

# Port Moller Test Fishery - Project Highlight

[BBRSDA](#) February 06, 2023

BBRSDA supported the Port Moller Test Fishery (PMFT) through two important projects in 2022. The Onboard Genetic Analysis Project and the charter of a new vessel, the R/V Halfmoon Bay.





The Port Moller test fishing effort in 2022 represents the greatest coverage in the history of the program; moreover, no days were missed due to weather or mechanical issues. The test fishing boats, the R/V Ocean Cat and the R/V Halfmoon Bay made 326 sets distributed across Stations 2-24. They also completed 13 sets of stock comp estimates in 2022 and historically the range has been 7-10 sets. This was in part because we were able to stay on the transect more with these boats than in the past, thereby missing fewer days of fishing due to weather.

Since 2006, lab work from PMFT was conducted at ADF&G's Gene Conservation Lab in Anchorage, conducting lab work at sea this year eliminated a large portion of one vessel's time previously spent running into ports on the North Peninsula to deliver samples. The the median length from collection of samples to release of stock comp results used to be an average of 3 days and sometimes as long as 5 days. Last year it was closer to 1 day (1-2 d range), a significant improvement.

In order to conduct lab work at sea, a specialty shipping container was procured, modified, and equipped to enable it to be operated as a lab at sea on the deck of the test fishing vessel (Halfmoon Bay). The at-sea genetics lab includes a scale press and a microscope equipped with a digital camera. Scale images were obtained in the lab and emailed to ADF&G scale readers in King Salmon. This was done to enable the team to continue to provide age composition estimates from PMTF without going ashore to ship samples.

More fish were genotyped at sea compared to previous years and stock composition estimates were released earlier than ever before. The onboard genetics lab eliminated the transit time to get samples from the test boats to the gene lab in Anchorage reducing the delay from about three days to only one. An added benefit to this innovation was that the test boats did not have to deliver genetics samples to Port Moller every two days, which kept the crews on the fishing transect and improved spatio-temporal sampling coverage to the greatest level in the project's history.

Thank you Bristol Bay Science and Research Institute (BBSRI) for your impressive effort!!

**To receive a brief summary of daily indexes by text message during the fishing season, text the just the four letters PMTF to 833-612-1053 Be sure to spell PMTF correctly or it won't work. These text updates go out about the time the email update goes out.**

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