

Pacific Northwest Crab Industry Advisory Committee (PNCIAC)

Meeting Minutes and Recommendations

11.28.2023 9-11am AKT

ATTENDEES

Committee Members: Sean Dwyer (Chair), Lance Farr (Vice Chair), Edward Poulsen, Elizabeth Reed, Jake Jacobsen, Steve Minor, Dean Fasnacht, Gary Painter, Jamie Goen (Secretary, non-voting)

(Committee members not in attendance: Mark Casto, Brett Reasor, Mike Simpson)

Quorum = greater than or equal to 50% (>=6)

Others in Attendance:

Council staff - Sarah Marrinan, Shannon Gleason
NOAA Fisheries – Alicia Miller, Brian Garber-Yonts
ADFG – Kendall Henry
Paul Wilkins, Mateo Paz-Soldan, Kristen Dobroth

AGENDA

1. Proposed crab amendments for [Dec Council](#) (processor use caps and C shares)
2. Crab Rationalization Program review discussion
3. Other business

MINUTES

1. Proposed crab amendments for Dec Council (processor use caps and C shares)

Agenda Item C1 - C-share recent participation requirement – final action – [analysis & addendum](#)

PNCIAC discussed the alternatives in the analysis and active participation requirements in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program. The Council is scheduled to take final action but has not indicated a preferred alternative.

If c-share holders have not demonstrated active participation within 4 years in a row, they are at risk of having quota revoked. This policy is to encourage c-share holders to divest if they are not active to give active fishermen an opportunity to buy. With COVID and low quota in recent years, it has been hard for c-share holders to meet the requirements.

Both action alternatives 2 & 3 would reissue quota that had been revoked in recent years.

Alternative 2, Option 3 would “level the playing field” for initial issues vs new entrants to qualify as active participation.

Under Alternative 2, Option 2, there are 3 methods of administering it. The agency spoke to the administrative burden of this alternative under the 3 methods (restart, extra year, skipped year). The agency noted there is concern that there could be more confusion for c-share holders with a longer timeframe where requirements don’t apply. Closed fisheries complicates administration.

There was a request whether agency could create a website or dashboard where the c-share holders could see their status. The agency noted it is possible and would be helpful to know what level of detail

is wanted, and what is public versus requiring login, cautioning that the more complex it is, the more costly.

Comment that it would be helpful if the program allowed more flexibility for c-shares, especially in times of low quota, and not stranding quota.

MOTION (Edward/Elizabeth) – PNCIAC encourages some form of active participation continue to be part of the c-share program and leniency be provided particularly during years of low quota. And the Council should consider reissuing quota that has been revoked during these times of COVID and low quota years. PASSED

Rationale – There is still a lot of dialogue about the elements and options to choose, but there should still be some level of active participation. Clearly, there has been some severe challenges with the crab industry in general and c-share in particular, so leniency makes sense. Some of these guys had no idea they were in the buzz saw and had their quota revoked so reinstating that makes sense.

There was additional comment that it was difficult to get on a boat in recent years with not enough boats fishing. Some fishermen aging and want to encourage new fishermen to enter the fishery. It is getting harder and harder to find crew. Would be good to level the playing field for participation in any fishery to qualify as active participation.

Agenda Item C2 - Facility use cap – final action - [analysis](#)

PNCIAC heard an overview and briefly discussed alternatives, noting not much changed from initial review. PNCIAC noted that this has been discussed by the group for some time and this past Bristol Bay red king crab fishery highlighted the need for more flexibility with facility use caps.

MOTION (Steve/Sean) – PNCIAC supports both alt 2 & 3. PASSED

2. Crab Rationalization Program review discussion

The Council discussed the workplan at their October 2023 meeting and the review is scheduled to be completed in April 2024. There is a chance that could be delayed to June depending on Council workload. PNCIAC continues to support a robust review. Talk of meeting closer to the Council discussing it again or if meet in January ahead of the Red King Crab Savings Area (RKCSA) action at Feb Council meeting.

3. Other business

Members agreed to meet again in mid- to late-January and before the February Council meeting to discuss RKCSA action, smaller opilio & bairdi size limits and harvest control rules, and potentially program review elements. Invite Scott Goodman from the Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation to speak to research available for crab size limit discussion.

The size limit discussion is a Board of Fisheries (BOF) matter. PNCIAC is also advisory to the BOF. The next BOF statewide shellfish meeting is in 2025 with proposals due April 10, 2024 [clarification by ADFG after the PNCIAC meeting].

Comments on the smaller size that it would reduce discard mortality. Noted the exploitation rate may have been too low on opilio before collapse. The harvest control rules need reviewed. Canadians bring in smaller crab.

ADJOURN 9:47am AKT