

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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NEWSLETTER

Alaska Board of Fisheries and Council Discuss Crab Management

Regulatory proposals for the 1984 king and Tanner crab fishing seasons were the main topics for discussion when the North Pacific Council met with the Alaska Board of Fisheries March 28-29 in Anchorage. During two days of public testimony participants in the fisheries made known their views on management by size, sex and season, the use of pot limits and exclusive registration areas, extended bait-up periods, and a proposed trawl closure in the Gulf of Alaska and the Bering Sea from Feb. 1-June 1 in areas identified as important to king crab reproduction.

Meeting alone, the Council reviewed foreign fishing vessel permit applications for joint ventures, a directed fishing allocation for the Soviet Union, a request for proposals for offshore herring research, and various alternatives for the herring fishery management plan.

These and other Council actions are described in this newsletter.

Special Council Meeting in April to Discuss Policy and Procedure

The Council will meet April 24-26 in Anchorage to deal exclusively with Council policy and procedure. The meeting will begin on Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. in the Westward Hilton and continue on Wednesday and Thursday in the Old Federal Building. A portion of the meeting may be closed for the discussion of personnel matters. An agenda will be available to the public approximately April 13. Though the Council's Advisory Panel and Scientific and Statistical Committee will not meet, selected representatives of both bodies will be present at the Council meeting.

Size, Sex & Season Management for Tanner Crab Voted Down

A proposal to manage Tanner crab by size, sex and season (3-S management) received little support from fishermen and ADF&G Advisory Committees during public testimony. ADF&G staff member Marty Eaton told Board and Council members that their main concerns with the proposal would be the increased handling mortality of female and sublegal crabs and the added enforcement effort required to strictly enforce the size limit. The Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee stated that they did not oppose the concept of 3-S management, but that it should be limited to areas of healthy adult and juvenile crab populations. Commissioner Collinworth stated that he could support a 3-S "experiment" in an area of high abundance. However, the general consensus was that no such areas of high adult and juvenile abundance are known at this time. The Board voted down the proposal on a vote of 7 to 0 with Council members concurring with the action.

Opening Dates Set for King and Tanner Crab Seasons

Problems with early molting and mating of Tanner crabs this season prompted a proposal to set earlier opening dates for the 1984-85 fishery. All Westward and Gulf of Alaska Tanner crab fisheries will open concurrently, on January 15, with the exception of the Western Aleutians-Adak area which will open on November 10, concurrent with the king crab opening in that area.

Tanner crab opening dates were set as follows:

Kodiak	January 15
Alaska Peninsula/Chignik	January 15
Eastern Aleutians/Dutch Harbor	January 15
Western Aleutians/Adak	November 10
Bristol Bay	January 15
Pribilofs	January 15
St. Matthew	January 15
Norton Sound	January 15
Southeast/Yakutat	January 15

The Westward king crab opening dates were set as follows:

Kodiak	September 20
Alaska Peninsula/Chignik	October 1
Eastern Aleutians/Dutch Harbor	November 10
Western Aleutians/Adak	November 10
Bristol Bay	October 1
Pribilofs	October 1
St. Matthew	September 1
Norton Sound	August 1

Action on Pot Limits and Exclusive Registration Areas
Postponed Until September

The Council and Board jointly considered proposals for pot limits and exclusive registration areas for the king and Tanner crab fisheries. Discussion focused on enforceability of pot limits and whether this type of gear limit and exclusive registration areas would meet the stated objectives of the proposals. Both bodies voted to defer action on these management approaches until they could be more fully examined at a joint Board/Council meeting scheduled for September 26-27 in Anchorage.

Summary of Board Action on King Crab

The Alaska Board of Fisheries approved several changes in king crab management for the 1984-85 season. Four area and boundary changes were made. The western boundary of the Dutch Harbor Area was shifted from 172°W. longitude to 171°W.; the northern boundary of the Adak Area was shifted northward to include Bowers Ridge; the Bering Sea Area was modified to reflect the Adak Area change; and a new subsection called St. Lawrence was established west of Norton Sound.

Opening Dates for King and Tanner King Seasons

Problems with early melting and melting of snow under this season prompted a proposal to set earlier opening dates for the 1981-82 season. All openings and date of season have been set as follows, on January 15, and the opening of the Western Alaskan season which will open on December 15, concurrent with the first opening in that area.

Tanner and opening dates were set as follows:

January 15	Kodiak
January 15	Alaska Peninsula/Chignik
January 15	Western Alaskan/Barrow Harbor
November 15	Western Alaskan/Adak
January 15	Barrow Bay
January 15	Barrow
January 15	St. Lawrence
January 15	North Sound
January 15	South Sound/Adak

The Western King and opening dates were set as follows:

September 15	Kodiak
October 1	Alaska Peninsula/Chignik
November 15	Western Alaskan/Barrow Harbor
November 15	Western Alaskan/Adak
October 1	Barrow Bay
October 1	Barrow
September 1	St. Lawrence
August 1	North Sound

Action on Bar Harbor and Barrow Area Regulations

The Council and Board jointly considered proposals for bar harbor and exclusive regulation areas for the king and tanner fishery. Discussion also focused on expediency of bar harbor and whether this type of gear limit and exclusive regulation areas would meet the stated objectives of the proposals. Both bodies voted to defer action on these management approaches until there could be more fully examined at a joint board/council meeting scheduled for September 22-23 in Anchorage.

Summary of Board Action on King Crab

The Board of Fisheries approved several changes in king crab management for the 1981-82 season. Four area and boundary changes were made. The western boundary of the Barrow Area was shifted from 172°W longitude to 171°W; the northern boundary of the Barrow Area was shifted westward to include lower ridge; the Barrow Area was modified to reflect the Adak Area change and a new section called St. Lawrence was established west of North Sound.

A proposal to manage king crab by size, sex and season (3-S management) was rejected by the Board, but staff was directed to increase the exploitation rate in the St. Matthew section if the 1984 pre-season king crab survey indicates a high abundance of post-recruit crabs.

The brown king crab size limit was changed to 6" in Dutch Harbor and 5½" in Bristol Bay. The Board also increased the closed area around St. Lawrence, King and Diomed Islands from 3 miles to 10 miles to address the concerns of subsistence crab and seal harvesters.

In other action, the Board eliminated the 116-hour bait up period in Bristol Bay, Dutch Harbor and the Pribilofs and replaced it with tank inspections beginning 24 hours before the season opening. The 36-hour contact period for the Pribilof District was reduced to 24 hours.

The old Federal Pot Storage area (from 57°N. to 58°N. latitude and 164°W. to 166°W. longitude) was reestablished to provide for pot storage closer to the Pribilof Islands. The Bristol Bay pot storage area was eliminated.

A proposal to allow vessels aiding distressed vessels to make up fishing time was not approved by the Board although they agreed that some type of compensation is justified. Fishermen testified that fishing after the close of the season would not be economical or biologically safe because of the condition of stocks at that time. The Coast Guard stated that they did not want to make decisions about how many vessels should be allowed to aid vessels in distress. The Board suggested that fishermen's groups look into insurance programs to compensate for lost income.

A controversial proposal by ADF&G to prohibit the use of on-bottom trawl gear drew considerable testimony and discussion. The proposal would have prohibited the use of bottom trawl gear from February 1 through June 1 in selected locations in the Westward area to protect soft shell and breeding crab. The Board and Council were concerned about the impact of trawl gear on crab and other non-target species but felt that there were insufficient data at this time to justify such an economic impact on trawlers. The proposal was rejected by the Board. They did, however, approve a data collection and observer program to identify sensitive areas and monitor the impacts of trawling in those areas. The Council concurred in principle with the action and will include it as an item on the agenda for their May meeting in Anchorage.

Council Withdraws Herring FMP

The Council voted not to send the Bering Sea/Chukchi Sea Herring Fishery Management Plan they approved in September 1983 to the Secretary of Commerce to begin review. The action was taken in response to a memo from General Counsel stating the plan would in all likelihood not be approved in its current form. The Council will decide at their May meeting whether to proceed with amending the plan or postponing further action.

The Council also postponed action on a request for herring research proposals pending a search by the appropriate agencies for alternative funding sources. Alaska Department of Fish and Game will report at the May meeting about the possibility of sponsoring the research through the use of the State's test fish program.

A proposal to manage the area by six, two and seven (2-5-7 management) was rejected by the Board, and instead was directed to increase the exploitation rate in the 82, 100 and 150 acre proposals. The Board also indicated a high percentage of commercial value.

The Board also indicated that the area should be divided into 10, 20 and 30 acre units. The Board also indicated that the area should be divided into 10, 20 and 30 acre units. The Board also indicated that the area should be divided into 10, 20 and 30 acre units.

In other matters, the Board indicated that the 100-acre unit should be divided into 10, 20 and 30 acre units. The Board also indicated that the area should be divided into 10, 20 and 30 acre units.

The old Federal Fish Storage Act (from 1911 to 1954) indicated that the area should be divided into 10, 20 and 30 acre units. The Board also indicated that the area should be divided into 10, 20 and 30 acre units.

A proposal to allow vessels to harvest the area was rejected by the Board, and instead was directed to increase the exploitation rate in the 82, 100 and 150 acre proposals. The Board also indicated a high percentage of commercial value.

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Commercial Harvesting

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Salmon

The Council endorsed the recommendations of the InterCouncil (Salmon) Coordinating Committee. A letter will be sent to the State Department requesting continued sponsorship of the U.S./Canada Chinook Technical Committee. The Council also wants to encourage Canada to support this forum for coastwide communication on salmon issues of mutual concern.

South Korea and Japanese Joint Ventures Approved

The Council approved permit applications for four South Korean and five Japanese vessels to participate in joint ventures off Alaska. The South Korean vessels will work for three Pacific cod joint ventures in the Gulf of Alaska: Hansung Fisheries and Alaska Contact for 2,500 mt, Daerim and Daerim America for 2,500 mt, and Sam Ho Moolsan and Alaska Joint Venture Fisheries for 2,000 mt. The Japanese vessels will operate with the Nichiro-Peter Pan Seafoods joint venture on 4,500 mt of sole in the Bering Sea and Aleutians.

Council Supports Fish Allocation to Soviets

Once again the Council went on record supporting a directed fishing allocation for groundfish for the Soviet Union. Representatives of Marine Resources Company testified that a 50,000 mt allocation in the North Pacific Ocean could mean a ton-for-ton increase in their joint venture sales. These now stand at about 160,000 mt and could be expanded to 210,000 if a direct allocation is made available. Of the 50,000 mt, Alaska would provide 20,000 mt of flatfish, mainly yellowfin sole, 5,000 mt of Atka mackerel, and 5,000 mt of other species. The remaining tonnage would be of Pacific whiting off California, Oregon and Washington. The Council will send a letter of support to the U.S. State Department; it had expressed similar support back in June 1982.

ADF&G Domestic Fisheries Report

ADF&G reported a harvest of 1.5 million pounds of Tanner crab in the Southeast area, which closed on March 18. As of March 21, 1984, the harvest in Cook Inlet was estimated at 0.3 million pounds with all of that area except the Southern District still open. In Kodiak, where most areas were either closed or due to close on April 1, the projected total harvest was reported at 14 to 15 million pounds. Harvests for South Peninsula and Chignik, both closed in March, were reported at 1.6 and 0.7 million pounds, respectively. The Eastern Aleutians, Western Aleutians and Bering Sea were still open with harvests as of March 21 reported at 0.1, 0.3, and 0.2 million pounds, respectively.

ADF&G reported that the first portion of the 1983-84 winter fishery for chinook salmon seems to be proceeding at approximately the same rate as in the 1982-83 season. Preliminary figures show that 17,085 chinooks, equal to 235,000 pounds, had been reported in 1,724 landings through March 20, 1984.

Joint Ventures Active Off Alaska

The total joint venture catch off Alaska through March 17 was 156,700 mt. Most of this catch has come from Shelikof Strait where 12 companies using 44 U.S. trawlers and 25 foreign processors caught 143,635 mt pollock. Two

Summary

The Council endorsed the recommendations of the International Fisheries Commission. A letter will be sent to the State Department requesting continued sponsorship of the U.S. Pacific Fishery Development Committee. The Council also wishes to encourage Canada to support the International Fisheries Commission as a means of mutual cooperation.

South Korea and Japanese Fisheries Agreement

The Council approved permits applications for four South Korean and five Japanese vessels to participate in joint ventures off Alaska. The South Korean vessels will work for three parties and joint ventures in the Gulf of Alaska. Japanese Fisheries and Alaska Fisheries and Alaska Fisheries and Alaska Fisheries. The Japanese vessels will operate with the Alaska Fisheries and Alaska Fisheries. The Japanese vessels will operate with the Alaska Fisheries and Alaska Fisheries.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Once again the Council will on record supporting a Director fishing agreement for the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Representatives of fishing resources have been identified in the North Pacific Ocean. There has been a considerable increase in their joint venture sales. There has been a considerable increase in their joint venture sales. There has been a considerable increase in their joint venture sales. There has been a considerable increase in their joint venture sales.

1962 Commercial Fisheries Report

AFS&G reported a harvest of 1.5 million pounds of Tanner crab in the 1962 season, which is about 10% above the 1961 harvest. The harvest in Cook Inlet was estimated at 1.3 million pounds with 1.1 million pounds of that amount being harvested in Kodiak. Where most areas were closed, the reported total harvest was reported as 1.5 million pounds. Harvests for South Peninsula and Chitina, both closed in 1962, were reported as 1.6 and 0.7 million pounds, respectively. The harvests for Kodiak, where most areas were closed, were reported as 1.1 million pounds and 0.2 million pounds, respectively.

AFS&G reported that the first portion of the 1963-64 season (April to June) shows a harvest of 1.5 million pounds of Tanner crab in the 1963-64 season, which is about 10% above the 1962 harvest. The harvest in Cook Inlet was estimated at 1.3 million pounds with 1.1 million pounds of that amount being harvested in Kodiak. Where most areas were closed, the reported total harvest was reported as 1.5 million pounds. Harvests for South Peninsula and Chitina, both closed in 1963, were reported as 1.6 and 0.7 million pounds, respectively. The harvests for Kodiak, where most areas were closed, were reported as 1.1 million pounds and 0.2 million pounds, respectively.

Joint Ventures Active Off Alaska

The total joint venture catch off Alaska through March 17 was 150,000 mt. Part of this catch has come from British Columbia where it is reported that 1.2 million mt of foreign processors caught 100,000 mt of fish. The

additional companies have used another nine U.S. trawlers and six foreign processors on cod and flatfish in the Kodiak area. Total joint venture catch in the Gulf of Alaska stood at 146,392 mt on March 17.

The Bering Sea/Aleutians joint venture catch totaled 10,308 mt, mainly cod and pollock, on March 17. Four companies have participated using 29 U.S. trawlers and 10 foreign processing vessels.

Foreign Fisheries Update

By March 10 foreign fleets in the Gulf of Alaska harvested 10,398 mt of groundfish or about 14.5% of the current foreign allocation for that area. The catch included 9,780 mt Pacific cod, 266 mt pollock, 139 mt sablefish and 61 mt of flatfish.

In the Bering Sea and Aleutians they harvested 99,028 mt, about 19.3% of the current foreign allocation. The catch included 91,488 mt pollock, 3,953 mt Pacific cod, 2,334 mt yellowfin sole, 870 mt flatfish, and 63 mt sablefish. Almost half the pollock catch came from the Aleutian area where a large foreign fishery has developed over the past two years. It appears that large concentrations of pollock, presumably spawning masses, are being targeted. The availability of such concentrations may present an alternative for U.S. trawlers to the Shelikof Strait fishery that is conducted the same time of year.

There were 50 foreign vessels off Alaska on March 22, 29 from Japan, 12 from South Korea, 7 from the U.S.S.R., and 1 each from Taiwan and West Germany. This is a large decrease from the 125 vessels present on February 22. The National Marine Fisheries Service reported that between 1963 and 1977, the annual foreign count off Alaska was between 1,100 and 1,500 vessels. Counts since 1978 indicate between 500 and 600 different foreign vessels annually in the Alaska 200-mile zone.

U.S. observer coverage on these vessels has increased to around 76% through February 1984. Coverage for the same period in 1983 was near 20%.

U.S. Coast Guard Report

As of March 23, U.S. Coast Guard enforcement effort off Alaska for 1984 has totaled 144 cutter patrol days and 654 aircraft patrol hours resulting in 18 reports of violations and 17 citations.

Citations were issued to nine Japanese vessels and one Korean vessel for not submitting the required cease fishing message 24 hours before leaving the Fishery Conservation Zone. The Japanese vessel, EIKYU MARU, was issued reports of violation for the infraction noted above and for failing to accurately maintain its Daily Cumulative Catch Log. Other violations during this period included the Japanese vessel, TENYOSHI MARU, not properly maintaining its International Radio Call Sign; the Korean vessel, No. 99 TAE BAEK, not transmitting a required shift message; and the Japanese vessel, RYUSHO MARU No. 15, not providing a safe boarding ladder. Two U.S. vessels participating in a U.S.-South Korean joint venture in Shelikof Strait, the ROYAL ATLANTIC and DONA GENOVEVA, were issued reports of violations for fishing without valid federal groundfish permits for 1984.

Additional companies have been used in the past and the foreign processors on the east coast. Total total volume caught in the Gulf of Alaska stood at 148,382 mt in 1983.

The foreign processing companies have been used in the past and the foreign processors on the east coast. Total total volume caught in the Gulf of Alaska stood at 148,382 mt in 1983.

Foreign Processing

By March 10 foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska harvested 12,000 mt of groundfish of about 14.5% of the annual foreign allocation for that year. The catch included 1,780 mt of halibut, 100 mt of sole, 100 mt of sablefish and 100 mt of tautog.

In the past sea and air routes have been used to transport groundfish to the east coast. The catch included 1,780 mt of halibut, 100 mt of sole, 100 mt of sablefish and 100 mt of tautog. Almost half the groundfish catch from the Alaskan area went to foreign processors. It is expected that large concentrations of groundfish will be processed in the future. The availability of such concentrations may present an alternative for the processor in the future. It is expected that the amount of groundfish processed in the future will be increased.

There were 20 foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska in March 1984. These vessels were from Japan, Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines. There is a large increase in the number of vessels present in the Gulf of Alaska. Between 1983 and 1984, the number of foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska increased from 1,100 to 1,700 vessels. This increase is due to the increase in the number of foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska.

The number of foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska increased from 1,100 in 1983 to 1,700 in 1984. This increase is due to the increase in the number of foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska.

U.S. Coast Guard Report

As of March 31, 1984, the Coast Guard reported 1,700 foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska. This increase is due to the increase in the number of foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska.

Violations were reported for 1,700 foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska. This increase is due to the increase in the number of foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska. The number of violations reported for 1,700 foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska increased from 1,100 in 1983 to 1,700 in 1984. This increase is due to the increase in the number of foreign vessels in the Gulf of Alaska.

The Coast Guard also reported that numerous Soviet fishing vessels were sighted actively engaged in fishing east of the U.S./U.S.S.R. Convention Line of 1867. Several were also fishing inside the U.S. Fishery Conservation Zone near the Convention Line. Documentation of these sightings were forwarded to the U.S. Department of State for appropriate action.

Council Approves Reports on Herring and Groundfish

The Council reviewed and approved a report entitled, "Feasibility of Using Scale Analysis Methods to Identify Bering Sea Herring Stocks" submitted by the Fisheries Research Institute of the University of Washington, Seattle. The report concluded that scale patterns could be used to separate northern (Norton Sound and Cape Romanzof), central (Togiak), and southern (Port Moller) herring stocks. About 88% of the herring sampled came from the largest stock in the Bering Sea, the Togiak stock.

A second report, "Projections of Domestic Fleet and Effort Required to harvest the Alaska Groundfish Optimum Yield," by Natural Resources Consultants, Seattle, Washington, was approved also by the Council. It concludes that the U.S. groundfish fleet now working the waters off Alaska has the potential to catch 1.1 million metric tons. The report predicts that full U.S. harvest of the Alaska groundfish resource will not occur before 1989.

These two reports will be available soon. Please contact the Council office for copies.

Foreign Industry Reps Change Personnel and Duties

The new Anchorage representative for the Japan Fisheries Association is Mr. Hidehiko Hirai who replaces Mr. Kenji Nishihara this month. Mr. Hirai was recently transferred to Alaska from shrimp aquaculture work in Aden. His home company is Nichiro and he will be in Alaska for two years. His phone number is (907) 278-9112.

Mr. Han Mo Kim, the Anchorage representative of the Korea Deep Sea Fisheries Association, has had his duties expanded to include representing fisheries trade with the Korean industry. He would be happy to consult with prospective American exporters of fisheries products to Korea. He may be contacted at (907) 345-7967.

The Council reviewed and approved a report entitled, "Feasibility of State Analytical Methods to Identify Bending Sea Herring Stocks" submitted by the Fisheries Research Institute of the University of Washington, Seattle. The report contained that state herring stocks would be available in the northern (Gordon Sound and Cape Horn) and southern (Port Moller) herring stocks. About 85% of the herring caught come from the largest stock in the Bering Sea, the Logon stock.

Council Review Report on Bending and Stocking

A second report, "Projections of Domestic Fish and Shellfish Resources of the Alaska Continental Shelf," by Council Fisheries Commission, Seattle, Washington, was approved also by the Council. It contained that the U.S. Continental Shelf was yielding 10 million tons of fish and shellfish per year. The report predicted that U.S. harvest of the Alaska continental resource will not occur before 1980.

These two reports will be available soon. Please contact the Council office for copies.

Foreign Fisheries and Change Program and Dates

The new Antarctic representative for the Japan Fisheries Association is Mr. Shirohiko Nishida who replaced Mr. Kojiro Nishida. Mr. Nishida was recently transferred to Alaska from shrimp aquaculture work in Adak. His home company is Hattori and he will be in Alaska for two years. His phone number is (907) 333-9111.

Mr. H. H. Kim, the Antarctic representative of the Korea Fishery Association, has had his duties extended to include representing Japanese trade with the Korean industry. He would be happy to consult with interested persons regarding Japanese products to Korea. It may be contacted at (907) 333-9111.