

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
REVIEW OF BERING SEA KING CRAB FISHERIES

BY MARTIN F. EATON
NOVEMBER 23, 1978

RED KING CRAB

NORTON SOUND

THE RED KING CRAB FISHERY SEASON OPENED ON JULY 15. NINE VESSELS MADE LANDINGS TOTALING 2.1 MILLION POUNDS WITH AN AVERAGE WEIGHT OF 3.0 POUNDS AND CPUE OF 62, OF WHICH 100,000 POUNDS WERE DEADLOSS. THE FISHERY WAS CONCENTRATED OFFSHORE THIS YEAR NEAR THE ENTRANCE OF NORTON SOUND. THE NOME SECTION WAS CLOSED BY EMERGENCY ORDER ON AUGUST 16 WHEN THE HARVEST WAS REACHED. IN 1977 THE FISHERY OCCURRED INSHORE NEAR NOME AND 543,000 POUNDS WERE HARVESTED OF WHICH 40% WERE DEADLOSS.

THE NORTHERN DISTRICT WILL SURELY EXPAND THIS SUMMER AS IT APPEARS THE STOCKS WILL STAND HIGHER HARVEST LEVELS.

BERING SEA

THE AREA Q FISHERY OPENED ON SEPTEMBER 10 AND CLOSED ON OCTOBER 31. THE 1978-79 RED KING CRAB FISHERY IN THE EASTERN BERING SEA PRODUCED A PRELIMINARY HARVEST OF 14.8 MILLION LIVE CRAB, WITH AN AVERAGE WEIGHT OF 5.8 POUNDS FOR A TOTAL LANDING OF 86.3 MILLION POUNDS OR 39,201 METRIC TONS. FISHERMEN WERE PAID \$1.23 PER POUND FOR A VALUE TO THE FISHERMEN OF \$106 MILLION DOLLARS. THIS HARVEST FIGURE ALSO INCLUDES 1,000,000 POUNDS OF DEADLOSS. THE CATCH FOR THE 1978/79 SEASON EXCEEDED LAST YEAR'S CATCH BY 17 MILLION POUNDS. THIS POUNDAGE REPRESENTS THE LARGEST RED KING CRAB HARVEST THAT HAS BEEN RECORDED FOR THE EASTERN BERING SEA INCLUDING COMBINED FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC FLEETS.

A TOTAL OF 156 VESSELS LANDED RED KING CRAB FROM THE BERING SEA DURING THE 1977-78 SEASON, WHICH REPRESENTS A 22 VESSEL INCREASE OVER THE 1977-78 SEASON.

THE AVERAGE MEAN WEIGHT PER CRAB WAS 5.8 POUNDS FOR THE 1978-79 HARVEST, COMPARED TO THE AVERAGE WEIGHT OF 5.8 DURING THE 1977/78 SEASON. THE CPUE FOR SEPTEMBER WAS 46 WHICH COMPARED TO AN OVERALL CPUE FOR THE 1977/78 SEASON OF 26.

THE 1978/79 FISHERY WAS CONCENTRATED SOUTHWEST OF THE NEW POT STORAGE AREAS AT 57° N. LAT., AND 164° W. LONG.

NMFS 1978 TRAWL SURVEYS INDICATE A 11 MILLION DECREASE IN PRE-RECRUIT SIZE RED KING CRAB THAT WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE EASTERN BERING SEA IN 1979 THAN IN 1978. POPULATION INDICATORS SUGGEST FEWER CRAB WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR THE 1979/80 SEASON.

BLUE KING CRAB

ST. MATTHEW ISLAND

THE 1978/79 BLUE KING CRAB FISHERY OPENED IN THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF THE BERING SEA ON JULY 15 AND CLOSED ON SEPTEMBER 3. THE FISHERY TARGETED ON BLUE KING CRAB LOCATED NEAR ST. MATTHEW ISLAND, AS IN 1977. A FLEET OF 22 VESSELS HARVESTED 2.0 MILLION POUNDS.

PRIBILOF

THE BERING SEA 1978/79 BLUE KING CRAB FISHERY IN THE PRIBILOFS COMMENCED SEPTEMBER 15, AND IS STILL IN PROGRESS. A TOTAL OF 1.3 MILLION POUNDS OF BLUE CRAB HAVE BEEN HARVESTED BY 30 VESSELS AS OF NOVEMBER 26. THE AVERAGE CPUE OF 10 CRAB PER POT WITH AN AVERAGE WEIGHT OF 8.0 POUNDS COMPARES FAVORABLY WITH THE PREVIOUS SEASON CPUE OF 10 CRAB PER POT.

THE POPULATION APPEARS TO REMAIN STABLE WITH A HARVEST LEVEL OF 5 TO 8 MILLION POUNDS ANNUALLY.

POPULATION ESTIMATES OF BLUE KING CRAB BY THE NMFS SUGGESTS THAT CONSIDERABLE VARIABILITY EXISTS WITH THE PRESENT DATA BASE. ADDITIONAL STUDIES TO DETERMINE POPULATION COMPOSITION, GROWTH DATA FOR AGE OF MATURITY, AND MIGRATION PATTERNS WILL BE DONE BY NMFS THIS SUMMER.

SUMMARY

1. THE CATCH OF RED KING CRAB THIS YEAR FROM THE BERING SEA WAS APPROXIMATELY 86.3 MILLION POUNDS.
2. FISHING EFFORT CONCENTRATED SOUTHWEST OF THE NEW POT STORAGE AREA.
3. THE AVERAGE WEIGHT WAS 5.8 POUNDS AND FISHERMEN WERE PAID \$1.23 PER POUND.
4. THE NUMBER OF PRE-RECRUIT CRAB ENTERING THE FISHERY IN 1980 APPEARS TO BE 11 MILLION LESS THAN 1978.
5. THE SIZE COMPOSITION, CPUE, AVERAGE WEIGHT, RECRUIT AND POST RECRUIT AND FINAL CATCH FIGURES ARE STILL BEING ANALYZED BY ADF&G AND SHOULD BE AVAILABLE IN A FEW WEEKS.
6. THE KING CRAB CATCH FOR RED AND BLUE KING CRAB FROM ALL BERING SEA STOCKS IS APPROXIMATELY 91.7 MILLION POUNDS.

STATE OF ALASKA

PRELIMINARY DATA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

CUMULATIVE SALMON CATCH REPORT 1978
(IN NUMBER OF FISH)

PAGE: 1.

AS OF	KING	RED	COHO	PINK	CHUM	TOTAL
GILL NET PORTLAND CANAL						
24-SEP	2,368	146,301	42,714	489,317	112,867	793,567
GILL NET PRINCE OF WALES						
24-SEP	2,727	38,956	49,773	206,404	15,115	312,975
GILL NET STIKINE						
24-SEP	502	58	32,314	1,122	877	34,873
GILL NET TAKU-SNETTISHAM						
24-SEP	1,491	54,276	34,082	46,669	34,702	171,220
GILL NET LYNN CANAL						
24-SEP	454	130,164	48,390	2,881	111,223	293,112
GILL NET YAKUTAT						
24-SEP	2,848	127,629	129,751	30,258	6,080	296,566
SEINE SOUTH SOUTHEASTERN						
24-SEP	5,379	147,340	132,335	15,405,456	256,252	15,946,762
SEINE NORTH SOUTHEASTERN						
24-SEP	176	36,867	4,718	2,281,477	27,175	2,350,413
TROLL SOUTHEASTERN						
24-SEP	385,000	0	780,000	355,000	0	1,520,000
SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA REGIONAL TOTALS						
	400,945	681,591	1,254,077	18,818,584	564,291	21,719,488
PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND						
24-SEP	1,043	220,329	1,464	2,785,156	483,559	3,491,551
COPPER RIVER						
24-SEP	29,115	251,525	220,743	3,514	2,235	507,132
BERING RIVER						
24-SEP	331	33,554	90,874	255	2,403	127,417
BRISTOL BAY						
24-SEP	175,245	9,703,710	81,898	5,186,628	1,165,884	16,313,365
COOK INLET						
24-SEP	19,215	2,769,751	227,327	2,010,121	641,089	5,667,503
CENTRAL REGIONAL TOTALS						
	224,949	12,978,869	622,306	9,985,674	2,295,170	26,106,968

STATE OF ALASKA

PRELIMINARY DATA

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

CUMULATIVE SALMON CATCH REPORT 1978
(IN NUMBER OF FISH)

PAGE: 2

AS OF	KING	RED	COHO	PINK	CHUM	TOTAL
YUKON DISTRICT						
2 -SEP	97,584	0	25,050	0	1,286,668	1,409,302
KUSKOKWIM						
24-SEP	46,711	11,897	221,450	61,813	258,009	599,880
NORTON SOUND DISTRICT						
24-SEP	9,772	1	878	318,749	180,693	510,093
KUZEBUE DISTRICT						
24-SEP	180	3	0	6,865	111,525	118,573
ARCTIC-YUKON-KUSKOKWIM REGIONAL TOTALS						
	154,247	11,901	247,378	387,427	1,836,895	2,637,848
KODIAK						
24-SEP	3,228	1,071,782	48,795	15,004,133	814,345	16,942,283
CHIGNIK						
24-SEP	1,600	1,576,000	20,000	985,000	120,000	2,702,600
SOUTH PENINSULA						
24-EP	760	560,160	49,070	5,834,470	542,220	6,986,680
NORTH PENINSULA						
24-SEP	13,860	892,650	53,710	446,400	162,030	1,568,650
ALEUTIAN ISLANDS						
24-SEP	0	183	0	30,770	0	30,953
WESTWARD REGIONAL TOTALS						
	19,448	4,100,775	171,575	22,300,773	1,638,595	28,231,166
ALL ALASKA TOTALS						
	799,589	17,773,136	2,295,336	51,492,458	6,334,951	78,695,470

SHELLFISH CATCH REPORT BY MONTH
(IN POUNDS)

PAGE: 3

MONTH	KING CRAB	DUNGENESS	TANNER	SHRIMP	SCALLOPS	TOTAL
ALEUTIAN ISLS EAST-UNALASKA						
JAN	3,976	0	425,385	905,346	0	1,334,707
FEB	0	0	306,124	675,314	0	981,438
MAR	0	0	634,325	619,875	0	1,254,200
APR	0	0	653,365	656,831	0	1,310,196
MAY	0	0	358,377	1,267,663	0	1,626,040
JUN	0	0	51,959	321,378	0	373,337
JUL	0	7,528	0	521,260	0	528,788
AUG	0	10,325	0	922,005	0	932,330
SEP	1,770,368	0	0	396,550	0	2,166,918
OCT	2,504,202	0	0	0	0	2,504,202
TOTAL	4,278,546	17,853	2,429,535	6,286,222	0	13,012,156

ALEUTIAN ISLS WEST-ADAK

FEB	0	0	3,285	0	0	3,285
MAR	953,880	0	234,227	0	0	1,188,107
TOTAL	953,880	0	237,512	0	0	1,191,392

BERING SEA

JAN	1,793,075	0	2,123,976	0	0	3,917,051
FEB	13,042	0	7,720,996	0	0	7,734,038
MAR	4,552	0	15,326,498	0	0	15,331,050
APR	16,130	0	21,178,996	43,307	0	21,238,433
MAY	0	0	16,274,780	0	0	16,274,780
JUN	0	0	4,712,387	0	0	4,712,387
JUL	601,593	0	381,434	0	0	983,027
AUG	3,017,969	0	6,510	0	0	3,024,479
SEP	31,163,135	0	0	0	0	31,163,135
OCT	50,202,156	0	0	0	0	50,202,156
TOTAL	86,811,652	0	67,725,577	43,307	0	154,580,536

ALL ALASKA TOTALS

JAN	2,706,452	14,428	14,003,196	7,495,659	0	24,219,735
FEB	77,251	25,023	18,986,430	2,546,298	0	21,635,002
MAR	1,022,414	2,740	35,535,030	629,027	0	37,189,211
APR	30,459	2,428	32,272,130	711,312	0	33,016,329
MAY	0	82,523	19,293,622	1,382,769	0	20,758,914
JUN	0	1,322,321	4,764,346	13,109,399	0	19,196,066
JUL	601,593	1,832,132	381,434	19,172,813	0	21,987,972
AUG	3,879,965	1,683,597	6,510	14,675,564	0	20,245,636
SEP	38,307,789	1,527,070	8,867	6,879,510	0	46,723,236
OCT	59,139,301	473,702	53,175	1,722,014	0	61,388,192
NOV	0	0	0	0	0	0
DEC	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	105,765,224	125,304,740	68,324,365	306,360,293	0	6,965,964

SHELLFISH CATCH REPORT BY MONTH
(IN POUNDS)

MONTH	KING CRAB	DUNGENESS	TANNER	SHRIMP	SCALLOPS	TOTAL
CUIAK						
JAN	734,923	0	8,206,377	4,129,729	0	13,071,029
FEB	0	0	7,620,811	244,415	0	7,865,226
MAR	0	0	13,628,353	0	0	13,628,353
APR	0	0	3,673,381	0	0	3,673,381
MAY	0	58,163	152,550	4,961	0	215,674
JUN	0	185,802	0	813,796	0	999,598
JUL	0	313,805	0	1,144,709	0	1,458,514
AUG	0	478,351	0	7,590,238	0	8,068,589
SEP	4,374,511	170,223	0	6,199,335	0	10,744,069
OCT	4,733,783	105,114	0	1,191,312	0	6,030,209
TOTAL	9,843,217	1,311,458	33,281,472	21,318,495	0	65,754,642

CHIGNIK

JAN	14,947	0	258,673	0	0	273,620
FEB	0	0	562,193	0	0	562,193
MAR	0	0	1,057,390	0	0	1,057,390
APR	0	0	2,033,863	0	0	2,033,863
MAY	0	0	776,491	0	0	776,491
JUN	0	0	0	8,924,310	0	8,924,310
JUL	0	0	0	11,737,347	0	11,737,347
AUG	0	0	0	2,315,063	0	2,315,063
SEP	17,724	0	0	0	0	17,724
OCT	47,824	0	0	0	0	47,824
TOTAL	80,495	0	4,688,610	22,976,720	0	27,745,825

SOUTH PENINSULA

JAN	4,556	0	1,261,148	1,341,737	0	2,607,441
FEB	0	0	1,603,661	1,261,816	0	2,865,477
MAR	0	0	1,539,639	0	0	1,539,639
APR	0	0	1,757,697	0	0	1,757,697
MAY	0	0	563,380	0	0	563,380
JUN	0	0	0	1,836,803	0	1,836,803
JUL	0	0	0	3,876,474	0	3,876,474
AUG	0	0	0	3,438,279	0	3,438,279
SEP	774,097	0	0	57,686	0	831,783
OCT	1,490,822	0	0	0	0	1,490,822
TOTAL	2,269,475	0	6,725,525	11,812,795	0	20,807,795

SHELLFISH CATCH REPORT BY MONTH
(IN POUNDS)

Jan 46

PAGE: 1

MONTH	KING CRAB	DUNGENESS	TANNER	SHRIMP	SCALLOPS	TOTAL
SOUTHEASTERN						
JAN	55,071	7,688	233,988	82,245	0	378,992
FEB	16,864	21,938	371,623	22,638	0	433,063
MAR	0	0	825,571	1,565	0	827,136
APR	14,329	0	706,812	5,164	0	726,305
MAY	0	0	118,237	109,163	0	227,400
JUN	0	892,379	0	131,192	0	1,023,571
JUL	0	956,723	0	141,275	0	1,097,998
AUG	0	366,880	0	240,462	0	607,342
SEP	50,716	134,507	8,867	113,701	0	307,791
OCT	122,835	68,806	53,175	89,065	0	333,881
TOTAL	259,815	2,448,921	2,318,273	936,470	0	5,963,479

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND

JAN	10,338	6,740	619,439	2,980	0	639,497
FEB	3,537	3,085	488,248	1,381	0	496,251
MAR	1,018	2,740	1,462,467	5,484	0	1,471,709
APR	0	2,284	1,099,417	2,492	0	1,104,193
MAY	0	23,609	563,699	982	0	588,290
JUN	0	237,598	0	97	0	237,695
JUL	0	519,340	0	642	0	519,982
AUG	0	467,402	0	633	0	468,035
SEP	0	583,776	0	112,238	0	696,014
OCT	21,913	145,675	0	320,403	0	487,991
TOTAL	36,806	1,992,249	4,233,270	447,332	0	6,709,657

COOK INLET

JAN	89,566	0	874,210	1,033,622	0	1,997,398
FEB	43,808	0	309,489	340,734	0	694,031
MAR	62,964	0	826,560	2,103	0	891,627
APR	0	144	1,168,599	3,518	0	1,172,261
MAY	0	751	486,108	0	0	486,859
JUN	0	6,542	0	1,081,823	0	1,088,365
JUL	0	34,736	0	1,751,106	0	1,785,842
AUG	861,996	360,639	0	168,884	0	1,391,519
SEP	157,238	638,564	0	0	0	795,802
OCT	15,766	154,107	0	121,234	0	291,107
TOTAL	1,231,338	1,195,483	3,664,966	4,503,024	0	10,594,811

Bottomfish Catch in Metric Tons in Western Alaska, Jan.-Dec. 1978

1978	Black Cod Sablefish	Pollock	Flounder	Gray Cod Pacific Cod	Rockfish	Sculpin	Skates	General Groundfish	Others	Ling Cod	Sole	Red Snapper	Eels	Total
Jan.	-	7.1	1.2	2.4	-	-	-	-	1.1	-	-	-	-	11.8
Feb.	-	13.4	3.3	3.4	-	2.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22.5
Mar.	-	105.1	17.6	39.4	-	5.6	-	-	1.9	-	-	-	-	169.7
Apr.	-	161.4	18.5	52.9	.2	.5	.5	-	-	-	-	-	-	234.0
May	-	144.8	6.3	91.0	T	-	-	-	.7	-	-	-	-	242.8
Jun.	-	-	-	17.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	17.8
Jul.	-	.4	-	33.1	-	-	-	-	.6	-	-	-	-	34.1
Aug.	-	32.9	-	81.1	.2	-	-	-	-	-	10.5	-	-	124.7
Sep.	-	9.0	-	88.1	.3	.9	.4	-	-	-	2.0	-	T	100.5
Oct.	.37	16.8	9.6	64.0	-	9.2	-	-	6.5	-	-	-	-	106.5
Nov.														
Dec.														
Total	0	490.9	56.5	473.2	.7	18.6	.9	0	10.8	0	12.5	0	T	1064.4

Bottomfish Catch in Metric Tons in Alaska, Jan.-Dec. 1978

1978														
Jan.	-	153.2	44.3	2.4	.2	-	-	5.5	1.1	-	-	-	-	206.7
Feb.	-	175.8	7.7	5.6	-	2.4	-	7.5	-	-	-	-	-	199.0
Mar.	2.9	352.5	42.8	46.3	.2	5.6	-	9.7	1.9	-	-	-	-	461.9
Apr.	121.0	174.6	19.8	116.6	1.9	.5	.5	3.9	-	.1	-	-	-	439.0
May	141.5	144.8	6.3	105.3	18.3	-	-	5.3	.7	1.9	-	-	-	424.1
Jun.	175.8	-	-	34.7	2.5	1.8	-	5.0	-	1.3	-	-	-	221.0
Jul.	343.2	.4	T	60.0	23.1	4.7	.4	3.7	2.3	8.2	-	T	.4	422.0
Aug.	134.8	32.9	-	86.6	10.9	.2	-	.6	.1	3.8	10.6	.3	-	281.0
Sep.	178.6	9.0	86.3	95.2	9.2	.9	.4	17.4	-	.7	8.1	-	T	405.7
Oct.	240.1	35.0	93.9	67.4	3.4	9.2	26.7	3.5	6.7	-	2.0	-	-	487.8
Nov.														
Dec.														
Total	1337.9	1078.2	301.1	620.1	69.7	25.3	28	62.1	12.8	16.0	20.7	.4	.4	3548.2

Prepared by:

Division of Commercial Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

T = Less than .1 metric tons

Bottomfish Catch in Metric Tons in Southeast Alaska, Jan.-Dec. 1978

1978	Black Cod Sablefish	Pollock	Flounder	Gray Cod Pacific Cod	Rockfish	Sculpin	Skates	General Groundfish	Others	Ling Cod	Sole	Red Snapper	Eels	Total
Jan.	-	146.1	43.1	-	.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	189.5
Feb.	-	162.3	4.4	2.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	168.9
Mar.	2.8	247.8	25.2	6.9	.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	282.4
Apr.	121.0	13.2	1.3	34.8	1.6	-	-	-	-	.1	-	-	-	172.1
May	141.0	-	-	14.0	13.9	-	-	-	-	1.1	-	-	-	170.0
Jun.	175.8	-	-	6.1	2.5	-	-	-	-	1.3	-	-	-	185.7
Jul.	343.0	-	-	25.9	23.1	-	.4	-	1.7	6.9	-	-	-	401.0
Aug.	134.8	-	-	4.8	10.7	-	-	-	.1	3.8	.1	-	-	154.3
Sep.	178.6	0.3	86.3	7.0	8.9	-	-	17.4	-	0.7	6.0	-	-	305.3
Oct.	239.7	.5	84.1	1.3	3.4	-	26.7	-	0.2	-	2.0	-	-	357.
Nov.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dec.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	1336.7	570.2	244.4	103.0	64.5	0	27.1	17.4	2.0	13.9	18.1	0	0	2387.0

Bottomfish Catch in Metric Tons in Central Alaska, Jan.-Dec. 1978

1978														
Jan.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5.5	-	-	-	-	-	5.5
Feb.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.5	-	-	-	-	-	7.5
Mar.	-	-	-	T	-	-	-	9.7	-	-	-	-	-	9.7
Apr.	-	-	-	28.9	-	-	-	3.9	-	-	-	-	-	32.8
May	.4	-	-	.3	4.5	-	-	5.3	-	.8	-	-	-	11.3
Jun.	T	-	-	10.8	-	1.8	-	5.0	-	-	-	T	-	17.6
Jul.	.3	-	T	.9	-	4.7	-	3.7	-	1.3	-	T	.4	11.3
Aug.	-	-	-	.8	-	.2	-	.6	-	T	T	.3	-	1.9
Sep.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Oct.	-	17.7	.1	2.1	-	-	-	3.5	-	-	-	-	-	23.4
Nov.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dec.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	.7	17.1	.1	43.8	4.5	6.7	0	44.7	0	2.1	T	.4	.4	121.0

Prepared By:

Division of Commercial Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

T = Less than 0.1 metric ton



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
P. O. BOX 1668 - JUNEAU, ALASKA 99802

November 21, 1978

AGENDA No. 5
11/30-12/1/78

Jim Branson, Director
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
P.O. Box 3136 DT
Anchorage, AK 99510

Dear Jim:

Enclosed is a preliminary report reflecting the foreign catches off Alaska for the week ending November 11, 1978, and the 1978 cumulative catches off Alaska through November 11, 1978, as reported by the individual nations involved. The figures have not been verified and are subject to change.

Sincerely,

Harry L. Rietze
Director, Alaska Region

Enclosure

cc:
Council Members
Dr. Donald E. Bevan
Mr. Brooks Brophy

