



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DECEMBER 1998 REPORT TO THE
NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**

Fisheries managed under delegated authority of the State of Alaska since the last council meeting include crab, scallops, salmon, Southeast demersal shelf rockfish, and state waters Pacific cod.

BERING SEA/ALEUTIAN ISLANDS KING AND TANNER CRAB FISHERIES: Starting with this fall's fisheries:

Aleutians brown king opened Sept. 1. In the area east of 174° W. long the GHL was 3.0 million pounds, west of there it was 2.7 million pounds. A total of 15 vessels registered for the area, 13 fished exclusively in the east and harvested a total of 3.16 million. The eastern area closed by E.O. on November 7. Total value (eastern area) = \$5.9 million pounds. The Western area remains open, with the total harvest to date at 425,000 lbs.

Pribilof red/blue king opened Sept. 15th with a combined species GHL of 1.25 million pounds. A total of 57 vessels participated, harvest was 510,365 pounds reds and 516,996 pounds blues, for a total of 1,027,361 pounds. The season closed by E.O. on September 28th. Total (both species) open access value = \$2.39 million. CDQ GHL was 45,500 lbs. taken by one vessel after Bristol Bay red king crab.

St. Matthew blue king opened Sept. 15th, the GHL was 3.96 million pounds. A total of 131 vessels harvested 2.85 million pounds and the season closed on September 26th. Total open access value = \$6.0 million. CDQ GHL (based on actual catch) was 99,512 pounds, harvested by two vessels.

Bristol Bay red king crab opened on November 1 with GHL of 15.8 million pounds. A total of 275 vessels participated and harvested a preliminary total of 14.5 million pounds. The season closed on November 6th. Total preliminary open access value = \$38 million. CDQ GHL was 525,115 pounds taken by 7 vessels.

Bering Sea snow crab will open on January 15, 1999. Open access GHL is 186.2 million pounds. CDQ GHL is 9.8 million pounds or 5% of open access harvest.

STATEWIDE SCALLOP FISHERY: All Management areas of the state opened on July 1st except Cook Inlet which opened on August 15th. A total of 9 vessels participated in the Alaska Scallop fishery. Only Cook Inlet and the Aleutian Islands remain open. Statewide harvest is currently in excess of 810,000 pounds. This is the highest level of harvest since

1994, when 16 vessels made landings statewide. The average price per pound in 1998 is approximately \$6.40.

SALMON TROLL FISHERY: The total amount of Treaty quota chinook salmon available was 260,000 fish. The total all gear catch of chinook salmon was 271,001 fish, consisting of both Alaska hatchery (26,246) and treaty quota salmon (244,753). The troll fishery harvested 191,983 chinook salmon in the 1998 fishery (Oct 1997 to Sept 1998), of these, 183,398 were treaty fish. The 1998 troll coho harvest was 1,636,500, of a total all gear harvest of 2,749,400 coho. The 1999 troll season begins with the winter fishery which has harvested 10,700 chinooks through Dec 2, in 436 landings.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA DEMERSAL SHELF ROCKFISH AND OTHER GROUND FISH FISHERIES: ON November 16 the DSR fishery reopened in EYKT, SSEI, NSEI, and SSEO the catch to date has been light, about 30,000 pounds out of an available harvest of 247,000 pounds.

Between September 15th and the third of December, 3.3 million lbs. of sablefish were landed in the NSEI fishery; 78,000 lbs. of sablefish were landed in the SSEI pot fishery; 62,000 lbs. of P. cod were landed; and 517,000 lbs. slope rockfish (primarily bycatch in the sablefish fisheries) were also reported.

STATE WATERS PACIFIC COD FISHERY: The statewater P. cod fishery opened in the South Alaska Peninsula on March 10. Chignik, Kodiak, Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound areas opened on March 17. The P. cod fisheries in the South Alaska Peninsula and Chignik area both obtained their guideline harvest levels (GHL) and are anticipated to increase their harvest level to the 20 percent level in 1999. The Kodiak area fishery is currently underway and is anticipated to reach the GHL prior to December 31. Therefore, Kodiak is also expected to ramp up to the 20 percent level. It is not anticipated that Cook Inlet will reach their 1998 GHL and will therefore not increase to the 20 percent harvest level. Prince William Sound is also not expected to reach their GHL. But in this area, there is no ramp up provisions and their target will remain at 25 percent of the Eastern Gulf ABC.