



D1 AIGKC Facility Use Caps

February 2023 Council Meeting

Action Memo

Council Staff: Sarah Marrinan and Clay McKean

Action Required: 1. Review discussion paper
2. Review EAG Facility Use Caps and take action as needed

BACKGROUND

In June 2021, the Council reviewed several public comment letters proposing changes in the Aleutian Islands golden king crab (AIGKC) fishery. In response, the Council made a motion for a discussion paper to address the two issues raised:

1) Identify potential regulatory or administrative changes that would allow Eastern Aleutian Islands golden king crab (EAG) and Western Aleutian Islands golden king crab (WAG) IFQ to be issued or fished prior to August 1. Changes could include regulatory changes to the crab fishing year for golden king crab or other administrative or regulatory changes that would allow golden king crab IFQ to be issued or fished earlier in the year. The paper should include potential impacts on other Crab Rationalization program fisheries including cost recovery fees.

2) Review current EAG facility use caps and discuss impacts of removing or changing them to recognize custom processing arrangements. The paper should include the history and intent of facility use caps and a discussion of the current processing conditions related to facility use caps in the EAG fishery.

In October 2022, the Council bifurcated these issues into separate discussion papers. This discussion paper addresses the second proposal, to remove the EAG facility use cap in order to provide more market opportunity for independent Processor Quota Share and Individual Processing Quota (PQS/IPQ) holders that do not have ownership in a processing facility.

The public comment letters received by the Council in support of this proposal highlight the opportunity for a live crab market at one particular processor in Dutch Harbor and the desire from crab harvesters and independent PQS/IPQ holders to have access to this market when custom processing their EAG IPQ. The 60% facility use cap is constraining to these independent PQS/IPQ holders as only one processor in Dutch Harbor currently has the capacity to facilitate a live crab market, and the facility use cap limits the amount of crab that can be processed at this facility.

At this meeting, the Council will receive a presentation on a discussion paper looking at the possible actions that could be taken to revise the facility use caps in this fishery and expected outcomes of those actions. Additional background on the fishery and the regulations are provided in Appendix 1 and 2 to the analysis.