



**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 crab, scallops, and groundfish.

Bering Sea/ Aleutian Islands crab. During the 2019/20 season, fisheries opened for Aleutian Islands golden king crab, Bristol Bay red king crab, and Bering Sea snow (*opilio*) crab. Ten percent of each total allowable catch (TAC) is allocated to the Community Development Quota (CDQ) fisheries; ten percent of the western Aleutian Islands golden king crab TAC is allocated to the Adak Community Allocation (ACA) fishery.

Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab

The 2019/20 Aleutian Islands commercial golden king crab fishery opened July 15, 2019 and closes by regulation on April 30, 2020. The TAC was set at 7.18 million pounds and is apportioned east and west of 174° W longitude; the eastern TAC is 4.31 million pounds and the western TAC is 2.87 million pounds. Ten percent of the eastern TAC is allocated to the CDQ fisheries and ten percent of the western TAC is allocated to the ACA fisheries. In the western area harvest to date is 2.35 million pounds (82% of the quota) and in the eastern area harvest to date is 4.24 million pounds (98% of the quota).

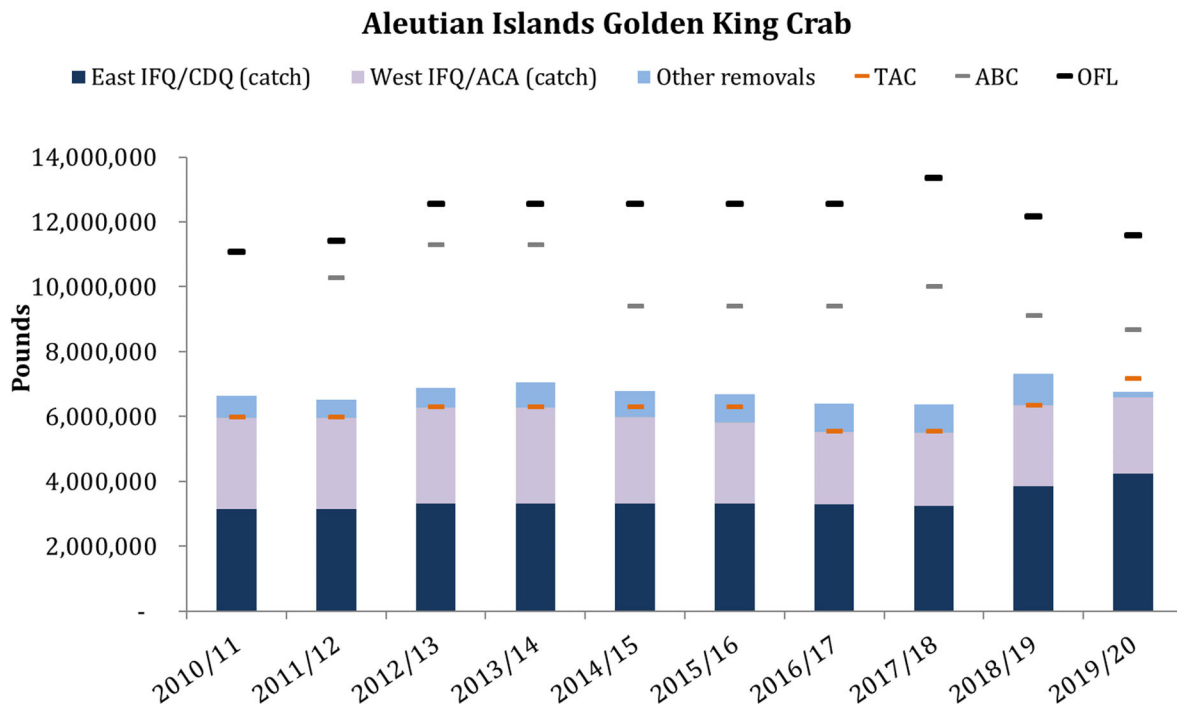


Figure 1. Aleutian Islands golden king crab harvest by area, TAC, OFL, and ABC, 2010/11 – 2019/20.

Bering Sea Snow Crab

The Bering Sea snow crab fishery opened on October 15, 2019 and will remain open through May 15, 2020 in the Eastern Subdistrict (between 166° W and 173° W longitude) and through May 31, 2020 in the Western Subdistrict (west of 173° W longitude). The 2019/20 snow crab TAC is 34.0 million pounds. Harvest to date is 2.6 million pounds (8% of the quota).

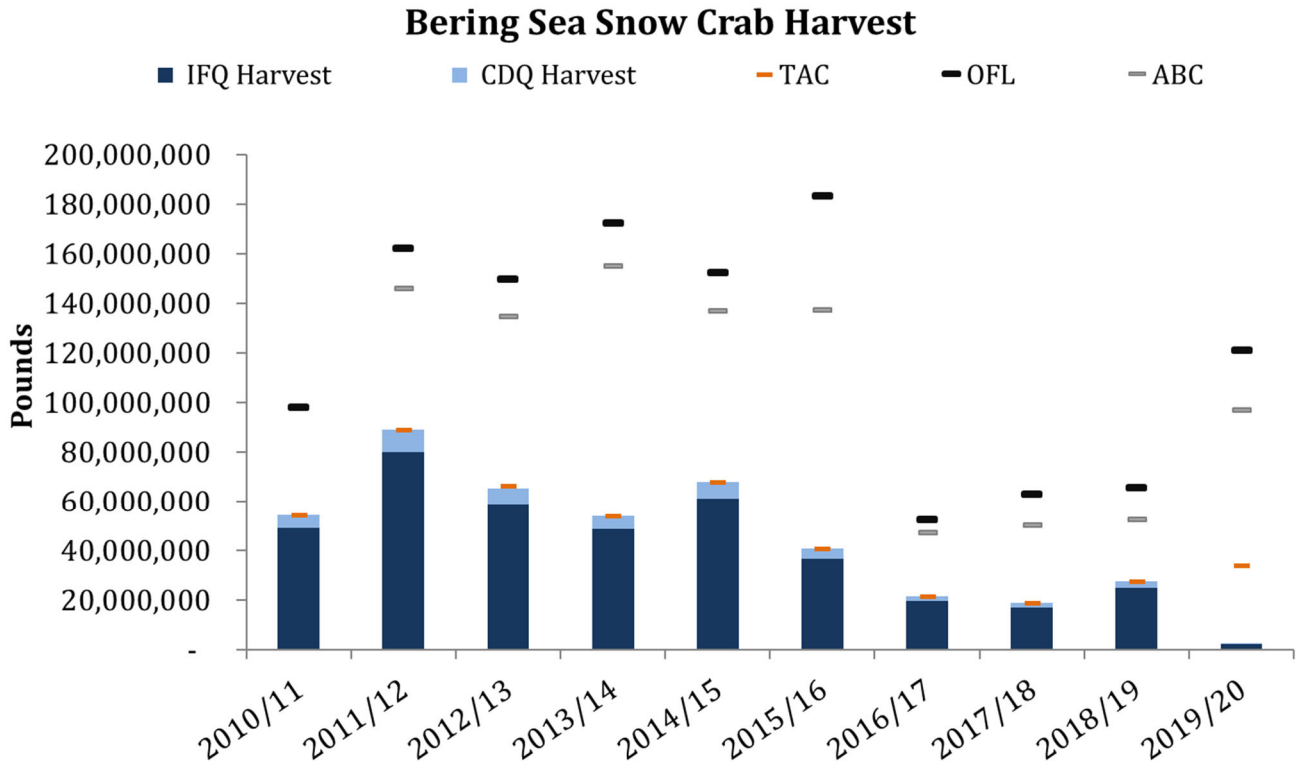


Figure 2. Bering Sea snow crab harvest, TAC level, OFL, and ABC; 2010/11 - 2019/20 seasons.

Scallops. Weathervane scallop fisheries in Yakutat, Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, 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.

Total harvest to date is approximately 230,000 pounds. Scallop fishing has closed in the Shelikof and Southwest districts of the Kodiak Area, and in the Unimak Bight district of the Alaska Peninsula Area. The scallop fishery closes by regulation on February 15, 2020.

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 ¹	<i>Exploratory Area (Commissioner's Permit)</i>		
Alaska Peninsula	160° to 161° W. long	7,500	3,750	25
	Unimak Bight ¹	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 & hybrids</i>	
			300,000	
¹ 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.

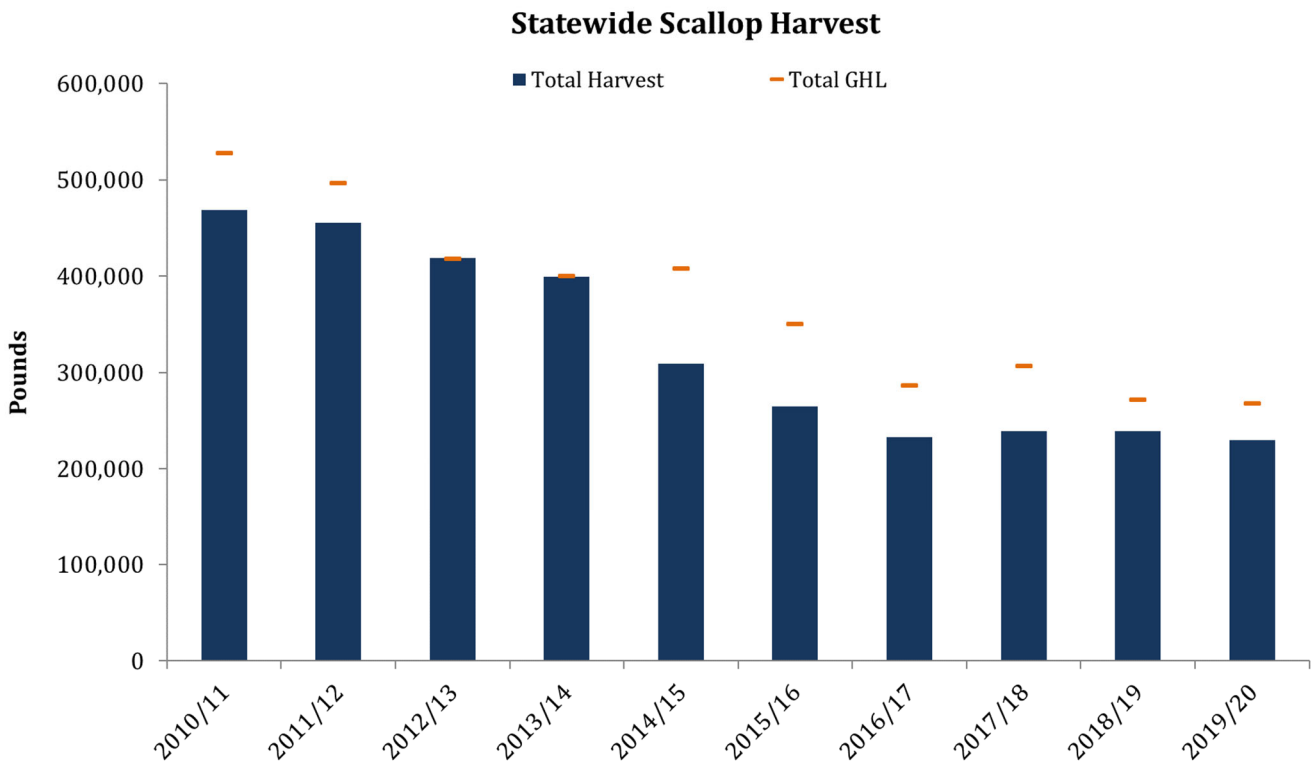


Figure 3. Statewide weathervane scallop harvest, 2010/11 – 2019/20.

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

State Management Area	ABC and GHL percentage in regulation		2020 GHL as percent of ABC	Gear	2020 GHL (mt)	Opening Date
Prince William Sound	EGOA - 25%		16%	Jig/Pot	30	2/1/2020
				Longline	169	2/1/2020
Chignik	CGOA - 25%	8.75%	16%	Jig	48	1/1/2020
				Pot	433	3/1/2020
Kodiak		12.50%		Jig	344	1/1/2020
				Pot	344	2/24/2020
Cook Inlet		3.75%		Jig	31	1/1/2020
				Pot	175	2/1/2020
South Alaska Peninsula	WGOA - 30%		20%	Jig	145	1/1/2020
				Pot	821	3/7/2020
Dutch Harbor Subdistrict	Bering Sea - 9%		NA	Jig	45	5/1/2020
			9%	Pot	14,028	1/26/2020
Aleutian Islands Subdistrict*	Aleutian Islands - 34%		33%	All	6,804	**

*AI Subdistrict GHL is capped at 15 million pounds (6,804 mt).

** Adak section opened January 1, 2020 and the remainder of the AI state-water fishery opens following the closure of the federal fishery.

In the Gulf of Alaska, jig fisheries opened in the Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Chignik, and South Alaska Peninsula Management Areas on January 1, 2020. All other Gulf of Alaska state-water fisheries will open in February and March. To date no harvested has occurred in the 2020 Gulf of Alaska state waters fisheries. The Dutch Harbor Subdistrict opened to pot gear on January 26, 2020. The Adak Section of the Aleutian Islands Subdistrict opened on January 1, 2020 and harvest is confidential due to less than three processors.

Alaska Board of Fisheries

The Lower Cook Inlet Finfish meeting was held December 10 - 13, 2019 in Seward and the Kodiak Finfish meeting was held January 11 - 14, 2020 in Kodiak. Of interest to the Council, at the Seward meeting, the Board passed Proposal 278 to designate the Aleutian Islands Subdistrict as an exclusive registration area during the state-waters Pacific cod fishery. Vessels may only be registered to fish in one exclusive registration area in the same calendar year. The regulations for this proposal were implemented for the 2020 season. Additionally, at the Kodiak meeting, the Board passed an amended version of Proposal 283. This amended proposal changed the federal fishery triggers used to open the state-waters Pacific cod fishery in the Aleutian Island Subdistrict. For vessels fishing with pot, longline, hand troll, and jig gear all state waters of the Aleutian Islands Subdistrict open four days after the BSAI "A" season closes for the federal pot CVs greater than 60 feet sector. For vessels fishing with trawl gear all state waters in the Aleutian Islands Subdistrict will open on March 15. This Proposal also changed the vessel length

restrictions for pot gear in the Aleutian Island Subdistrict from 125 feet to 100 feet in overall length prior to March 15.

The next scheduled Board of Fisheries meetings are Upper Cook Inlet Finfish, from February 7-19, 2020 in Anchorage, and Statewide King and Tanner Crab, from March 8-11, 2020 in Anchorage. Comments for the Statewide King and Tanner Crab meeting are due February 21, 2020.

Statewide King and Tanner Crab: March 8-11, 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 of 3.1 inches.

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 August 1 through April 30 to March 1 through 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.