



Board of Fish 2025/2026 Work Session and Pacific Cod Meeting

The Alaska Board of Fisheries held the Work Session October 28-29, and the Pacific cod meeting October 30-31 at the Dena'ina Center in Anchorage to kick off the 2025/2026 meeting cycle.

Work Session

Märit Carlson-Van Dort was nominated as Board Chair and Tom Carpenter as Vice-Chair, with no other nominations.

The ADFG staff presented information on escapement goals and stocks of concern for Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Islands/Chignik, Bristol Bay and Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim (AYK).

One Department recommendation of note was to delist the Chignik sockeye early run stock of concern, since the Optimal Escapement Goal has been met in four of the past five years. The Board instead left the Stock of Concern designation for Chignik early-run Sockeye salmon in place. The vote tally on the motion to lift the stock of concern designation was 3 to 4, with Carpenter, Mike Wood and Gerard Godfrey in support, and the majority, Carlson-Van Dort, Curtis Chamberlain, Olivia Irwin and Greg Svendsen opposed.

The management action plan for the Chignik sockeye early run stock of concern has implications for Alaska Peninsula fishermen. The plan calls for ADFG to reduce the 2nd June opening in the Shumagin Islands Section by 50%, in order to achieve the lower bound of the Chignik River early-run sockeye salmon escapement goal, and take further management actions if escapement is not being reached.

The 2nd day of the Work Session, the board considered 9 agenda change requests (ACRs). All 9 ACRs did not meet the Board's own criteria for accepting ACRs, according to Department staff comments. The Board however, did accept 2 ACRs:

- ACR 5 would reduce commercial salmon fishing opportunity with drift gillnet gear in the Central District of the Cook Inlet Area.
- ACR 8 would close the Tsiu River and all waters within one quarter mile of the Tsiu River and Kaliakh River confluence to commercial fishing for salmon.

Both ACRs were accepted by 4 to 3 votes, with same members in the majority as in the stock of concern vote. Both ACRs are now scheduled for consideration at the Board's Statewide Finfish meeting in March 2026.

Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, Bering Sea, and Chignik Pacific Cod

At the Pacific Cod meeting, the Board considered 10 proposals and heard Proposal 11 that will be considered at the Statewide meeting. Proposals 1 through 8 by local AEB residents and community Advisory Committees requested the South Alaska Peninsula Pacific cod guideline harvest level (GHL) be raised. The GHL is currently set at 30% of the allowable catch of the Western Gulf of Alaska area. Proposals 9 & 10 would make adjustments to the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict (DHSD) Pacific cod fishery.

- Proposals 1 & 2 would raise the GHL to 50% of the allowable harvest.
- Proposals 3, 4, 5 & 6 would raise the GHL to 40%, with stair-step provisions up to 50%.
- Proposals 7 & 8 would raise the GHL to 50%, with stair-step provisions up to 60%.
- Proposal 9 would close waters near Unimak Island for South Pen and DHSD cod fisheries.
- Proposal 10 would essentially change the DHSD fishery opening date to March 7.

The Board adopted just 1 Pacific cod proposal: Proposal 6, using substitute language found in RC 17, was adopted 6 to 1, with member Chamberlain opposed. The language in RC 17 is:

“Beginning in 2026, the guideline harvest level for Pacific cod in the South Alaska Peninsula Area is 35 [30] percent of the estimated total allowable harvest of Pacific cod for the federal Western Gulf of Alaska Area until 2029, when the estimated guideline harvest level for Pacific cod in the South Alaska Peninsula Area is 32.5 percent of the estimated total allowable harvest of Pacific cod for the federal Western Gulf of Alaska Area.”

The Board took no action on Proposals 1 ,2, 3, 4 ,5, 7 & 8 due to their action on Proposal 6, and no action on 9 since the proposer had rescinded support. Proposal 10 using substitute language found in RC 7, failed 0-7.

The next Board meeting will be for AYK finfish in Fairbanks November 18-22, followed by the Bristol Bay finfish meeting January 13-17, the Alaska Peninsula / Aleutian Islands / Chignik meeting February 18-24 and the Statewide finfish meeting March 17-21, all in Anchorage at the Egan Center.

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