



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

Fisheries managed by the State of Alaska since the last Council report includes those for salmon, scallops, and crab.

**Salmon Troll Fishery** - The Southeast Alaska general summer troll fishery opened on July 1, 2019. The summer fishery targets most of the annual Treaty Chinook salmon quota in one or more open periods during the July 1-September 30 timeframe. During the summer season, most waters of the Southeast Alaska/Yakutat area are open to commercial trolling, including outer coastal waters in the EEZ, excluding those waters described in 5 AAC 29.150.

The total summer troll Chinook harvest was 83,421 fish and 82,325 of those fish were estimated to be Treaty Chinook salmon.

### Southeast Alaska Summer Troll Chinook Harvest

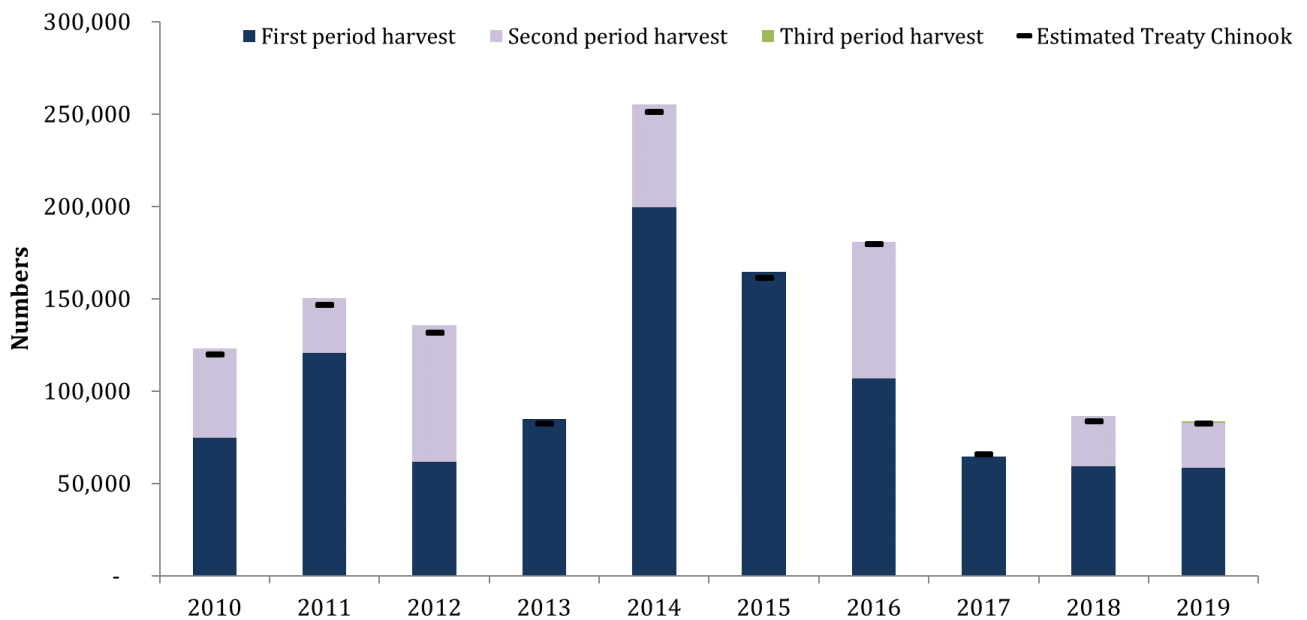


Figure 1. Chinook salmon harvest in the Southeast Alaska summer troll fishery, 2010 – 2019.

**Scallops** - Weathervane scallop fisheries in Yakutat, Kodiak, Alaska Peninsula, Dutch Harbor, and the Bering Sea registration areas opened on July 1, 2019. The cumulative guideline harvest level (GHL) for the 2019/20 season is 267,500 pounds of shucked meats, a 3,800 pound decrease from the 2018/19 cumulative GHL.

2019/20 Alaska Weathervane Scallop Guideline Harvest and Crab Bycatch Levels				
Registration Area	District/Management Unit	GHL (pounds of shucked meat)	Bycatch Limits (number of crab)	
			Tanner Crab	King Crab
Yakutat		155,000	N/A	N/A
Prince William Sound	East Kayak Subsection	<i>Closed for the 2019/20 season</i>	N/A	N/A
	West Kayak Subsection	<i>Closed for the 2019/20 season</i>	N/A	N/A
Cook Inlet	Kamishak Bay District	<i>Closed for the 2019/20 season</i>	N/A	N/A
Kodiak	Northeast District	15,000	9,000	25
	Shelikof District	20,000	10,000	25
	Southwest District	35,000	17,500	25
	Southeast District	15,000	9,000	25
	Semidi Islands District <sup>1</sup>	<i>Exploratory Area (Commissioner's Permit)</i>		
Alaska Peninsula	160° to 161° W. long	7,500	3,750	25
	Unimak Bight <sup>1</sup>	7,500	7,500	25
Dutch Harbor	Bering Sea waters	5,000	5,000	10
	Pacific Ocean waters	<i>Closed for the 2019/20 season</i>	N/A	N/A
Bering Sea		7,500	65,000	500
			<i>C. opilio &amp; hybrids</i>	
			300,000	

<sup>1</sup> Commissioner's Permit required to harvest scallops in these areas.

Table 1. Weathervane scallop guideline harvest level and bycatch limits, by area for 2019/20.

Total harvest to date is approximately 159,000 pounds. Scallop fishing has closed in the Southwest and Shelikof Districts of the Kodiak Area. The fishery closes by regulation on February 15, 2020.

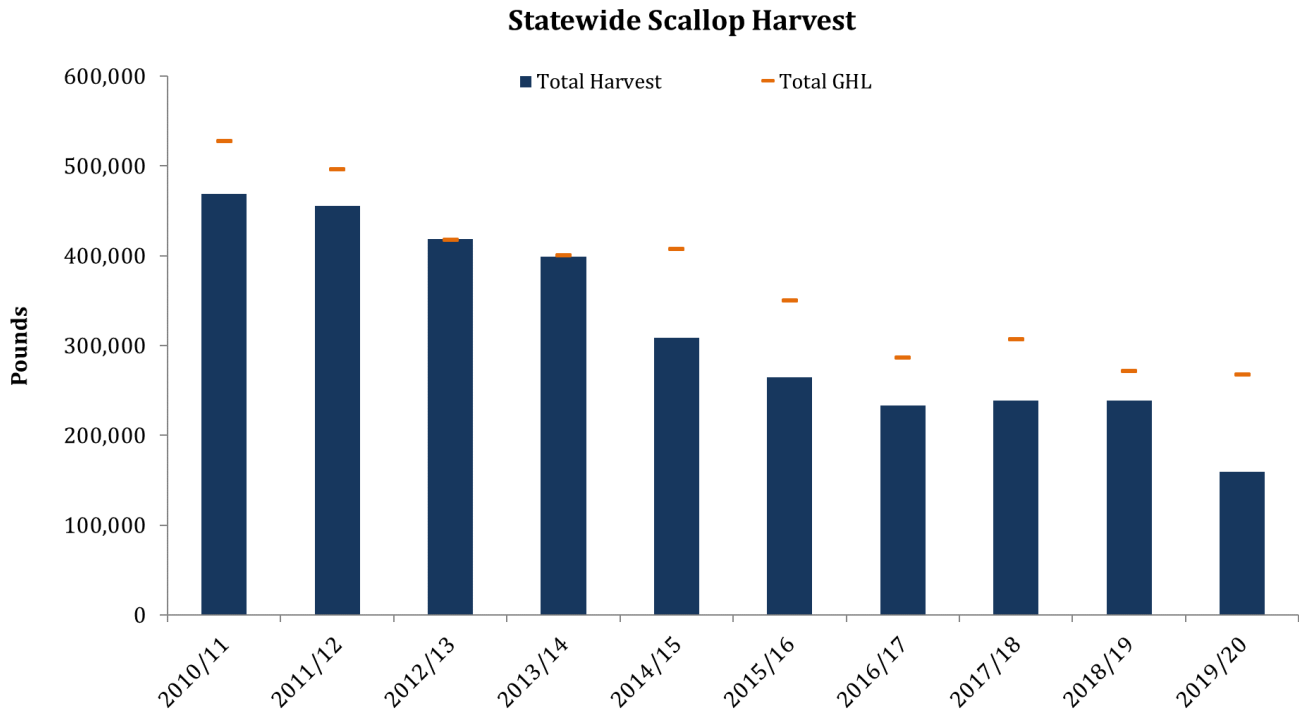


Figure 2. Statewide weathervane scallop harvest, 2010/11 – 2019/20.

**Norton Sound red king crab** - The 2019 Norton Sound red king crab winter open access fishery opened on February 25, 2019, one week earlier than 2018 to allow for more fishing opportunity. Poor ice all winter resulted in no effort in the eastern and southern portions of Norton Sound and moving ice resulted in approximately 30 lost

pots. Total winter harvest was 3,295 pounds or just over a quarter of the winter open access quota; this was the poorest winter harvest in over 10 years. Average price of crab was \$6.97 per pound, the second highest paid in the Norton Sound winter king crab fishery.

The summer fishery opened on June 25, 2019 for both the open access and CDQ fisheries with a combined GHL of 147,300 pounds. The total summer harvest was 75,023 pounds, just over half of the combined summer quota. Harvest rates were very low this season and averaged five crab per pot which was well below the average of 14 crab per pot for the previous five seasons. Due to poor catch rates, many crabbers opted for longer soak times and by mid-July effort decreased substantially. The fishery concluded in late August when the local processor stopped buying crab due to low catch rates and soft-shelled crab. The average price paid was \$6.98 per pound, the highest amount ever paid for the summer fishery.

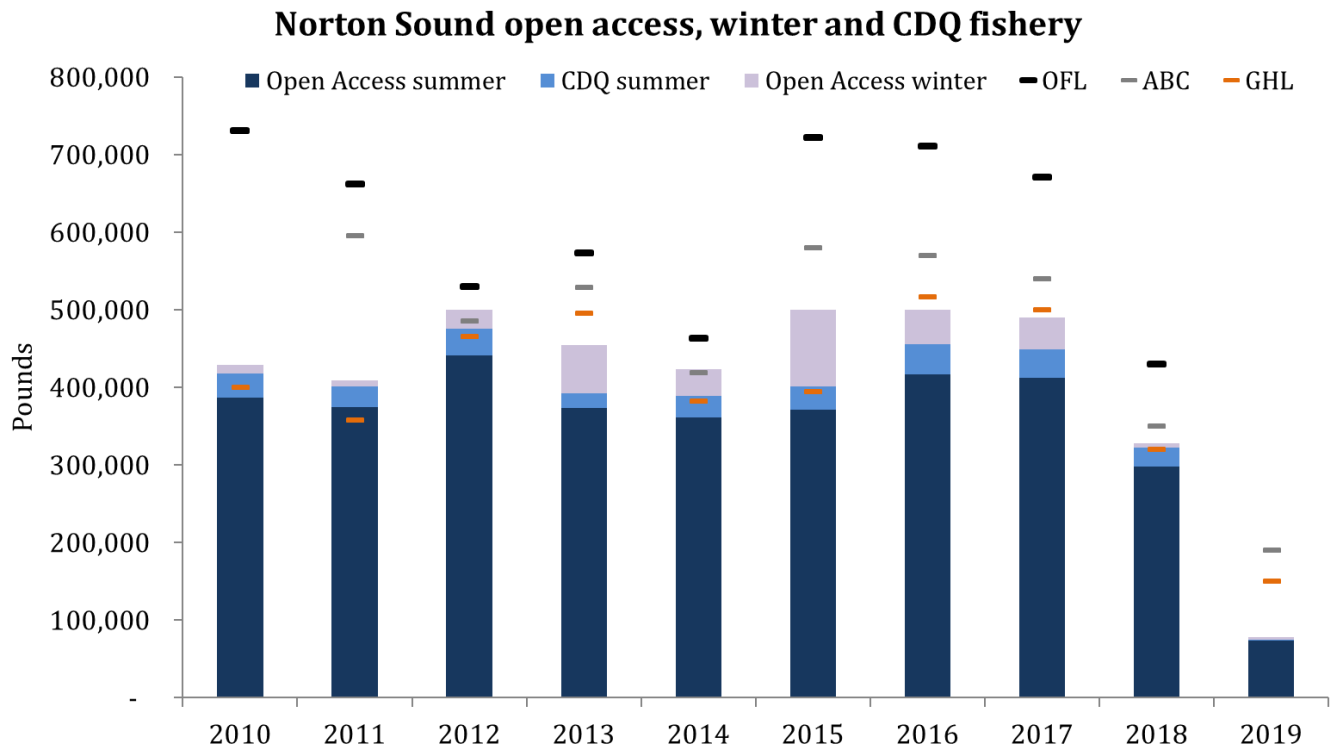


Figure 3. Norton Sound red king crab harvest, TAC, OFL, and ABC, 2010 – 2019.

**Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab** - The 2019/20 Aleutian Islands commercial golden king crab fishery opened July 15, 2019. The total allowable catch (TAC) was set at 7.18 million pounds and is apportioned east and west of 174° W long; the eastern TAC is 4.31 million pounds and the western TAC is 2.87 million pounds. Ten percent of each TAC is allocated to the CDQ (eastern) and Adak Community Allocation (ACA-western) fisheries. Three vessels are currently participating in the western area and harvest to date is 0.99 million pounds. Two vessels are fishing in the eastern area and harvest remains confidential. The fishery closes by regulation on April 30, 2020.

## Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab

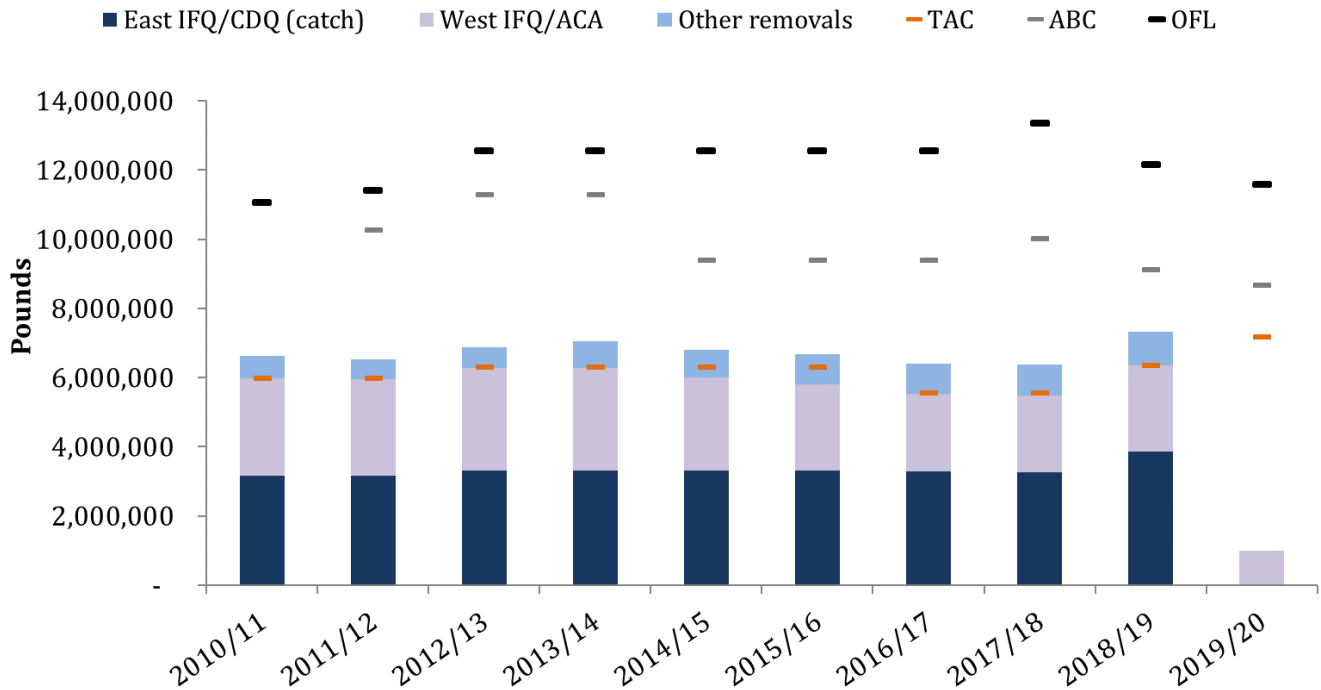


Figure 4. Aleutian Islands golden king crab harvest by area, TAC, OFL, and ABC, 2010/11 – 2019/20.

**Alaska Board of Fisheries** - The Board may consider out-of-cycle proposals through an Agenda Change Request (ACR) and state regulations (5 AAC 39.999) define the guidelines by which an ACR may be accepted. The Board considers ACRs at its first meeting in the fall (Work Session: October 23-24, in Anchorage). The only action for the Board is to determine whether to accept an ACR and to determine which future meeting it will be deliberated. The Board received two ACRs this cycle that may be of interest to the Council:

**ACR 6** Close Aleutian Islands waters west of 174° W long to trawl vessels >100 feet using nonpelagic trawl gear.

**ACR 7** Change the Aleutian Islands state-waters fishery registration requirement from nonexclusive to exclusive. If the Aleutian Islands Subdistrict becomes an exclusive registration area, boats that fish in other exclusive registration areas (Dutch Harbor Subdistrict, South Alaska Peninsula, Kodiak, Cook Inlet, and Prince William Sound) would be prohibited from also fishing in the Aleutian Islands Subdistrict in the same calendar year.

**Lower Cook Inlet Groundfish: December 10 – 13, 2020, in Seward**

**PROPOSAL 42** Clarify possession and landing requirements for the parallel Pacific cod fishery in the Cook Inlet Area (ADF&G). Vessels may only be registered for one registration area at a time and cannot fish in adjacent registration areas during the same trip. This proposal seeks to clarify possession and landing requirements as a condition of registration for the Cook Inlet parallel Pacific cod fishery.

**Kodiak Groundfish: January 11-14, 2020, in Kodiak**

**PROPOSAL 49** Create a Kodiak Area commercial sablefish season from September 1 through December 31 or until the quota is caught with a GHL established at 1% of the federal Central Gulf IFQ TAC.

**PROPOSAL 52** Increase the percentage of Central Gulf of Alaska (CGOA) Pacific cod ABC used to establish the Kodiak Area state-waters Pacific cod GHL from 12.5% to 17.5% and allocate the additional GHL to the pot gear fishery.

**PROPOSAL 53** Add unharvested Kodiak Area state-waters Pacific cod jig gear quota to the Kodiak Area state-waters Pacific cod pot gear GHL allocation the following calendar year. Depending on the previous year's unharvested jig quota, this proposal could increase the amount of the CGOA ABC used to establish the Kodiak Area Pacific cod GHL to 18.75%.

**Statewide King and Tanner: March 7-11, 2020, in Anchorage**

**PROPOSAL 261** Adopt a new Bering Sea Tanner crab harvest strategy used to set annual harvest limits. The current Bering Sea Tanner crab harvest strategy was established in 1999 and requires minimum abundance threshold levels for both mature male and female crab to be met before fisheries can occur. The analysis in support of the revised harvest strategy will evaluate the utility of including female abundance when considering harvest limits for the male only Tanner crab fishery.

**PROPOSAL 262** Modify the Bering Sea *C. opilio* harvest strategy definition of “exploited legal males”. Providing flexibility to the definition of “exploited legal males” in the harvest strategy would allow the definition to adapt to changes in the industry preferred size while remaining above the minimum legal male size (3.1 in.).

**PROPOSAL 263** Allow retention of incidentally harvested Bering Sea District *C. bairdi* during directed a *C. opilio* season. This proposal would allow a small amount (between two to five percent) of non-target species (*C. bairdi* crab) caught incidentally when targeting *C. opilio* crab after the season for *C. bairdi* crab has closed without being subject to a penalty or violation. The *C. bairdi* crab would have to be forfeited at the time of landing and would not accrue toward quota in the crab rationalization program.

**PROPOSAL 265** Update Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands crab registration regulations. This proposal would provide additional clarification between preseason and fishery registrations, allow the fleet to submit forms to the department by electronic mail, provide the department with flexibility on registration location, and allow the department the ability to waive tank inspections for vessels.

**PROPOSAL 266** Change the season dates for the Registration Area O golden king crab fishery from July 15 – April 30 to March 1 – October 31. A March season start would mean that more of the GKC harvest would occur during the summer months which may reduce deadloss, reduce weather related safety issues, and provide opportunities for vessels to participate in other crab fisheries that conflict with the current season.

**PROPOSAL 268** Allow gear transfers to be authorized by electronic mail. Allowing the department to authorize gear transfers by email while the vessels are on the fishing grounds would increase both department and fleet flexibility and efficiency. This proposal will additionally provide clear guidance for the department on invalidating gear transfers.

**PROPOSAL 271** Specify marine safety requirements for fishing vessels carrying observers. When a vessel is required to carry an onboard observer, the vessel owner, owner's agent, or operator shall maintain safe conditions on the vessel for the protection of observers including adherence to all U.S. Coast Guard and other applicable rules, regulations, or statutes pertaining to safe operation of the vessel. The proposed regulation closely parallels federal regulations regarding observer safety.

**PROPOSAL 273** Amend the season dates for king crab in the Northern District Norton Sound Section, as follows: through the ice only, during a fishing season established by emergency order to open on or after February 1 and close April 30, unless extended by emergency order (winter season). These dates would eliminate the portion of the season when ice is prone to move.