

Attention Cod Fishermen!

80% Decrease in Catch Limit for 2018



The Pacific cod stock in the Gulf of Alaska has drastically declined. Scientific information suggests that this decline is the result of an unusually warm mass of water (the 'blob') that persisted from 2014 through 2016. The warm water increased the metabolism of cod while reducing available food, resulting in poor body condition and increased mortality. The warm water also impacted cod egg production and larval survival, greatly reducing recruitment during these years. The lower number of adult and juvenile cod will affect the population and fishery for several years to come. Management of Gulf of Alaska cod is now focused on maintaining the spawning stock and increasing the likelihood that the fishery will remain viable in the future. Accordingly, catch limits for Pacific cod were set at very low amounts for 2018 and 2019.

At its December 2017 meeting, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council approved a Gulf-wide (including State waters) catch limit for cod at 18,000 metric tons (~39.7 million lbs) for 2018. Recognizing that cod fishermen in the Central and Western Gulf of Alaska need to quickly get this information to adjust their fishing plans for 2018, the Council is providing the following tables that compare the 2018 catch limits to the 2017 limits by area, fishery, and season.¹

District	State Guideline Harvest Limits (metric tons)					
	2018			2017		
	Jig	Pot	Total	Jig	Pot	Total
South Alaska Peninsula	364	2,061	2,425	1,633	9,254	10,887
Kodiak	507	507	1,015	2,761	2,761	5,523
Chignik	71	639	710	387	3,479	3,866
Cook Inlet	46	259	304	249	1,408	1,657
Prince William Sound			450			1,968
Total (excluding PWS)	988	3,466	4,454	5,029	16,903	21,932

Central Gulf Federal TAC	2018 Central GOA (metric tons)			2017 Central GOA (metric tons)		
	A season	B season	Total	A season	B season	Total
Jig	37	24	61	199	133	331
Hook and Line CV <50'	562	319	880	3,065	1,734	4,790
Hook and Line CV ≥50'	338	66	404	1,840	360	2,200
Hook and Line CP	248	60	308	1,347	327	1,674
Trawl CV	1,274	1,233	2,507	6,933	6,708	13,641
Trawl CP	121	132	253	657	720	1,377
Pot CV and CP	1,075	601	1,676	5,849	3,272	9,121
Total	3,653	2,436	6,089	19,881	13,254	33,135

Western Gulf Federal TAC	2018 Western GOA (metric tons)			2017 Western GOA (metric tons)		
	A season	B season	Total	A season	B season	Total
Jig	51	34	85	381	254	635
Hook and Line CV	39	39	78	173	173	347
Hook and Line CV	607	496	1,103	2,700	2,204	4,904
Trawl CV	1,543	596	2,140	6,861	2,650	9,511
Trawl CP	50	84	134	223	372	594
Pot CV and CP	1,103	1,014	2,117	4,904	4,508	9,412
Total	3,394	2,263	5,657	15,242	10,161	25,404

¹ Not official NMFS data; final numbers are subject to change. To convert to pounds, multiply metric tons by 2,205.

