

Agenda Item: B-3

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME****REPORT TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL****September 27, 1995**

Fisheries managed under delegated authority of the State of Alaska since the last council meeting include crab, salmon and demersal rockfish.

BERING SEA/ALEUTIAN ISLANDS KING AND TANNER CRAB FISHERIES: The 1994/95 Adak brown king crab fishery closed on August 15, with a preliminary harvest of over 6 million pounds valued at over \$16.6 million. Thirty vessels participated in the 9 1/2 month long fishery, 9 more than the 93/94 season, and 12 more than the 92/93 season, and the larger 94/95 harvest can be attributed to the larger effort levels. On November 1, the Adak red and brown king crab will open for the 1995/96 season. New regulations require 100% observer coverage on all vessels, participating in these fisheries.

On August 17, the Department announced the 1995/96 GHLS for Saint Matthew blue king crab, 2.4 million pounds, and the combined Pribilof red and blue king crab fishery, 2.5 million pounds. Due to anticipated large effort levels and uncertainty in the survey data, a conservative management approach was used in projecting the Pribilof district king crab harvest. Both of these fisheries will open on September 15.

The Dutch Harbor brown king crab fishery opened on September 1 with 16 vessels, 2 more than the 1994/95 season, participating. With the opening of the Bering Sea king crab fisheries on September 15, 3 of these vessels left the Dutch Harbor area. Catches for the past 5 years in the Dutch Harbor Brown king crab fishery average 1.4 million pounds with an average value of \$4.0 million. Catch to date is 452,000 pounds. Like the Adak area, new regulations

require 100% observer coverage on all vessels participating in this fishery.

On September 6, the Department announced the closure of the Bristol Bay area to red king crab fishing for the 1995/96 season. As in 1994, this action was prompted by the lack of adequate mature female numbers to meet the 8.4 million crab threshold established by the department. With the closure of the red king crab fishery, regulations also close the area east of 163° west longitude to the taking of *C. bairdi*.

On September 13, the 1995/96 GHLS for the Bering Sea *C. opilio* (50.7 million pounds), and *C. bairdi* (5.5 million pounds west of 163° west longitude) were announced. The area east of 163° west longitude is closed by regulation to the taking of *C. bairdi* due to the closure of the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery. The 1994/95 harvests for *C. opilio* and *C. bairdi* were 75.3 and 7.6 million pounds respectively.

SALMON TROLL FISHERY: On September 7, Western Washington United States District Court Judge Barbara Rothstein issued an injunction prohibiting the further retention of chinook salmon in the Southeast Alaska troll salmon fishery through September 30, 1995. Approximately 175,000 fish were caught from the 250,000 fish quota. The State plans to open the winter troll fishery on October 11, 1995.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA DEMERSAL SHELF ROCKFISH FISHERY: All outside areas of Southeast Alaska were open to lingcod. A portion of the Central Southeast outside waters were closed on May 24, the east Yakutat area closed to all fishing on August 25, and the northern Southeast outside waters closed to the directed fishery on September 16. The central and northern outside waters will reopen on October 1.

The Chatham Strait blackcod fishery opened on September 13, with a GHLS of 3 million pounds, dressed weight. To date, there are 122 permit holders. Each permit holder is eligible for 24,500 pounds dressed weight and has one month to harvest the quota.

DSR remains closed until November due to the IFQ fishery for halibut.

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SEP-18-95 MON 16:49

FROM ALASKA CRAB COALITION  
ADFG SHELLFISH  
FISH&GAME DUTCH HARB

FAX NO. 9074861824  
FAX NO. 9075811572

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# COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

FOR YOUR INFORMATION  
From: Ami Thomson



## NEWS RELEASE

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME



STATE OF ALASKA

Westward Region

Department of Fish and Game  
Frank Rue, Commissioner

211 Mission Road  
Kodiak, AK 99615

Robert C. Glasby, Director  
Commercial Fisheries Management  
and Development Division

Contact: Rance Morrison  
Area Shellfish Biologist  
Dutch Harbor, Alaska

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: September 18, 1995

### ATTENTION PRIBILOF AND ST. MATTHEW KING CRAB FISHERMEN

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced today the closure of the St. Matthew Island and Pribilof Island king crab fisheries. The St. Matthew Island Section will close at 12:00 noon on Wednesday September 20, 1995. The Pribilof Islands Section will close to the taking of king crab at 12:00 noon on Friday September 22, 1995. The guideline harvest levels for both areas will have been reached by the closure. For further information please contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

# COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



## NEWS RELEASE

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME



STATE OF ALASKA  
Department of Fish and Game  
Frank Rue, Commissioner

Westward Region  
211 Mission Road  
Kodiak, AK 99615

Robert C. Clasby, Director  
Commercial Fisheries Management  
and Development Division

Contact: James A. Spalinger  
Regional Shellfish  
Management Biologist  
Westward Region

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: September 13, 1995

### ATTENTION BERING SEA CRAB FISHERMEN

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game and National Marine Fisheries Service have completed survey analyses for Bering Sea *Chionoecetes bairdi*, *C. opilio* and Korean hair crab stocks. Based on the results, the following guideline harvest levels have been established for the 1995/96 fisheries.

FISHERY	GHL	OPENING DATE
<i>C. bairdi</i> (west of 163° W longitude)	5.5 million pounds	Nov. 1
<i>C. opilio</i> (Bering Sea, 4" and larger)	50.7 million pounds	Jan. 15
Korean hair crab (Pribilof king crab District)	1.8 million pounds	Nov. 1

#### *C. bairdi*

The total population estimate for the *C. bairdi* stock continues to remain at a low level. The 1995 survey indicates a population of 11 million legal-sized males compared to 15.4 million legal-sized males last year. Poor recruitment to legal-sized crab is expected in the next few years. A harvest of 5.5 million pounds was calculated based on a 40% exploitation rate on males greater than 5.5 inches in carapace width for the *C. bairdi* population west of 163° W. longitude. The commercial fishery will only occur in the waters west of 163° W. longitude in accordance with 5 AAC 35.510(6)(B) which mandates that the area east of 163° W. longitude remains closed to Tanner crab fishing when the Bristol Bay (Area T) red king crab season is not open. In an earlier announcement, the department closed the Bristol Bay red king crab season. Survey results indicate that 45.5% of the legal male *C. bairdi* population is east of 163° W. longitude.

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*C. Opilio*

Survey results for the *C. opilio* stocks indicate a harvest guideline of 50.7 million pounds of male crab greater than or equal to 4 inches. Harvest is set at 29.5 million pounds east of 173° W. longitude and 21.2 million pounds west of 173° W. longitude. These guideline harvest levels are based on a 58% exploitation on male *C. opilio* greater than or equal to 4 inches.

The Bering Sea *C. opilio* populations appear to have bottomed out. The survey identified a large abundance of small *C. opilio* in the northern range of the population. The numbers of recruits to the fishery should begin to increase next year, and this is expected to lead to higher guideline harvest levels in future years.

**Korean Hair Crab**

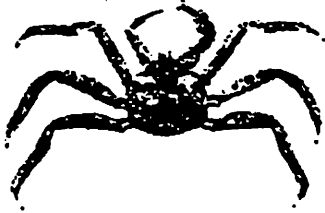
The Bering Sea survey results show a population estimate for the Pribilof District of 5.8 million male Korean hair crab greater than 3.25 inches in carapace width. Given uncertainty in the population estimates and lack of knowledge of reproductive biology of Korean hair crab, a conservative 20% exploitation rate was used to establish a guideline harvest level of 1.8 million pounds.

The population in the Pribilof District appears to be reaching peak abundance with the highest estimate of large male crabs since 1982. The guideline harvest level is an increase over last season's 1.1 million pound guideline. The Korean hair crab fishery will not open in other Bering Sea fishing districts this year.

For further details contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at 486-1840.

End

# COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



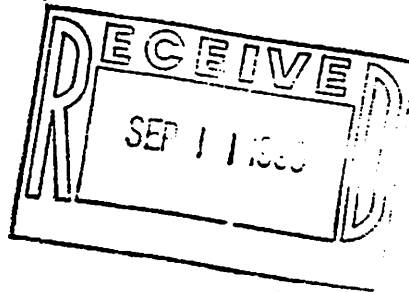
## NEWS RELEASE

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME



STATE OF ALASKA  
Department of Fish and Game  
Frank Rue, Commissioner

Robert C. Clasby, Director  
Commercial Fisheries Management  
and Development Division



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211 Mission Road  
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Contact: James A. Spalinger  
Regional Shellfish  
Management Biologist  
Westward Region

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: September 6, 1995

### ATTENTION BRISTOL BAY RED KING CRAB INDUSTRY

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced today that the Bristol Bay commercial red king crab fishery will not open during the 1995/96 season. The continued closure is necessary to protect the future viability of these valuable king crab resources.

Bristol Bay red king crab data from the standard National Marine Fisheries Service Eastern Bering Sea trawl survey and a resurvey consisting of 60 additional tows in the area of high female abundance have been reviewed by ADF&G and NMFS staff. The additional survey data provided useful information on the distribution of the red king crabs in Bristol Bay. Taken together, these data indicate that mature female red king crabs (>89 mm carapace length, CL) are at or below the threshold level of 8.4 million animals. Mature male (>119 mm CL) and legal male (>134 mm CL) crab abundances declined slightly from 1994 estimates. Although this year's survey indicates an increase in numbers of immature and prerecruit crabs relative to last year's survey, the stock remains in a depressed condition. Fishery closure at the mature female threshold level is in accordance with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game King Crab Harvest Strategy (5AAC 34.080), Alaska Board of Fisheries Policy on King and Tanner Crab Resource Management, and the Fishery Management Plan for the Commercial King and Tanner Crab Fisheries in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands.

The Alaska Board of Fisheries Policy on King and Tanner Crab Resource Management defines a threshold as "the minimum stock size that allows sufficient recruitment so that the stock can rebuild itself." When stocks are at or below threshold, the fisheries must remain closed because further removals from the spawning stock would jeopardize the ability of the stock to recover. The Board's Management Policy and ADF&G's King Crab Harvest Strategy were adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries on March 23, 1990.

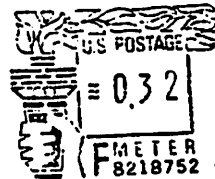
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Threshold is similarly defined in the North Pacific Fisheries Management Plan for the Commercial King and Tanner Crab Fisheries in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands, and is one of five criteria that must be considered when establishing guideline harvest levels in accordance with the plan. The threshold value for Bristol Bay red king crabs of 8.4 million mature females was estimated by the Crab Plan Team of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council in 1990. This value was incorporated into ADF&G's Harvest Strategy for the Bristol Bay red king crabs prior to the 1991 commercial fishery and was formally presented to, and adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in February 1993.

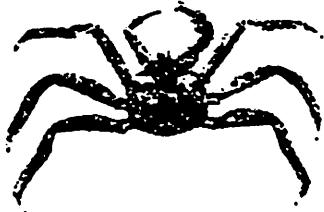
An announcement for the Bering Sea Tanner crab fisheries will be made on or before September 15, 1995.

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# COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



## NEWS RELEASE

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
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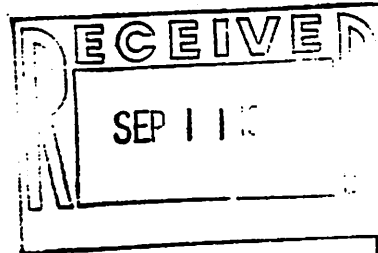
STATE OF ALASKA  
Department of Fish and Game  
Frank Rue, Commissioner

Robert C. Clasby, Director  
Commercial Fisheries Management  
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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Westward Region  
211 Mission Road  
Kodiak, AK 99615

Contact: Rance Morrison  
Area Shellfish Biologist  
Dutch Harbor, Alaska



Date: September 5, 1995

### ATTENTION PRIBILOF AND ST. MATTHEW KING CRAB FISHERMAN

The 1995 Pribilof District red and blue king crab season, and the St. Matthew Island Section of the Northern District blue king crab season will open at 12:00 noon September 15. The guideline harvest level for the Pribilof fishery is 2.5 million pounds of red and blue king crab, and 2.4 million pounds of blue king crab for the St. Matthew fishery.

Tank inspections will be available for the St. Matthew fishery as follows:

Dutch Harbor	12:00 noon, September 12 throughout the season
St. Paul	12:00 noon, September 14 throughout the season
Akutan	12:00 noon, September 14 for 72 hours
King Cove	12:00 noon, September 14 for 72 hours

Tank inspections will be available for the Pribilof fishery as follows:

Dutch Harbor	12:00 noon, September 14 throughout the season
St. Paul	12:00 noon, September 14 throughout the season
Akutan	12:00 noon, September 14 for 72 hours
King Cove	12:00 noon, September 14 for 72 hours

Courtesy pre-tank inspections will be available beginning September 7 in Dutch Harbor only to facilitate loading of gear. Pre-tank inspections at Akutan and King Cove will be available as ADF&G personnel arrive at those locations. No pre-tank inspections will be given in St. Paul.

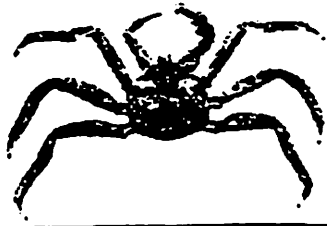
Fisherman are reminded that the interim-use permit holder must be on the vessel with the permit at the time of tank inspection. A 1995 K09Q or K91Q interim use permit is required for these fisheries.

### IN-SEASON MANAGEMENT OF THE PRIBILOF AND ST. MATTHEW FISHERIES

This year's Pribilofs and St. Matthew king crab fisheries will be managed in-season by means of daily vessel catch reports. Vessel operators interested in reporting daily catch and effort via single side band (coded) or MCI (standard A or C) should contact ADF&G in Dutch Harbor for information on reporting worksheets, codes and reporting instructions. Worksheets, codes and reporting instructions will also be available at the time of tank inspection. The precision of in-season fishery performance information will increase with the number of in-season reporters. To provide the best information possible for management of these fisheries, vessel operators are encouraged to participate in daily in-season reporting. For further details contact the Dutch Harbor office at 581-1239.



# COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



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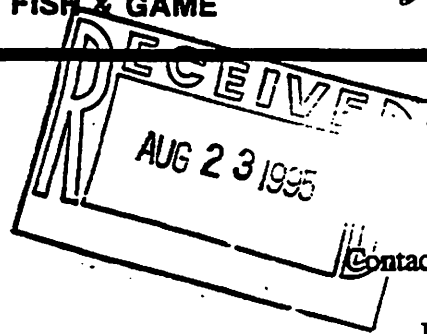


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Westward Region



IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 17, 1995

### ATTENTION BERING SEA CRAB INDUSTRY

The Department of Fish and Game and National Marine Fisheries staff has reviewed the recent crab surveys of the Bering Sea. To-date, only the Pribilof and St. Matthew king crab survey data analyses are complete. The following harvest projections have been set for the upcoming September 15, 1995 opening:

#### PRIBILOF ISLANDS

Red & Blue King Crab	2.5 Million Pounds
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#### ST. MATTHEW ISLAND

Blue King Crab	2.4 Million Pounds
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The department anticipates effort levels for both fisheries to be high, with probable closure announcements at the opening of each fishery. Due to anticipated large effort levels and uncertainty in the survey data a conservative management approach was used in projecting the Pribilof Is. king crab harvest. The guideline harvest level in the St. Matthew Islands fishery was based on a 20% exploitation rate of 3.0 million mature male blue king crab.

Survey results for the Bristol Bay king crab fishery will be available by September 6, 1995.

For further details contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Kodiak at (907) 486-1840.

- End -