



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME REPORT TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Fisheries managed by the State of Alaska since the last state report to the Council include those for crab, scallop, and groundfish.

Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab

The 2023/24 Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery opened on July 1, 2023, for the Community Development Quota (CDQ) fishery and on August 1, 2023, for the Adak Community Allocation (ACA) and Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) fisheries. All fisheries closed by regulation on April 30, 2024. The overfishing level (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) are set by the Council and ADF&G sets the total allowable catch (TAC) so that total removals do not exceed the ABC. For the 2023/24 fishing year, the Aleutian Islands golden king crab TAC is 5.53 million pounds, apportioned east and west of 174° west longitude. The Eastern Aleutian Islands golden king crab (EAG) TAC is 3.72 million pounds, and the Western Aleutian Islands golden king crab (WAG) TAC is 1.81 million pounds. Ten percent of the EAG TAC is allocated to the CDQ fishery and ten percent of the WAG TAC is allocated to the ACA fishery. To date, 1.56 million pounds have been harvested in the WAG fishery and harvest in the EAG fishery remains confidential (Figure 1).

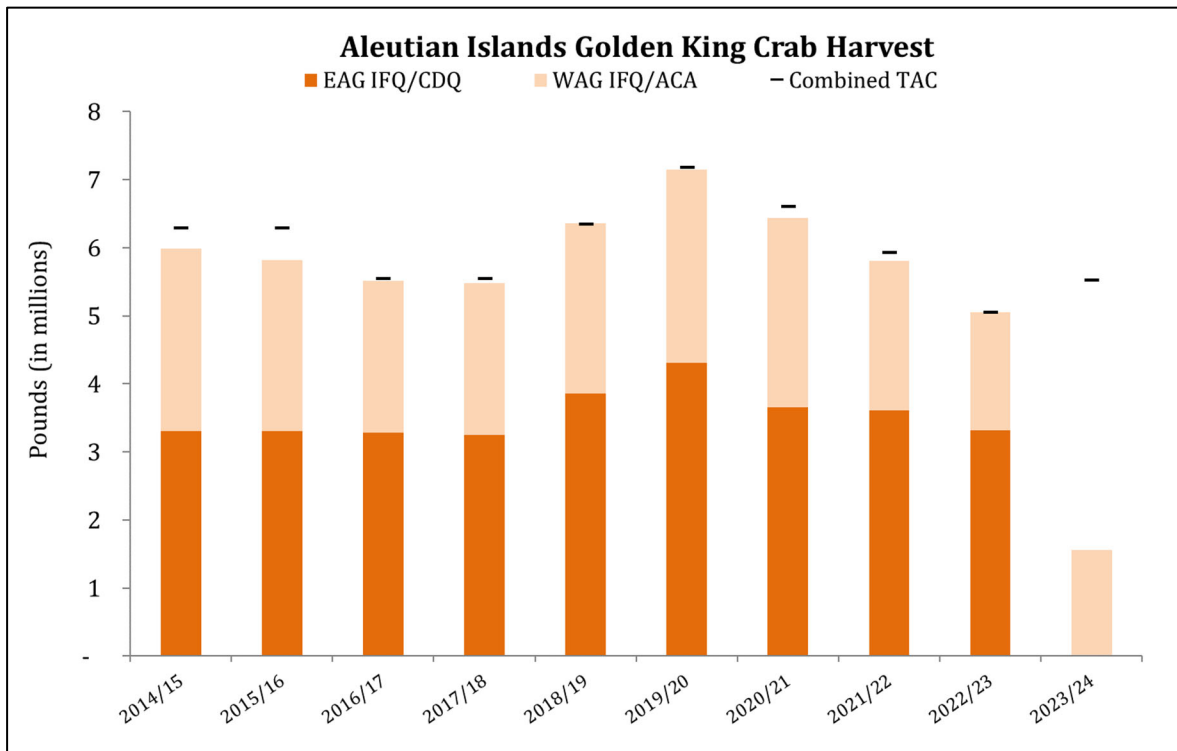


Figure 1. Aleutian Islands golden king crab harvest by area, 2014/15 – 2023/24 seasons.

Bristol Bay Red King Crab

The 2023/24 Bristol Bay red king crab fishery opened October 15, 2023, after a two-season closure, with a TAC of 2.15 million pounds (Figure 2). Ten percent of the TAC is allocated to the CDQ fishery. The TAC has been fully harvested by 31 vessels and catch rates this season averaged 20 crab per pot which is below the ten-year average catch of 26 crab per pot and similar to the 2020/21 catch rate of 21 crab per pot. The fishery closed by regulation on January 15, 2024.

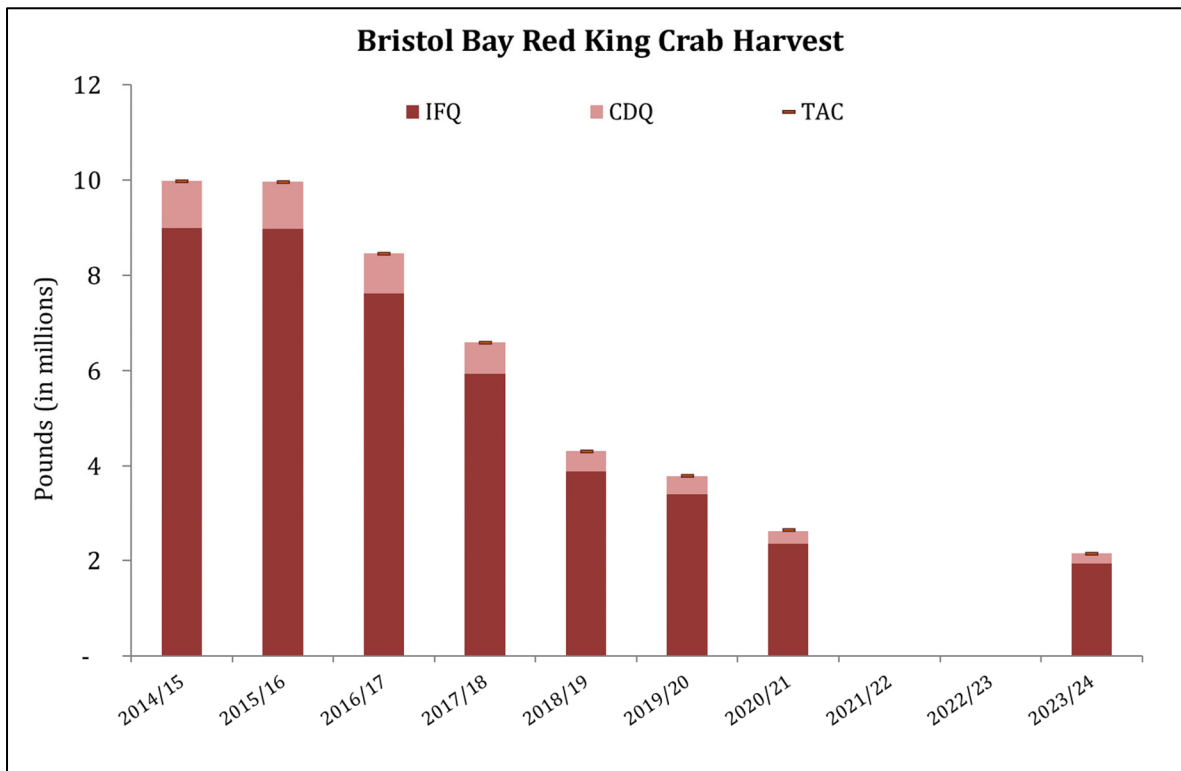


Figure 2. Bristol Bay red king crab harvest, 2014/15 – 2023/24 seasons.

Eastern Bering Sea Tanner Crab

The 2023/24 Bering Sea District Tanner crab fishery opened in both the western area (west of 166° west longitude) and eastern area (between 166° west longitude and 163° west longitude) on October 15, 2023. TAC in the western area is 1.32 million pounds and TAC in the eastern area is 760,000 pounds; 10% of the TAC in each area is allocated to the CDQ fishery. Current harvest in the western area is 406,723 pounds by 12 vessels and harvest in the eastern area is 687,728 pounds by fifteen vessels (Figure 3). Both areas closed by regulation on March 31, 2024.

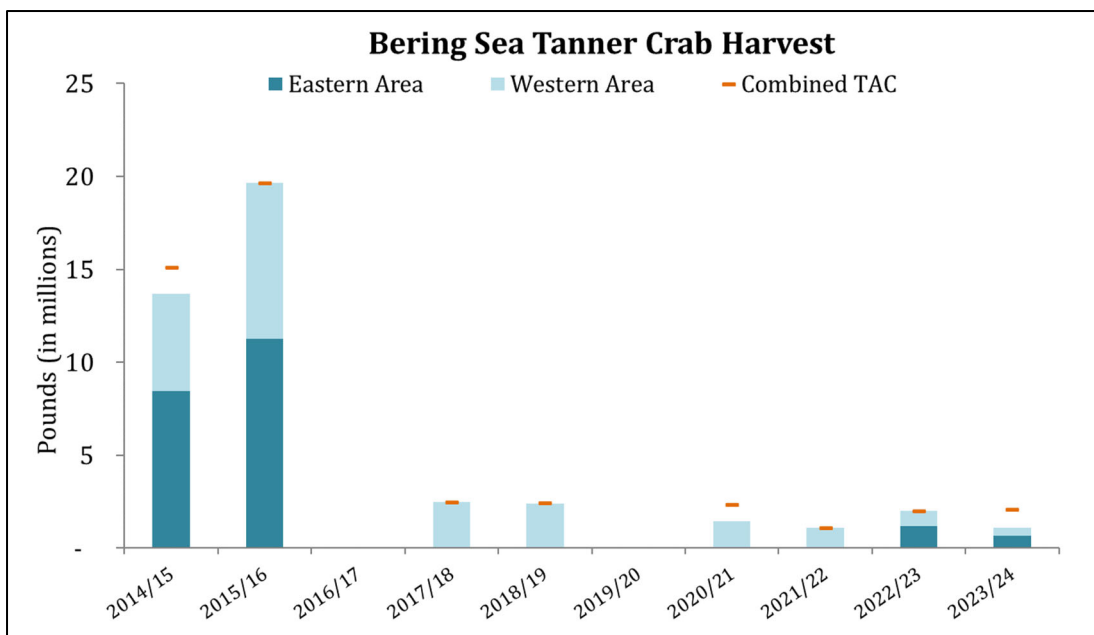


Figure 3. Bering Sea Tanner crab harvest by area, 2014/15 – 2023/24 seasons.

Scallop

Weathervane scallop fisheries in the Yakutat, Prince William Sound, Kodiak, Alaska Peninsula, Dutch Harbor, and Bering Sea Registration Areas opened on July 1, 2023. The cumulative GHL for the 2023/24 season is 374,700 pounds of shucked meats. The Kodiak Northeast District closed on July 14, the Prince William Sound West Kayak Subsection closed on July 23, the Yakutat Area closed August 27, and the Kodiak Shelikof District closed on September 23, 2023. All other areas remain open and to date a total of 318,221 pounds of shucked meats have been harvested (Figure 4). The scallop fishery closes by regulation on February 15, 2024 and there has been no effort in the fishery since the last update to the Council.

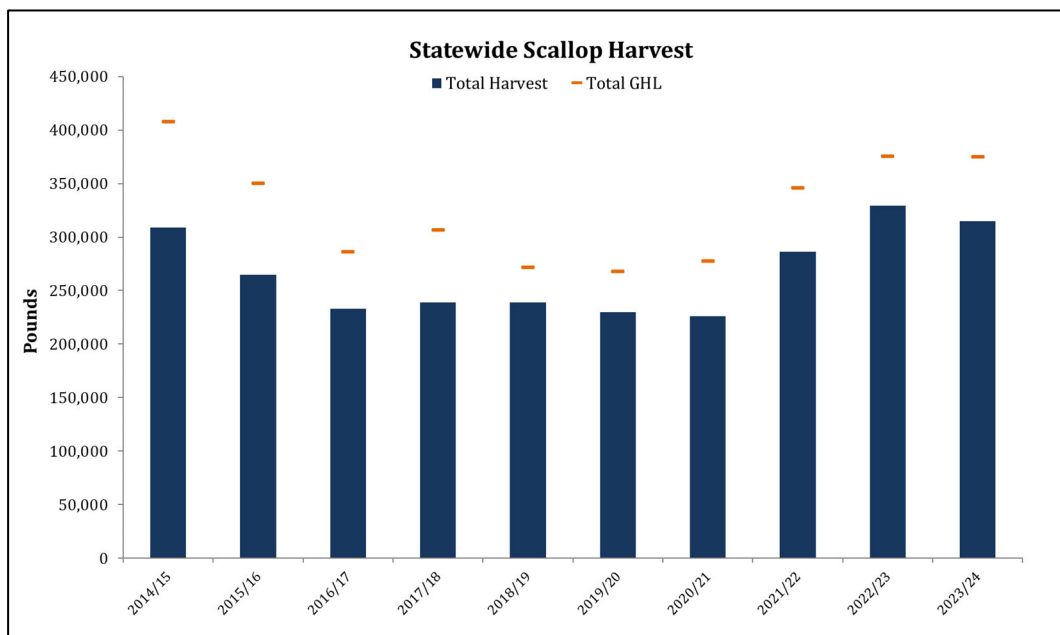


Figure 4. Statewide scallop harvest and GHL, 2014/15-2023/24 seasons.

Pollock

The state-waters directed pollock fishery occurs in Prince William Sound and opened on January 20, 2024, with a GHL of 9.61 million pounds. The Inside District is divided into three sections: Hinchinbrook, Knight Island, and Bainbridge with harvest from any section restricted to 60% of the GHL or 5.77 million pounds in 2024. Overall bycatch is limited to 5% of the directed walleye pollock weight, annually. ADF&G sets bycatch limits by Emergency Order for salmon (0.04%), rockfish (0.5%), shark species (0.96%), squid (3.0%), and other species (0.5%). Vessels must adhere to trip limits of 300,000 pounds of pollock and logbooks are required for every trip. On January 29, the Hinchinbrook Section closed because the squid bycatch cap of 173,039 pounds had been reached. To date, 5.36 million pounds of pollock have been harvested. (Figure 5).

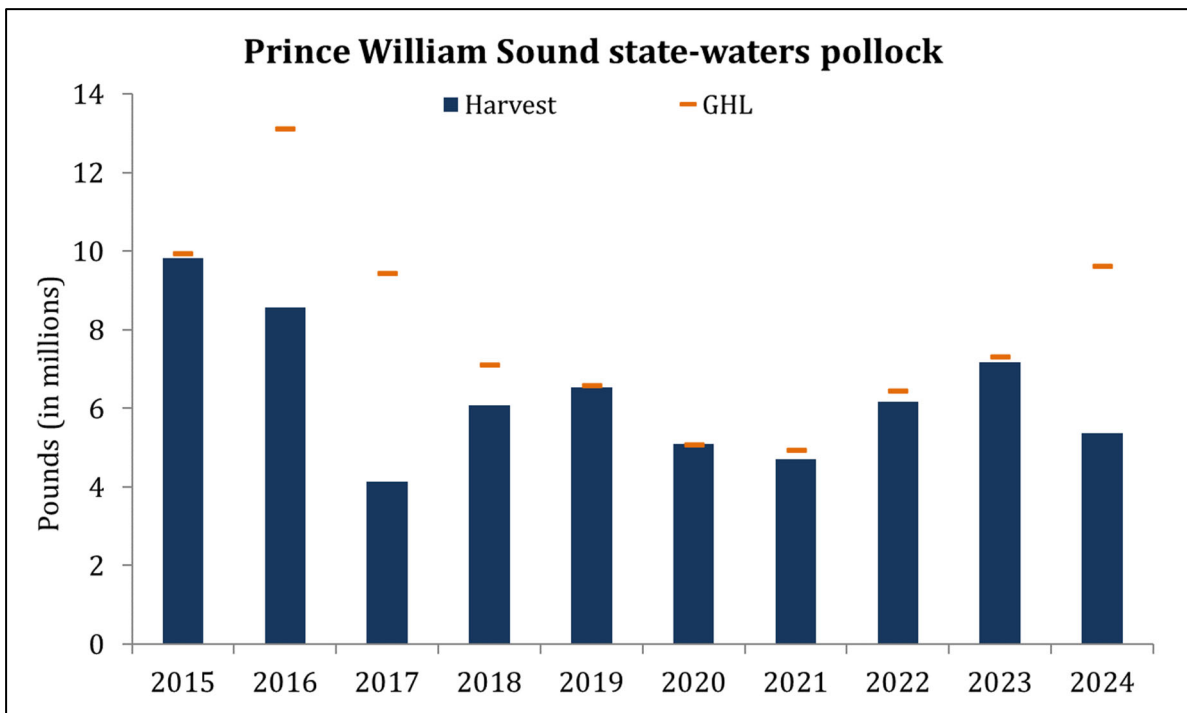


Figure 7. Prince William Sound pollock harvest and GHL, 2015-2024.

Pacific Cod

State-water Pacific cod fisheries are established in Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Chignik, South Alaska Peninsula, and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Management Areas. The GHLs are calculated as a percentage of area ABCs and 2024 GHLs are as follows:

State Water Pacific Cod GHL and Harvest					
State Management Area	ABC and GHL percentage in regulation		Gear	2024 GHL (pounds)	2024 GHL (mt)
Prince William Sound	EGOA - 25%		Jig/Pot	323,749	147
			Longline	1,294,995	587
Chignik	CGOA - 25%	8.75%	Jig	397,186	180
			Pot	3,574,676	1,621
Kodiak		12.50%	Jig	2,837,045	1,287
			Pot	2,837,045	1,287
Cook Inlet		3.75%	Jig	255,337	116
			Pot	1,446,908	656
South Alaska Peninsula	WGOA - 30%		Jig	867,565	394
			Pot	4,916,203	2,230
Dutch Harbor Subdistrict	Bering Sea - 12%		Jig	100,000	45
			Pot	44,431,000	20,153
Aleutian Islands Subdistrict	Aleutian Islands - 35%		All	9,591,800	4,351

Kodiak

The 2024 state-waters GHL for the Kodiak Area (Central Gulf of Alaska) is 5.674 million pounds and is allocated 50 percent to mechanical jig and hand troll gears and 50 percent to pot gear. The jig fishery opened on January 1 and harvest is confidential. The state-waters pot fishery will open seven days after the closure of the CGOA parallel waters pot fishery.

Dutch Harbor

The 2024 GHL for the Dutch Harbor Subdistrict is 44.531 million pounds, with 44.431 million pounds allocated to pot vessels and 100,000 pounds allocated to jig vessels. The state-waters pot fishery for vessels 58 feet or less opened on February 1, following the closure of the parallel waters pot fishery.

Aleutian Islands

The 2023 Aleutian Islands Subdistrict (AIS) GHL is 9.592 million pounds which represents 35% of the Aleutian Islands Pacific cod ABC. The state-waters fishery in the Adak Section, between 175° west longitude and 178° west longitude, opened January 1 to vessels 60 feet or less, except for vessels fishing with longline gear which are limited to a length of 58 feet. On February 1, all state waters of the AIS opened to vessels 100 feet or less using pot gear, vessels 60 feet or less using nonpelagic trawl or mechanical jig gear, and vessels 58 feet or less using longline gear.

Alaska Board of Fisheries

Kodiak finfish, January 9-12, 2024. Proposals of interest:

- Proposal 52 – Establish a new Kodiak Area commercial sablefish fishery: Failed.
- Proposal 53 – Allow longline slinky pots for Pacific cod during the state water fishery: Failed.

Upcoming Board of Fisheries meetings:

[Upper Cook Inlet finfish](#), February 23-March 6, 2024, Anchorage. Written comments are due February 8, 2024.

Invasive Species

European Green Crab (EGC), a high-risk global invader that can devastate coastal marine ecosystems by displacing native species, degrading and disturbing native habitats (including eelgrass which is important for many species such as juvenile salmon), and altering food webs. EGC were initially established in Alaska in 2022 and since then, community-based early detection monitoring for the species has expanded and over 3,000 EGC have been trapped. To increase response readiness, ADF&G partnered with U.S. Fish and Wildlife, National Marine Fisheries Service, Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, Kachemak Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, and Metlakatla Indian Community to update the Early Detection and Rapid Response Plan for European Green Crab (*C. maenas*) in Alaska. A desk-based mock response exercise was held in Homer, Alaska in August 2023 that brought together stakeholders to discuss jurisdictions and authorities, capacity, and to outline an incident command system approach to responding to new detections of EGC in areas of particularly high value. Additional information can be found at:

https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=invasiveprofiles.europeangreencrab_impacts.