

Amendment 18 to the Fishery Management Plan for
The Scallop Fishery off Alaska

Additions are in bold. Words indicated with a strikethrough (e.g. ~~striking~~) should be deleted from the FMP.

1. Update Table of Contents as needed.
2. (Section 1.1), Add Amendment 18 summary with text description below:

Amendment 18: Revise Specification timing

On [insert date and FR citation of NOD], the Secretary of Commerce approved Amendment 18 (88 FR 75535, November 3, 2023). This action revised the timing of the development of the Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report and the harvest specification setting process.

3. (Section 2.2.2, #7 Research and Management Objective, page 13) Revise the sentence as follows:

~~An annual~~ Stock Assessment Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report discussing current biological and economic status of the fisheries, guideline harvest ranges, and support for different management decisions or changes in harvest strategies will be prepared by the State (ADF&G lead agency), with NMFS and scallop plan team input when appropriate.

4. (Section 2.3, #4, page 14) Revise the sentence as follows:

An ~~annual~~ area management report, **corresponding with the production of the SAFE report**, discussing current biological and economic status of the fisheries, guideline harvest ranges, and support for different management decisions or changes in harvest strategies will be prepared by the State (ADF&G lead agency), with NMFS and scallop plan team input incorporated as appropriate. This report will be available for public review.

5. (Section 3.1.1.2, page 20) Revise the sentence as follows:

~~Annually,~~ The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee will set a statewide ABC for the weathervane scallop fishery prior to the beginning of the fishing season(s).

6. (Section 3.1.1.2, page 20) Revise the paragraph as follows:

Overfishing Limit (OFL). The OFL will be used to determine if overfishing occurs in a given year. Overfishing occurs if the total catch exceeds the OFL. If an estimate of the statewide weathervane scallop spawning biomass is available, the overfishing control rule would be applied to that estimate of spawning biomass to determine the OFL. In the absence of an estimate of the statewide weathervane scallop spawning biomass, the default OFL is the MSY of 1.284 million lbs. (582 mt) of shucked meats. **It may be appropriate to establish a multi-year approach to OFL based on a period of no more than 3 years. This approach would be based on the stability of the stock status, the determination that the harvest specifications are not likely to fluctuate significantly from year to year, and the determination that the approach would not result in exceeding OFL.**

7. (Section 4.4, page 34) Revise the sentence as follows:

Vessel participation and total catch by registration area and year are published in the ~~annually updated~~ Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) Report compiled by the Scallop Plan Team of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

8. *(Page 34)*
Update chapter numbering for Ecosystem Component heading from 4.3.5 to 4.4.1
9. *(Section 4.4.1 Page 34) Revise the sentence as follows:*
Evaluation of EC species bycatch in the weathervane scallop fishery occurs ~~annually~~ through the existing Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report process. The SAFE report ~~annually~~ summarizes best available scientific information on EC species.