

Producer Co-ops and Producer Organizations



POLLOCK CONSERVATION
COOPERATIVE RESEARCH CENTER

Project Synopsis



Pollock trawler in the Bering Sea. CREDIT: TODD WARSHAW

FUNDING SUMMARY

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Gunnar Knapp
University of Alaska Anchorage
Institute of Social and
Economic Research

YEAR FUNDED

2002

RESEARCH PERIOD

2002-2003

BUDGET

\$25,000

Toward fisheries self-governance

Increasingly, commercial fishermen are creating formal and informal arrangements to govern themselves. These agreements serve to improve their political position, eliminate inefficiencies, and increase their harvest's economy of scale that in turn results in bargaining power and higher prices for the catch. The Bering Sea Pollock Conservation Cooperative is one of many examples of fisheries self-governance entities in the United States.

WHY IS PCCRC INTERESTED?

PCCRC has an interest in furthering the understanding of how cooperatives and other vehicles for fisheries self-governance are constructed and how they operate to benefit both the resource user and the resource itself.

WHAT SCIENTISTS DID

A workshop was convened June 23-24, 2003, that brought together participants from universities, governments, and industry to discuss fisheries self-governance around the world. Among the fisheries discussed were Bering Sea pollock, Alaska weathervane scallop, Chignik salmon, Oregon whiting, New Zealand orange roughy, New Zealand scallop, New Zealand lobster, Atlantic Canada offshore scallops, British Columbia geoducks, Matjes herring, Oregon Yaquina Bay herring, and Hawaii lobsters.

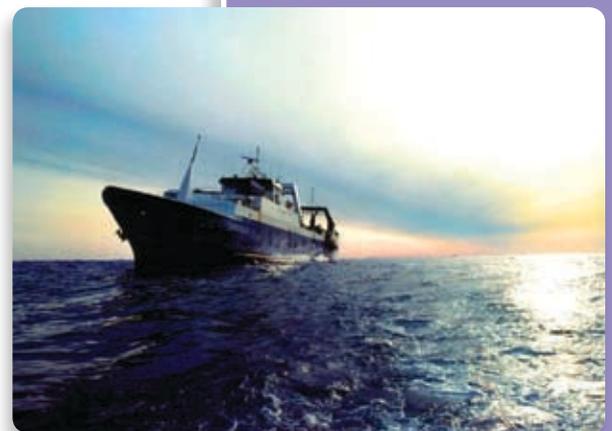
The workshop also was attended by fishery managers from NOAA Fisheries, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, and the

OBJECTIVE

Convene a workshop to discuss self-governing cooperatives in world fisheries.

BOTTOM LINE

Fisheries cooperatives offer benefits to fishermen in areas of improved efficiencies and regulatory and economic bargaining power. For fishery managers, benefits include lower regulatory costs. There is some evidence that cooperatives result in improved environmental conditions that benefit both managers and fishermen.



This ship, known as a “catcher-processor,” is used in the Bering Sea to both harvest and process pollock. Pollock roe, fillets, and surimi are processed within hours of the fish being caught.

CREDIT: AMERICAN SEAFOODS

Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission, as well as some members of the industry.

WHAT SCIENTISTS LEARNED

Virtually all forms of fisheries self-governance arose within some kind of limited entry/property rights management program. Self-governance usually involved contracting among the limited set of participants, using traditional contract law. Most cases involved relatively small numbers of fishermen, probably because the transactions costs of negotiating and enforcing contracts increase with the number of participants. The advantage that drives self-governance is that the industry can negotiate rules more efficiently and can enforce rules at lower cost.



Overseen by the U.S. Department of Commerce, the massive Alaska pollock fishery is managed at a sustainable level by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC), which heavily relies on input from a Science Advisory Board.

CREDIT: DAN LAMONT. COURTESY OF GENUINE ALASKA POLLOCK PRODUCERS

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