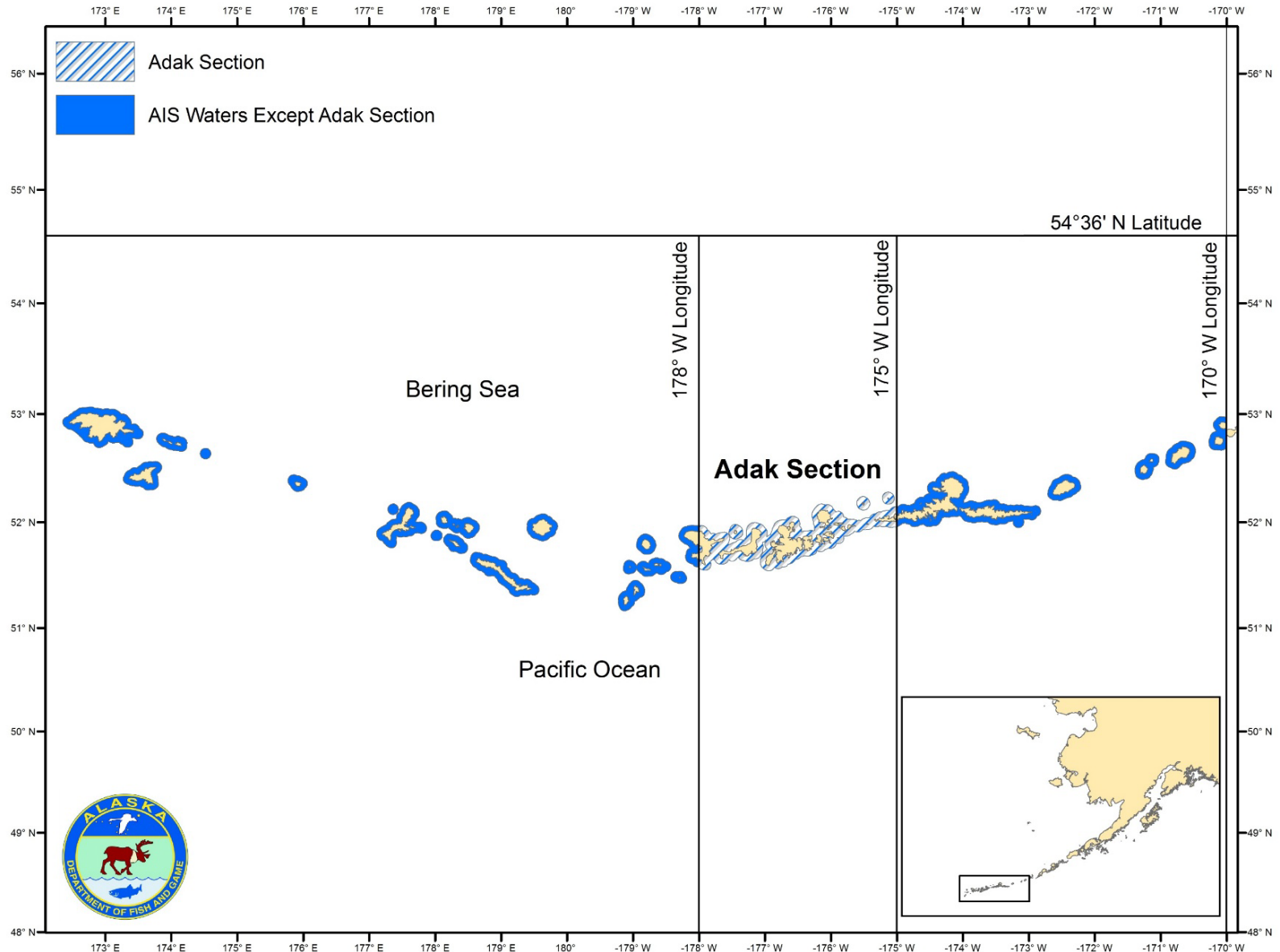
*Harvest through September 1, 2025

Proposal 11

Close all state waters (0–3 nmi) in the Aleutian Islands District west of 170° W. long to groundfish fishing with pelagic and nonpelagic trawl gear

- Final deliberation scheduled for March 2026 Statewide Finfish meeting
- Eliminate groundfish harvest opportunity for vessels using nonpelagic trawl gear in the Aleutian Islands Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod fishery, and
- For vessels using pelagic and nonpelagic trawl gear in the multiple parallel groundfish trawl fisheries west of 170°W. long.

Aleutian Islands Subdistrict (AIS) State-waters Pacific cod fishery



Aleutian Islands Subdistrict state-waters Pacific cod fishery harvest and value by trawl gear, 2020–2025

Season	Vessels	Landings	Harvest	Exvessel	Fishery value
2020	6	34	CF	CF	CF
2021	5	18	CF	CF	CF
2022	5	15	CF	CF	CF
2023	3	19	CF	CF	CF
2024	0	0	0	N/A	N/A
2025	2	7	CF	CF	CF
Average	4	16	1,095,802	\$0.35	\$473,963

