



ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

REPORT TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
DECEMBER 8, 1992

Fisheries managed under delegated authority to the State of Alaska since the last council meeting include crab and salmon. Demersal Shelf Rockfish have remained closed.

Bering Sea King and Tanner Crab Fisheries: The St. Matthew blue king crab was opened September 1 - September 4, with a 3.1 million pound quota. This was the first major Bering Sea fishery with 100 pot limit. 174 vessels registered, which was 106 vessels more than the 1991 season. The harvest reached 2.3 million pounds, at a value of \$7 million.

The Dutch Harbor brown king crab opened September 1 and closed November 17. 10 vessels fished the area for a harvest of 1.4 million pounds. All vessels left the area with the opening of Adak and Bristol Bay on November 1. The fishery was valued at \$3.5 million to fleet.

The Bristol Bay red king crab fishery was open November 1 - November 8, with a 10.3 million pound quota. A pot limit of 250 was in place; which put 68,000 pots on ground compared to 90-120,000 pots fished last year. 281 vessels landed crab for a total of 8 million pounds. Catch per pot was 6 crab; half of 1991 harvest rate. All portions of population down, future fisheries are doubtful due to poor recruitment. The 1992 fishery was valued at over \$40 million to fleet.

The Adak red/brown king and Tanner crab fishery opened on November 1 with 12 vessels registering. As of November 29, 710,000 pounds of red king crab and 200,000 pounds of brown king crab harvested. Vessels are presently leaving the area to enter Bering Sea bairdi.

The Bering Sea C. bairdi season opened November 15 with approximately 260 vessels registering. Harvest as of November 29, equaled 8.7 million pounds. Ex-vessel price is \$1.50/pound.

Due to buoy sticker problems, issuance of stickers suspended prior to opening of Tanner crab fishery. On November 30, National Marine Fisheries Service suspended pot limits in Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands due to inconsistency with Federal Management Plan.

TROLL SALMON FISHERY REPORT: The winter troll fishery opened on October 11, 1992, a ten day delay from previous years. The opening was delayed by the Board of Fisheries in an attempt to decrease the winter harvest and increase the duration of the summer fishery. The preliminary estimate of chinook salmon harvest through November 21 was 15,554 fish, about 10,000 less than last year at this time.

The difference resulted primarily from the 10 day delay, as catches by week are similar for the open period. The number of landings during the open period was down slightly from those weeks in 1991. Very preliminary estimates of Alaska hatchery contribution are about 13.5%, down from 16.8% in the first half of the 1991-1992 winter fishery. The majority of the harvest has come from Sitka Sound.