CERTIFIED CORRECT 8/26/77

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Minutes of the Eighth Plenary Session
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
June 23rd - 24th, 1977
Hill Building, 632 6th Avenue, Room 808-809
Anchorage, Alaska

The regular meeting of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council was held in Anchorage, Alaska, at the Hill Building, 632 6th Avenue, Room 808-809, June 24 - 24, 1977. Those present are listed in Appendix A.

The Council meeting was called to order on Thursday, June 23rd, 1977, by Chairman Elmer Rasmuson at 8:30 a.m. The Council's Advisory Panel had met on June 22nd at the Council headquarters from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. They reconvened on June 23rd from 7:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m. and then again from 5:30 to 6:00 p.m. They also met Friday morning, June 23rd, from 8:30 to 9:00 a.m.

The Scientific and Statistical Committee met in the Council headquarters on June 22nd from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. and from 3:30 p.m. until 5:30 p.m. The Advisory Panel and the Scientific and Statistical Committee otherwise met concurrently with the Council on Thursday and Friday, June 23rd and 24th.

A closed session to discuss matters of a classified nature was held in the Hill Building, 632 6th Avenue, Room 808-809 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. on June 23rd. Council members, Advisory Panel members, Scientific and Statistical Committee members, and others with security clearances were in attendance. The Council reconvened to hear public testimony from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at which time the Council recessed for the day. The Council reconvened on Friday morning, June 24th, 1977, by Chairman Rasmuson at 9:00 a.m. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The provisional agenda for the Council meeting was approved and is included in Appendix B. The minutes of the May 26-27, 1977, Council meeting (which had been mailed out to all Council members) were deferred for comment and subsequently approved with corrections during the second day of the meeting (Appendix C).

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Executive Director, Jim Branson, presented his report which included the following (Appendix D):

- o That the Council had received a letter of credit for $305,400 which included Council administrative and operational costs and the $12,000 State of Alaska 'pass through' money. The total management plan expenditures to date were reported at slightly over $6,000. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game's (ADF&G) $60,000 management plan development contract with the Council was reported to have received no action from Washington. The contract however, had received approval from the State of Alaska Interim Legislative Budget and Audit Committee.

- o A report that the procurement standards approved at the last Council meeting had not been accepted by the NOAA grant officer, primarily because they lacked a 'conflict of interest' section.

  The Council then reviewed the Pacific Regional Council's 'conflict of interest' section. Concern was expressed that Council members would not be able to testify or participate in Council-related presentations after their termination with the Council. It was pointed out that this prohibition involvement dealt only with contractual or financial arrangements. The Council unanimously approved the motion accepting this 'conflict of interest' section as a part of the Council's regular procurement standards.

- o Resolution #1 from the North Pacific Fishery Management Council was presented: "To enroll the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and its employees and officers in the Public Employees Retirement System Participation Agreement and in the Public Employees Retirement System of Alaska. The Council was also asked to pay the retroactive fees into the Retirement Program from the original date of employment for each Council staff member. The total cost was estimated to be approximately $1,500, and in line with other Regional Council expenditures.

  The Council unanimously approved a motion which adopted this resolution and approved the retroactive payment for the retirement program.

- The second Council newsletter was reported mailed in June. It was also published in the June 10th issue of the Market News Report, NMFS.

  The Council's supplement to the Alaska Seas & Coasts magazine had also been published.

- Regarding staff travel: Mr. Branson attended the Optimum Yield Workshop in Houston, June 8th through June 10th and worked the following three days in Juneau. Mark Hutton, Assistant Executive Director, had spent June 15th through 17th in Juneau attending the Scientific and Statistical Committee meeting, and Judy Willoughby was scheduled to leave for the Administrative Officer's conference in Charleston, South Carolina on June 25th.

- The Council, SSC and AP were advised that arrangements had again been made for photographs to be taken of those Council members, SSC and AP members not photographed at the May meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Branson reported on the following communications.

a. A letter from R. A. Davenny and Associates to the Council indicating that the KMIDC/Davenny fishing venture expected to catch an estimated 130,000 metric tons of pollock and assorted by-catch in the Gulf of Alaska groundfish fishery in 1978.

b. A letter from Congressman Don Young to Secretary of Commerce Kreps on behalf of the Council endorsing the need to reconsider and reallocate the foreign catch of herring in the eastern Bering Sea in 1977.

c. A letter from the National Fisheries Institute to the Council formally opposing any sale of fishery products to foreign fishing vessels by U.S. vessels which would serve to circumvent the intent of the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (FCMA).

d. A letter from the Pacific Fishery Management Council to Secretary of Commerce Kreps transmitting their decision to reject a joint U.S./Russian proposal to catch and process hake.

e. A letter from the Outer Continental Shelf Environmental Assessment Program (OCSEAP) to the Council seeking an expression of Council interest in a symposium on problems related to the resources of Prince William Sound, the adjacent land areas and development (notably oil).

The need for a symposium and the probable related subjects were discussed in view of the Council's mandated duties and obligations. In general it was agreed:

(1) That the FCMA required management to the maximum extent of the range of the specie;

(2) That there were several species outside three miles that also inhabit the inside waters of Prince William Sound which were of interest to the Council;

(3) Oil transportation and pollution problems would be discussed and involved the offshore environment also.

The matter was referred to the Scientific and Statistical Committee for their review and recommendations on Friday.

After reviewing the matter, the SSC felt that the subjects to be discussed would be important and perhaps the Council should consider an endorsement.

f. A letter from United States Senator Ted Stevens to the Council indicating his support and request to NOAA to retain the R/V OREGON for fisheries work off Alaska.

g. A letter from Director Schoning to the Council regarding the proposed retirement of the R/V OREGON. The letter stated the OREGON was still scheduled for retirement; however, one additional month would be added to the vessel's survey time for 1977 and charter services (to replace the vessel) were guaranteed to be made available.

h. A letter from Alaska Shell, Inc., to Director Schoning, National Marine Fisheries Service, discouraging the development of the foreign processing industry to the detriment of U.S. industry.

i. The monthly Council memorandum from NMFS which contained reports on the observer program, foreign fishing activity, the U.S./Cuba agreement, policy guidance on Council operations, Advisory committee reorganization, fishery management plans, draft event schedules, Council members' terms of expiration, MAFAC, Optimum Yield Workshop, Atlantic States' Marine Fisheries Commission meeting, and the State Director's meeting. The memorandum also included reports from all eight Regional Councils.

j. A letter from U.S. Senator Ted Stevens to the Council supporting the Davenny/KMIDC joint pollock operation for 1978.

The matter was appreciated and the problems related [illegible] were discussed in view of the Council's extended duties and obligations. In general it was agreed:

(1) That the [illegible] standard management for the [illegible] throughout the range of the species;

(2) That there were several species outside these [illegible] the whole [illegible] of interest to the Council;

(3) Oil transportation and pollution problems [illegible] discussed and involved [illegible] offshore development also.

The matter was referred to the [illegible] and Statistical Committee for their review and recommendations [illegible].

After reviewing the matter, the SSC felt that the subject [illegible] discussed would be important and perhaps the Council [illegible] consider an endorsement.

[illegible] A letter from United States [illegible] to the Council [illegible] his support [illegible] the [illegible] for [illegible].

[illegible] A letter from Director [illegible] the proposed requirement [illegible] the [illegible] additional month [illegible] guaranteed to be made available.

[illegible] A letter from Alaska [illegible] National Marine Fisheries Service, [illegible] the [illegible] processing industry [illegible] U.S. [illegible].

[illegible] The [illegible] Council [illegible] reports on the [illegible] advisory [illegible] Council operations, [illegible] schedule, [illegible] Atlantic [illegible] Commission meeting, and the [illegible] Director's meeting. The memorandum also [illegible] eight Regional Councils.

[illegible] A letter from U.S. [illegible] regarding the [illegible] joint [illegible].

k. A letter from the National Research Council, Ocean Sciences Board, to the Council requesting information on the future direction that the International Decade of Ocean Exploration Research Program should take. The letter was referred for study and recommendation to the Scientific and Statistical Committee on Friday.

Regarding the NRC letter, Alverson told the Council that the SSC would prepare an indepth answer at a later time.

l. A letter from Mr. Saito, Consulate of Japan, to the Council relaying 1977 catch quotas agreed upon between Japan and the U.S.S.R. in the U.S.S.R. 200-mile fishing zone. The letter was found to contain different allocations than previously understood according to Mr. Price (Department of State) who promised a review of Mr. Saito's information and his own information and a correct accounting to the Council.

m. A memorandum from Schoning regarding the status of applications and foreign permits issued. The following fishing vessels and support vessels have been granted permits to fish off Alaska; 373 fishing vessels and 89 support vessels for Japan, 6 fishing vessels and 2 support vessels for Poland, 27 fishing vessels and 3 support vessels for South Korea, 4 fishing vessels for Taiwan, 74 fishing vessels and 56 support vessels for the Soviet Union.

n. A letter to Schoning from the Council Director regarding the events schedule for the development of management plans and environmental impact statements.

The letter stressed the need for concurrent EIS/MP review which would reduce, by at least 26 days, the NMFS event schedule, and the necessity to continue with the Council's existing time schedule, dates of public hearings, and implementation of plans. This letter and the events schedule for the development of management plans received considerable attention.

It was noted that the Council had neither received approval nor disapproval for its own events schedule for the development of management plans.

The Chairman stressed the importance of having two management plans in place by January, 1978, according to our schedule. Mr. McKernan (Councilman) complimented the letter written by Mr. Branson and felt the section relating to "real time management was very important."

Rear Admiral Hayes said he felt the Council events schedule was fundamental to the need for public input and that it actually satisfied the spirit and intent of the law. Mr. Brooks questioned any review of the preliminary drafts in

Washington, as these drafts were deliberately broad to encourage public review and comment. Mr. Rasmuson then instructed the Executive Director to send a letter to NOAA,

(a) reemphasizing our time constraints for the development of the management plans,

(b) the concurrent review periods, and

(c) suggested we advise the Department of Commerce after our plan has been approved.

That letter is appended (E).

OLD BUSINESS

Tanner Crab Report

Mr. Jack Lechner, of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) reported on the current status of the U.S. tanner crab fishery in the eastern Bering Sea (Appendix F). Approximately 50.5 million pounds of Tanner crab (primarily Chionoecetes bairdi) had been taken as of June 15th. He said an additional harvest would probably result from the anticipated development of the C. opilio Tanner crab fishery this summer as several processors have indicated an interest in buying the species.

Eighty-three U.S. fishing vessels fished Tanner crab in the Bering Sea, an increase of 17 from the 66 vessels registered in 1976. The report indicated that an additional 20 million pounds could probably have been harvested during the months of January and February when the uncertainties of the season prevented a major fishing effort. The processors in the Dutch Harbor area, Lechner said, could process 4.5 million pounds a week.

Endangered Species Legislation

The Council received a report from Kim White, NOAA Legal Counsel, that dealt with Endangered Species Legislation and its relationship to small halibut imports. The report was in response to a Council request at the May meeting to further investigate existing legislative alternatives to prohibit the import of small halibut from Japan and other countries.

The report indicated that halibut and other commercially desirable fish should not be placed on the endangered or threatened species list if they were expected to remain in

commercial use. In response to a question from Mr. Lokken who asked if halibut under ten pounds could be declared an endangered species, Mr. White said that size restriction for any species was not an acceptable criteria for the endangered list.

Dr. Alverson (Chairman of the SSC), from the audience, said that he hoped the Council would not place any species on the endangered and threatened list without (emphasis added) substantial evidence based on sound biological and ecological reasons. Mr. White was requested to report on the relevancy of the Black Bass Act to halibut imports at the next Council meeting.

Management Plan Review

The Council reviewed drafts of the fishery management plan and environmental impact statement for the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Fishery during 1978 and the environmental impact statement for the Tanner Crab Fishery Management Plan off Alaska. As indicated earlier, the plans had been extensively reviewed by the Advisory Panel, the Scientific and Statistical Committee and Council members.

The Chairman addressed the topic of public review on the management plans as there was a considerable diversity of opinion as to (1) what should be accomplished at the Council meeting regarding approval of the plans and (2) what should be accomplished at the public hearings regarding comment on the plans. The Chairman discussed the following criteria which he felt summarized the sense of all Council comments.

The management plans should contain all editorial and non-controversial changes suggested during this (Council) review process. It was noted that there were extensive lists of editorial and minor changes in the plan as suggested and reviewed by the staffs of various Council members and the Scientific and Statistical Committee and Advisory Panel. The management plans, Mr. Rasmuson said, should also contain every substantive change recommended by the Advisory Panel, the SSC or the Council, as Appendix items duly noted as to source.

In contrast to the argument that the Council would present a management plan which most closely represents its specific viewpoint on management of the species, it was generally agreed that the plan should not focus on one set of management alternatives and thus preclude from public comment the opportunity to discuss all options.

Strong support was presented for this method of public review in view of the experience of Pacific Council with their troll salmon plan and when the subsequent adoption of the management alternative not previously identified in the plan draft created considerable problem. Mssrs. McKernan, Hayes, Lokken, Rasmuson and Brooks in summation, concluded that the appending of all substantive changes would present to the public the best Council plan possible insofar as soliciting comment on alternative options.

Comments on the Tanner Crab Fishery off Alaska Management Plan

Dr. Alverson, Chairman of the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee, reported that the SSC had met in Juneau on June 15th and 16th to formalize their comments on the management plans. In summary Mr. Alverson said the SSC reviewed the rationale and supporting scientific data dealing with pot limits, exclusive registration areas, seasonal closures, the optimum yield established for Chionoecetes opilio and C. bairdi in the Bering Sea, size limits, and harvest guidelines for the Tanner Crab Plan. The SSC further reviewed the plan as it related to statistical reporting requirements, documentation of conclusions, new research direction, and the cost of management. In addition to numerous editorial changes, the following substantive changes were recommended by the SSC.

- The SSC noted that the exclusive area registration used in certain management areas could be in conflict with the 4th National standard inasmuch as it may tend to discriminate against portions of the U.S. fleet.

- The SSC observed that the use of pot limitations could potentially discriminate against certain vessel classes. However, the SSC noted the area of concern associated with directed pot levels was totally within the jurisdiction of the State of Alaska and hence did not apply to the area under the Council's jursidiction. The areas of non-directed pot limits should be addressed by the Council as regards the national standards.

- The SSC supported the concept of seasonal closures to minimize dead loss. Dead loss, defined as the aggregate of mortalities imposed by handling, releasing and carrying crabs to ports of entry. They recommended the factors influencing dead loss to be studied and quantified. The Committee also felt that where closure dates for tanner crabs are established for conditional factors, they apply when practical to both U.S. and foreign fishermen.

- The SSC noted that the OY for C. bairdi was set taking into account density profiles and market values for the U.S. fleet which may prove to be out of date by 1978, which may necessitate the adjustment of OY upwards for the domestic annual expected harvest to accommodate changes in the economic capability of the U.S. fleet to harvest at lower density levels.

- The SSC recommended a minimum size limit of 140 m,, 5.5 inches for C. bairdi, except for Prince William Sound (135 mm, 5.3 inches). The SSC felt this size limit constituted a conservative approach but was consistent with current management practices in Alaska.

- The SSC reported that their understanding of harvest guidelines was that they were not to be perceived as quotas but as operational ranges available for management during a particular season.

Mr. Keith Specking, Chairman of the Advisory Panel reported they had reviewed the Tanner Crab Management Plan and offered the following recommendations.

- That no foreign harvest of Tanner crab be permitted south of 59°, 39" North latitude. In addition, they recommended that the optimum yield for Chionoecetes opilio Tanner crab south of 58° 39" be determined by the anticipated U.S. harvest.

- They requested the $441 ex-vessel price used in calculating foreign fees be adjusted to $727 ex-vessel price to more currently reflect the market prices.

- The Panel recommended that whenever U.S. and foreign fisheries are being conducted in the same areas, management measures should be consistent for both U.S. and foreigners.

The Council members discussed the Tanner Crab plan and generally had the following comments.

Mr. Brooks commented on the use of harvest guidelines. He said that the Alaska Board of Fisheries in 1972 adopted the practice of using harvest guidelines to offer a flexible method for emergency and short-term fisheries management in dynamic fisheries. It was his opinion that the ability to regulate a fishery was contingent upon the flexibility allowed by utilizing harvest guidelines. Mr. Harville concurred with Mr. Brook's statement by re-emphasizing that the National FCMA guidelines specify the plans must be flexible.

Regarding the discussions on minimum size recommendations for Tanner Crab, the Council generally agreed with the

drafting team's recommendation that a minimum size range should be from 127 mm to 140 mm and that any selection in this range would provide a reasonable degree of protection for newly matured crabs and second molt mature crabs. Dr. Alverson, in commenting on the difference between the Northwest and Alaska Fisheries Center's recommendation and the Scientific and Statistical Committee recommendation, said that a minimum size limit could be as low as 123 mm and not 127 mm but told the Council that while the Center's best scientific determination was 123 mm it was the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee's recommendation that a value between 127 mm and 140 mm was acceptable.

Mr. McKernan questioned the goals and objectives of the management plan as they seemed to him different than those of the FCMA. He also questioned the need for the section on the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the section on State regulations.

The Council discussed in some detail the section dealing with 'adoption of existing State regulations'. Mr. Branson reminded the Council that the plan should not contain the section on State regulations. Admiral Hayes concurred by saying the Council should adopt a policy of not attaching regulations to the first preliminary draft of any management plan. He said that at the time regulations are attached there would still be ample opportunity for formal and informal public input. There were some differences of opinion as Mr. Brooks stated he felt the regulations should be included in the plan for the public hearings because, in his words, his experience in Alaska has indicated that the regulations are the most meaningful part of any plan and should have the widest opportunity for public comments. Mr. Bart Eaton was in agreement with that statement and expressed, from a fishermen's point of view, the importance of seeing the regulations in the management plan. Mr. Harville commented that the experience of the Pacific Council indicated that management plans should contain the guidelines of every available alternative without being too specific for public review.

In summarizing the Council's comments, the Chairman stated that the plan should contain the regulations for comment where appropriate and that in light of his previously stated position to include all editorial changes and append all substantive changes, he felt the regulations should be appended. Mr. Rasmuson also requested the following to become a part of the record.

(1) "That the Council authorizes the printing of the two management plans that have been presented to us, namely the Tanner Crab and the Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska with

these changes or additions.

(2) That the task forces that have developed the management plans should incorporate any changes that are simply improvements in the wording or presentation, but do not modify the basic facts that have been presented, or the options.

(3) That in addition, as an addendum to the plans go to the public hearings, the recommendations of the SSC, the Advisory Panel, and a recommendation from Mr. Meacham, having to do with options in the Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Plan that was introduced here at the Council be appended to the appropriate plans.

(4) That in addition, the portion of the tanner crab plan contains the regulations that have been followed by the State in the past be submitted, not in the body of the plan indicating that it is part of the plan, but rather as a special appendix, stating that these are the regulations that were in effect with respect to tanner crab by the State of Alaska during 1976, so everybody will know what those regulations have been."

COMMENTS RECEIVED ON THE GULF OF ALASKA GROUNDFISH FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR 1978

Dr. Alverson reported that the Scientific and Statistical Committee had reviewed the trawl plan and had requested further general clarification of (1) the methods of calculating equilibrium yield and its relationship to the allowable biological catch, (2) the nature of the options presented in the plan, (3) the need to address questions of consumer interest, (4) domestic allowable harvest calculations, (5) the inclusion of joint enterprise activities in the plan, (6) methods of handling latent fisheries development, (7) research needs, and (8) the potential need to establish a minimum size limit.

The SSC also had the following specific comments regarding the plan.

- The SSC felt that the Equilibrium Yield EY concept in the plan was unnecessary and that matters associated with year to year variation in recruitment and population size could be adjusted using Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC). They did not recommend removing EY from the plan.

- The SSC felt that the options presented in the plan were perhaps not really total extremes, but did require the Council to make a choice in favor of one fishery

vis-a-vis another. In this sense, the SSC felt that there were intermediate options that would allow for effective growth and development of trawl fisheries while minimizing impact on halibut and other non-target species. The Committee requested that the Management Team consider revision of the plans to achieve this goal but also suggested that such revision await comment on part of the Council.

- The SSC noted that the plan did not include any information dealing with the issue of consumer interests.

- The SSC expressed concern regarding the methods of estimating domestic annual harvest. In general, the SSC was satisfied that the best information available had been used but that it still did not represent the most accurate estimates possible of the expected growth of the U.S. industry.

- The SSC questioned the inclusion of the joint U.S./Korean enterprise as a part of the U.S. production plans.

- The SSC noted that the plan failed to incorporate research needs as required in the management plan outline.

- The SSC proposed that the management team study the desirability of establishing a minimum mesh size limit for the trawl fisheries operating in the Gulf. The drafting team was also requested to examine historical mesh size data on perch and other species to determine whether or not a mesh limitation would be desirable in this plan.

- The SSC generally favored the adoption of Option I.B.2. in combination with Option III.C.

The SSC felt that the plan in some ways failed to provide the information and/or reference material on which to make independent judgments concerning the various proposed strategies.

The Advisory Panel reviewed the groundfish management plan and had the following recommendations.

- In general terms they requested numbers of fish be converted to pounds for more meaningful comparisons.

- The Panel favored Option I.B.2. but also noted that on some species it would not be practical to hold 30 percent of the TAC in abeyance for mid-year allocation. The Panel expressed a preference for Option II.A.

- The AP discussed the increasing sablefish effort by the domestic commercial fishery and recommended the adoption of Option III.C.

The Council discussed the management plan and added only a suggestion by Mr. Meacham, a new Sub-Option I.B. to the plan.

As related to the various options, the Council did not wish to choose any of the options but rather leave all in for incorporation into the draft plan which the public will review.

FOREIGN PERMIT APPLICATION - REVIEW

The ad hoc committee studying foreign permit applications chaired by Mr. Keith Specking of the Advisory Panel, presented the following recommendations:

- That the permit requested by Poland for the M/S SOUGETA, flying the French flag, be withheld until a legal opinion is obtained on the question of allowing a support vessel in a fishery where the flag country has no allowable catch. Mr. Specking also said the Polish application had very sparse data with which to make the judgment.

  Mr. Rasmuson commented that the implications of selling fish to a vessel with a different flag affiliation than the catcher vessel had broad implications and required legal interpretation as to the desirability of such an arrangement. He strongly questioned the participation of a "fishing vessel" in an area where a flag vessel has neither a permit nor a GIFA.

  Mr. Price questioned which issue was of greatest concern to the Council: the fact that the vessel was a non-FCMA licensed vessel vis-a-vis French flag, or the fact that two different flag vessels were involved in the catching and processing?

  The Council, on this recommendation, moved that the permit be denied. The motion was carried.

- The committee reviewed the application for the ISE MARU #8, a Japanese snail pot boat (#JA-77-0869). The application had been received by phone and previously approved during the May meeting. The Council again accepted the recommendation to recommend approval of the permit.

- The committee recommended conditional approval for the KOTOKU MARU (#JA-77-1086) to process and receive raw fish only from vessels of same flag. The Council approved this conditional recommendation.

- The committee studied and recommended approval of the permit application for the KOHOKU MARU #7 (#JA-77-0870). The Council approved and recommended approval of this application.

- The Committee studied the application for a Polish vessel to fish in the northeast Pacific Ocean. Their recommendation was that the vessel should apply to the Pacific Council as the area of fishing was off the coasts of Washington and Oregon. The Council accepted this recommendation and recommended not approving the application.

The Council discussed the issue of approving permits with conditional restrictions. It was mentioned that recently permits had been approved with special conditions and that this practice should eliminate any chance of misinterpreting the Council's intent.

ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

Mr. Keith Specking, Chairman of the Advisory Panel, presented the formal AP report. He said the Panel had met on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings and had considered the following:

- A presentation by Walt Jones, NMFS, to consider priorities and to make recommendations for 1979 NMFS fisheries development programs and funding. An ad hoc working group of Mssrs. Jensen and Lauber, Jaeger and Lewis will be working with Mr. Jones to develop criteria and priorities for fisheries development programs.

- The Panel discussed the two management plans. Their comments are on page 9.

- Herring quotas were discussed for the eastern Bering Sea. The Panel adopted a recommendation "that the 1978 foreign allowable catch (FAC) for the Bering Sea herring fishery be reduced by 3,000 MT which was the 1977 U.S. commercial catch." Specking said the Panel also recommended that the total 1978 allocation be 7,000 MT and that there be no foreign fishery for herring east of 168° West Longitude.

- Concluding the Advisory Panel report, Ms. Carlene Welfelt was introduced to the Council and the audience. Ms. Welfelt is the newly appointed Advisory Panel member replacing Ms. Judith Ayres.

a. The committee recognized conditional approval for the [illegible] (DIA-77-1068) to process and market any fish only from vessels of [illegible]. **The Council approved this conditional recognition.**

b. The committee studied and recommended approval of the permit application for the [illegible] (DIA-77-0070). **The Council approved and recommended approval of this application.**

c. The Committee studied the application for a Polish vessel to fish in the northeast Pacific ocean. Their recommendation was that the vessel should apply to the Pacific Council as the area of fishing was off the coasts of Washington and Oregon. **The Council accepted this recommendation and recommended not approving the application.**

The Council discussed the issue of approving permits with conditional restrictions. It was mentioned that recently permits had been approved with special conditions and that these should eliminate any chance of misinterpreting the Council's intent.

ADVISORY PANEL REPORT

Mr. Ralph Spalding, Chairman of the Advisory Panel, presented the Panel AP report. He said the Panel had met on Wednesday, [illegible] and made the following:

o A presentation by [illegible] Jones, [illegible], to contract [illegible] to make [illegible] for [illegible] development programs and [illegible]. Mr. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] fish [illegible] development programs.

o The Panel discussed the two management plans. Their comments are on page [illegible].

o [illegible] were discussed for the [illegible]. The Panel adopted a recommendation that the [illegible] foreign allowable catch (TAC) for the [illegible] be [illegible] by 3,000 [illegible] which was the [illegible] commercial catch. [illegible] the Panel also recommended that the total 1978 allocation be [illegible] [illegible] [illegible].

o Concluding the Advisory Panel report, Mr. [illegible] was introduced to the Council and the audience. Mr. [illegible] is the newly appointed Advisory Panel member replacing [illegible].

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

Dr. Alverson, Chairman of the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee reported the Committee had met in Anchorage, Alaska on June 22nd, 1977 at Council headquarters. All members were present except Miles, Rogers, Rosenberg and Bevan. The major agenda items discussed were:

(1) The Scientific and Statistical Committee's recommendation to the Council regarding the tanner crab and trawl management plans.

(2) A review of the report prepared by the working group concerned with renegotiation of INPFC.

(3) Research Proposals.

(4) Discussion of the Houston Optimum Yield Workshop.

The SSC's comments regarding the tanner crab and trawl management plans can be found on pages 8 and 9.

Alverson reported that the SSC approved a draft report by the ad hoc committee studying the INPFC renegotiation. The report recommended three options to the Council.

(1) That the INPFC be superceded by a bilateral agreement between the United States, Canada and Japan dealing with the high seas salmon fishery of Japan.

(2) That with respect to groundfish resources fished by foreign nations within the U.S. Fishery Conservation Zone in the Pacific, the U.S. immediately begin to sponsor annual meetings involving all countries which have signed a Governing International Fishery Agreement, including Canada and Mexico if desired, to exchange data and review the status of stocks and research plans on species of mutual concern.

(3) That a new organization of wider membership than the INPFC be created to deal with (a) cooperative aspects of fisheries research, analysis and data exchange for the North Pacific, (b) all of their marine scientific research, analysis and data exchange affecting the North Pacific, (c) pollution monitoring in the North Pacific, (d) an exchange of data and analysis relating to the management of multiple use conditions and conflicts in the North Pacific.

The SSC next considered five research proposals which had been submitted for review and recommendation. The five proposals were:

(1) An Alaska Department of Fish and Game proposal for increasing the accuracy of forecasting runs and evaluating optimum escapement for Bristol Bay sockeye. The study would cost approximately $100,000 for the first year and is a three-year study.

(2) A University of Washington Fisheries Research Institute proposal for investigations on the continental origin of sockeye and coho salmon in the area of the Japanese landbased fishery. Total cost $45,500.

(3) A University of Washington proposal for scientific fisheries coordination in the North Pacific. Total cost $54,586.

(4) A groundfish management drafting team proposal to establish an observer program for the domestic trawl fishery. Total cost $146,228.

(5) An Alaska Department of Fish and Game proposal for development and enhancement of a fisheries information system costing $124,000 for the first year; $73,600 for the second.

In evaluating the proposals, Alverson told the Council that formal criteria should be developed on which to judge the proposals now and in the future. He said that the general feeling of the SSC was that Council supported research should be:

(1) Responsive to Council needs

(2) Timely

(3) Heavily prioritized

(4) That proposals should be clearly necessary for management plan development

(5) Short-term

(6) Be identified with some on-going plan development

The following recommendations were made with respect to the five proposals. Proposal #1 was recommended held in abeyance until next year, pending what action will need to be taken regarding high seas salmon fishing. Proposal #3 for the scientific coordination of fisheries in the North Pacific was not considered a high priority project and should also be held in abeyance.

The Scientific and Statistical Committee recommended three of the five proposals for funding, with highest priority to the ADF&G proposal for the development and enhancement of a fisheries information system. It gave its second priority to the University of Washington proposal for investigation of the continental origin of sockeye and coho salmon in the area of the Japanese landbased fishery. The third recommendation was for the ADF&G proposal for a domestic observer program which they felt should be scaled down to $50 or $60,000 for initial funding.

All proposals are appended.

Regarding the research proposals, Mr. McKernan, Chairman of the Council's ad hoc finance committee, reported that the committee had studied the SSC's recommendations and also were recommending that the Council approve these three proposals for funding. The motion was placed before the Council, seconded and unanimously passed.

Lastly, the SSC discussed the Houston Optimum Yield (OY) Workshop. Dr. Alverson said a final report was forthcoming and he generally thought the workshop was useful, especially in promoting OY as an evolving concept for a holistic approach to fisheries management. It was thought that the interpretation of OY would probably have to be non-universal, with each Council having special problems which would act differently as modifiers to OY.

The SSC also presented the Management Planning Teams with their individual editorial and substantive comments on each of the management plans.

The SSC reviewed two letters at the request of the Council: one dealing with the National Research Council (NRC) requesting information on long-term ocean science research, the other requesting Council endorsement of a symposium on the waters and surrounding land and water areas of Prince William Sound. Recommendations on these two items are found on page 4 and page 5 of these minutes.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The need for supplemental research proposals was discussed. It was generally felt that research proposals were needed in the area of the social and economic impact on the villages in the Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim area from commercial herring fishing, the various joint venture possibilities being proposed to the Council, and research into the herring population in the Bering Sea. The list was not to be considered exhaustive but merely a starting point for further research needs for the Council.

The Council unanimously approved a motion directing the Council staff, the SSC and members of the Council to develop requests for research proposals in these and other areas. (Four have subsequently been developed and are Appendix H.)

Mr. Lokken discussed the need for a joint/ventures research proposal with the upcoming hearings and added the proposals might have to be rewritten after the comments received at those hearings are evaluated.

Mr. McKernan emphasized that all research proposals should be developed only after consultation with all interested agencies and parties.

EVALUATION OF CURRENT U.S. HERRING CATCH

Mr. Brooks for Carl Rosier, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, presented a report (Appendix I) on the U.S. commercial herring fishery in the Bristol Bay area for 1977. He told the Council that preliminary information indicated that the total U.S. commercial and subsistence utilization of herring will exceed 3,000 tons from the Bering Sea stocks this year. Mr. Brooks reported that catch and effort data was incomplete at this time, but primarily purse seines were the most effective gear type for the herring operation. He said gillnets were not utilized because the catch composition in that gear included a substantial proportion of spawned out fish.

The Bering Sea PMP for the trawl fisheries provides an acceptable biological catch for 1977 of 21,000 metric tons. Of this amount the PMP estimated 1,000 metric tons would be needed by the U.S. subsistence fishery. With the increased U.S. commercial harvest and assuming the U.S.S.R. and Japanese fishery in November and December takes the remainder of the foreign allotment, the 1977 ABC will be exceeded.

Mr. Brooks told the Council that there were two options for the Council to consider: (1) a reduction in the foreign allocation of herring by the amount of the increased U.S. harvest on the November/December 1977 portion of the foreign

RESEARCH PROPOSALS

The need for supplemental research proposals was discussed. It was generally felt that research proposals were lacking in the area of the social and economic impact on the villages in the Noatak/Kivalina area from commercial herring fishing, the various joint venture possibilities being proposed by the Council, and research into the herring population in the Bering Sea. This list was not to be considered exhaustive, but merely a starting point for further research needs for the Council.

The Council unanimously approved a motion directing the research staff, the SSC and the members of the Council to develop proposals for research projects in these and other areas. [illegible] (see Appendix [illegible].)

Mr. Johnson discussed the need for a joint/venture research proposal with the upcoming meeting, and asked that the proposals might have to be rewritten after the comments received at these hearings are completed.

Mr. Tuckerman emphasized that all research proposals should be developed only after consultation with all interested agencies and parties.

EVALUATION OF THE U.S. HERRING FISHERY

Mr. Brooks for Paul Krasnowski, Alaska Department of Fish and Game, presented a report (Appendix D) on the U.S. commercial herring fishery in the Bering Sea for 1977. He told the Council that preliminary information indicated that the total U.S. commercial and subsistence utilization of herring was almost 3,000 tons from the Bering Sea stock this year. Mr. [illegible] reported that catch and effort data was incomplete at this time, but primarily purse seines were the most effective gear type for the herring operation. He said gillnets were not utilized because the catch composition in gill nets included a substantial proportion of spawned out fish.

The Bering Sea FMP for the trawl fisheries provides an acceptable biological catch for 1977 of 21,000 metric tons. Of this amount the FMP estimates 3,000 metric tons would be taken by the U.S. subsistence fishery. With the increased U.S. commercial harvest and assuming all of the U.S.S.R. and Japanese fishing in November and December takes the remainder of the foreign allotment, the 1977 ABC will be exceeded.

Mr. Brooks told the Council that there were two options for the Council to consider: (1) a reduction in the foreign allocation of herring by the amount of the increased U.S. harvest in the November and December 1977 fisheries of the foreign [illegible]

harvest, or (2) revision of the PMP for 1978 to accommodate the increased harvest by U.S. fishermen in 1977 and the projected U.S. harvest for the spring of 1978.

Both options, Brooks said, were biologically sound, however, the SSC and the ADF&G were suggesting that the least disruptive method would be to subtract the catch from the 1978 foreign allocation as the fishery occurs from November to May and a reduction there would have the same biological effect as a reduction in November and December, 1977. It was also noted that it would be much easier to change the foreign allowable catch for 1978 in the preparation of that preliminary management plan. Additionally, the expected increase in catch by the U.S. fishery could be accommodated simultaneously.

Mssrs. Meacham and Tillion both indicated that the OY in either case would be exceeded for 1977. The question of developing management plans by calendar year and/or biological year was discussed. Generally, the Council concluded the biological cycle of herring would not be affected by either alternative.

The arguments for amending the 1978 FAC rather than the 1977 FAC were considered technically incorrect and potentially capable of setting inconsistent precedences by Mr. Tillion and McKernan. However, most Council members felt the biological consequences were minimal.

The potential for other winter fisheries raised the general question of whether or not to continue allocations on a calendar year or biological year basis.

The Council unanimously approved a motion "to recommend reducing the foreign allowable catch for 1978 for herring in the Bering Sea because of the increased domestic catch in 1977 and the expected increase in 1978."

JOINT VENTURE PUBLIC HEARINGS

Mr. Rietze reported on the June 17th notice in the Federal Register to advertise public hearings to discuss joint ventures between the U.S. commercial fishery and foreign processors. He reported that the public hearings could be either (1) sponsored by NMFS separately, (2) the NMFS and Council jointly, or (3) the Council separately. The Pacific Council had already voted to sponsor the public hearings jointly with NMFS. Mr. McKernan moved that the North Pacific Council jointly sponsor the public hearings on joint ventures with the NMFS and that these public hearings should coincide with the Council's Management Plan Public Hearings. It was seconded and unanimously carried.

The format of joint hearings was discussed. Mr. Rasmuson suggested (1) the Executive Summary for the plans be presented at that time and (2) that witnesses be allowed to speak to all subjects; joint ventures, Gulf of Alaska trawl fishery and Alaska tanner crab fishery plans in the same meeting.

MANAGEMENT PLAN PUBLIC HEARING DATES

The Council discussed the location and dates of the public hearings for the Tanner crab and Gulf groundfish management plans. The Council scheduled public hearings for the following places: Anchorage, Seattle, Petersburg, Sand Point and Kodiak, on the following schedule:

August 3rd, Petersburg
August 5th and 6th, Seattle
August 22nd, Anchorage
August 23rd, Sand Point
August 24th, Kodiak

It was agreed that at least one Council member would attend each public hearing. It was assumed that most Council members would attend the public hearings in Kodiak and Anchorage and that public hearings will also be attended by at least two Council staff and one management plan drafting team member, and as many SSC and AP members as wish to come.

INPFC REPORT

Mr. Carl Price announced that on July 11th and 12th in Anchorage, a meeting of the American Section of the INPFC would be held. He said that August 8th through the 15th in Seattle had been scheduled for the INPFC renegotiation. Mr. Rasmuson stated for the record that as Chairman of the American Section of the INPFC, he had not received formal notification of either meeting. He also requested the Department of State consider the INPFC July 11 and 12 and August 8 - 15 dates as "meetings" and to fund INPFC Advisory Panel's attendance.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE FCMA

The Council considered the proposed amendments to the FCMA recommended by the New England Regional Fishery Management Council. In general, the Council's opinions were summarized by Mr. McKernan who restated the desire to wait a full year before suggesting changes to the FCMA. Mr. Meacham concurred and Mr. Rasmuson again suggested that we relay our preference for waiting a full year before commenting.

[illegible] PLAN PUBLIC [illegible] NAVY

[illegible] proposed the [illegible] and Chief of the [illegible] meeting [illegible] and Chief [illegible] Navy [illegible] Public [illegible] Navy [illegible] Public [illegible] Navy [illegible] Public

NMFS REPORT ON FOREIGN FISHING ACTIVITY

Mr. Ron Naab, Chief of Enforcement, National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Region, presented a report on the foreign fishing activity off Alaska.

He said that in June they had seen a continuation of the trend to reduced numbers of foreign fishing vessels off Alaska. Naab said a total of 639 individual foreign fishing and support ships were fishing off Alaska during June. (20 Soviet, 612 Japanese, 6 South Korean and 1 Tiawanese). This was an increase of 302 from the past month and a decrease of 120 from June 1976.

Mr. Naab drew particular attention to the decline in Soviet activity as 68 fewer vessels were off Alaska than in June 1976. The Soviet effort was limited to two areas: northwest of the Pribilofs and along the western Aleutians.

The Japanese effort off Alaska had continued to increase this month, with nearly three hundred more vessels off Alaska than any previous month. He said most of the increase resulted from the arrival of the Japanese high seas salmon fleet. The increase also reflected a need to compensate for the reductions in catch allotted Japan in the Soviet 200 mile zone. The Japanese groundfish trawl effort continued to be the largest foreign fishing effort off Alaska. The major effort, was along the continental shelf edge in the eastern and central Bering Sea where six factory ships and 86 accompanying trawlers, and 66 individual stern trawlers fished, mainly for pollock. The effort along the central and western Aleutians remained extremely high with 104 stern trawlers dragging for greenland turbot, arrowtooth flounder, and Pacific Ocean perch.

The first Japanese snailpot boat began fishing the central Bering Sea in June.

The Japanese tanner crab fishery continued near the Pribilofs. In early June, one fleet moved back into Area A near the Pribilofs and fished nine more days to complete its share of the quota for that area. That fleet had originally moved from Area A to Area B without catching its quota. The Area A quota of 2,500 metric tons was filled June 14th and the area ordered closed by the Secretary of Commerce. Two fleets are now in Area B south of the Pribilofs. Catches in Area B through June 21 totalled almost 5,000 metric tons, leaving a balance of 650 metric tons to be caught to fill the quota in Area B. At the present catch rate Area B is expected to close on June 29th. With the closure of the southeast Bering Sea the remaining Japanese quota of 4,400 metric tons must come from north of 59°N. latitude and west of 173° W longitude. Japanese regulations have allotted a

[illegible]

quota of 2,727 metric tons for the independent pot boats west of 175° W longitude and the balance of 1,673 metric tons by the motherships fleets west of 173° W longitude. It is anticipated that the factory ship fleets will remain between 173° W and 175° W to avoid conflict with the independent crab pot boats. If the mothership fleets catch rates remain about the same as in Area B, it would take approximately 21 days to reach the quota west of 173° W. If the fleets move to the area by July 1 after the June 29th closure of Area B, the quota could be taken by July 22nd.

Eleven independent crab boats started fishing in late May southwest of St. Matthews in the triangle area.

Six NMFS biological observers were on board reporting daily catches. Through June 21st the boats had taken slightly over 1,000 MT tons and at the current rate will harvest the remaining 1,700 MT of the quota in 38 days.

Nineteen Japanese longline vessels were in the Gulf of Alaska fishing sablefish. 2,550 MT of the 3,750 MT quota for S.E. Alaska had been taken. 3,200 MT of the total quota of 10,150 MT for the Gulf of Alaska have been caught. At the current level of effort the balance of 7,000 MT tons could be taken by November.

The Republic of South Korea has six vessels fishing off Alaska: four long liners fishing sablefish in the Gulf of Alaska, one long liner in the Central Bering Sea and one stern trawler in the eastern Bering Sea north of Unimak Pass.

Naab told the Council that after some initial delays NMFS had all foreign catch statistics from March and April. He said they were cross checking with our reported catch data to determine discrepancies. Data is being recorded by INPFC areas and checked by applying average daily catch data to determine estimated catches. Naab said that boarding reports, observer reports, and statistics from foreigners were all serving to crosscheck the catch estimates. He reported that generally all systems seem to be working quite well.

Mr. Meacham requested the summary of all catches be made available to the Council. Mr. Rietze indicated this could be done.

Mr. McKernan offered his congratulations for the outstanding job of reporting and monitoring that the National Marine Fishery Service had done.

Mr. Naab reported that the Japanese gillnet catch of herring in the eastern Bering Sea by six vessels had harvested between 560 and 570 MT of the 1,000 MT allocated to that fleet by the Japanese GIFA.

U.S. COAST GUARD REPORT

Rear Admiral J.B. Hayes told the Council that there was nothing significant to report about violations for the month of June. He said that foreign fishing activity off Alaska was in almost total compliance with all of the regulations. He said the only problems incurred were very minor misunderstandings.

The Admiral told the Council that the Coast Guard was spending an inordinate amount of cutter time on very specialized fisheries. He cited as an example that one cutter, which normally would board 2 to 5 vessels per day, had been stationed to watch one or two vessels in the herring fishery in Bristol Bay. He said that the Coast Guard, because of this, would not be able to fully utilize patrol capabilities in the other fisheries.

He also reported that he had signed a letter, (Appendix J) which represented a joint effort between the Coast Guard and the National Marine Fisheries Service, which discussed joint ventures. The Admiral told the Council that this was a matter of utmost urgency for the Council to discuss and rule on as it related directly to his ability to enforce fishery regulations off Alaska.

MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSIONS FUNDING NEEDS

Mr. John Harville, Executive Director of the Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission, discussed a proposal from Director Schoning to provide each Marine Fisheries Commission with $10,000 per Council served. Funded through NMFS the money would be used for internal staff assistance in PMFC to permit their full participation in Council activities. The level of funding for the Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission would be $20,000 for work with two Councils.

The Council unanimously approved a motion to endorse this funding request and recommend to NMFS that $20,000 be granted to Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission.

FEE SCHEDULE FOR FOREIGN FISHING IN 1978

The Council examined a proposed fee schedule for foreign fishing in 1978 as prepared by NMFS. The fee schedule had been mailed June 10 from Washington, D.C. with Council

[illegible]

response requested by July 15th, 1977. In light of short time for response Mr. Rasmuson stated emphatically that the Council needed more lead time. He offered two alternatives for the short time for Council response: (1) cut NMFS review time or (2) adopt our own ad hoc study committee and establish the policy ourselves.

The fee schedule was discussed as it related to the use of current market prices as opposed to 1975 and 76 prices and the use of prices on foreign markets for some species. Chairman Rasmuson then ruled that a letter be written outlining this Council's opinions as stated above.

Mr. Rasmuson suggested the National Marine Fisheries Service be requested, in letter, to (1) use the telecopier to get information to us faster, (2) be reminded of our time schedule for meetings and the way they relate to management plan development, (3) be reminded of our time schedule as it relates to the July 15th deadline, (4) be reminded that the public hearings which will be held in August will probably answer some of these questions.

Mr. Rietze stated that he felt the intent of the memorandum was very preliminary and the intent was to get this Council's initial reaction.

The Council unanimously approved a motion to cancel the regularly scheduled July Council meeting.

CLOSED MEETING

The Council met in closed session with members of the Scientific and Statistical Committee and Advisory Panel (all of whom had security clearances) to hear matters of a classified nature regarding United States/Canadian negotiations and the renegotiation of the International North Pacific Fishery Convention.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Preceding the public comments, the Chair brought up correspondence he had received from interested parties regarding Council rationale for allowing public comments. The letters expressed different points of view and suggested ways of improving public input into the Council business.

The Chairman stated that the public hearing portion of the Council meeting was not really a "hearing" per se, and certainly not a forum for rebuttal between speakers. The due process of the Council operations, allows public comment on any subject (a) directly related, (b) indirectly related, or (c) not related to business before the Council. Mr. Rasmuson further stated that he did not expect public comment to be a running commentary on the agenda or audience discussion of ongoing Council business.

Mr. Thomas Casey, Manager of the United Fishermen's Marketing Association of Kodiak spoke on the availability of U.S. fishing vessels to fish pollock in the Gulf of Alaska. He stated that he had found, in researching the Export/Import United States Bank Loan records, that Mr. Shim (Korean Marine Industrial Development Corporation) had purchased 50 United States shrimp trawlers, each 75 feet long, from Bender Boat Works in Mobile, Alabama. He said these boats would utilize foreign crews and that in his opinion the Council should obtain a ruling and establish policy on the use of foreign crews on these foreign owned U.S. vessels in the fishery.

Mr. Ed Furia, legal counsel representing the New England Fish Company, commented on the Pacific Council's meeting as it related to the utilization for foreign crews on U.S. bottoms. He also discussed the Federal Register notice of June 17th and foreign processing ships accepting fish from any fishing boat. Mr. Furia also commented on the need to rewrite the environmental impact statement if either the domestic catch or the foreign catch exceeded the preliminary management plan figures.

Mr. Harold Sparcks testified on behalf of the natives of the Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim (AYK) region of western Alaska. He dealt with the need for further investigation into the social and economic impacts of an accelerated herring fishery in western Alaska and of the AYK need to protect salmon resources as they were being exploited by the Japanese high seas fishery.

Mr. R. A. Davenney (of Davenny and Associates) testified on the KMIDC proposal. Mr. Davenny said that the KMIDC proposed to take 130,000 MT of pollock in the Gulf of Alaska in 1978. He said he hoped to use 30 boats which would catch 600 tons of pollock per day for 217 days. He stated that this project expected to put 20 million dollars into the commercial fishing economy and that he had no intention of utilizing boats outside Alaska for this fishery.

When questioned, he agreed to a U.S. observer on board and indicated their by-catch might include 10 percent or 13,000 tons of species other than pollock.

Mr. Ed Naughton, (past manager of the Kodiak Shrimp Trawlers) announced he was now a private fisheries consultant for the Korean Marine Industrial Development Corporation. He reemphasized that the KMIDC proposal would utilize Alaskan fishing boats (first).

Mr. Bob Ely, legal consultant for KMIDC discussed a Christian Science Monitor and a Fish Boat Magazine article relating to the purchase by Mr. Shim of 50 Bender shrimp boats. He said the boats were currently under contract in South America fishing shrimp and could not at this time, without a legal ruling and a change in their loan structure, fish in the United States.

End of Comments.

There being no further business before the Council, the meeting was adjourned.

8-4-77

Mark -

what is to be done
with this sheet?

Florence

Mark - page 11 of the minutes

June 23, 1977
Lee Alverson

I

"I feel quite strongly about this question and hope that this Council will not in any way allow itself to be brought into a position of proposing that a species be put either in an endangered or threatened position unless there is some very sharp biological or ecological (?) evidence to support such a conclusion, because otherwise I think you're putting a species in a legal definition which is much different than a biological interpretation of threatened and endangered and is likely to have a very poor consequence as to the fishing industries of the Pacific Nortwest both for this species and other species, so I hope you would support that only on the basis that any such evidence - break in tape -

very intent by even a complete uncontrolled fishery has shown no evidence of being threatened although certainly this stock size is substantially lower than they were in earlier years. I think you're leading yourself into a very dangerous situation by even getting involved in discussing the concept of this from a standpoint of threatened or endangered species.

Mark 8-3-77

This is
From which meeting?

Florence

[Read from prepared text]

~~Question: You said your first trial will be in May?~~

Question: You said your first trial will be in May?

Answer: Yes.

Question: What will you do with pollock?

Answer: We'll probably use it for crab bait or (fish reduction).

Question: What sort of price are you predicting?

Answer: We haven't projected a price yet. We will have to contact KMIDC first. They will have to determine how much we can pay for pollock.

Question: You said you're going to harvest about (150,000 or 130,000 metric tons) and you expected that to generate $1,500,000 worth of income?

Answer: I said 130,000 is what we're proposing to catch.

Question: Sir do you consider this vessel which the American boats deliver to as having to require a permit?

Answer: I don't know.

Comment: I interpret the law as meaning this vessel will be interpreted as a fishing vessel and therefore will require a permit. So I presume that will mean some modification of the present fishing vessel permits that the Koreans have at the present time.

Question: Secondly, do you consider that the Koreans will deliver their catch to this vessel as well as American fishermen. That is, will Korean fleets in the area as well as domestic fishermen or just domestic fishermen deliver to your processor?

Question: You said your direct trawl will be in May?

Question: You said your direct trawl will be in May?

Answer: Yes.

Question: What will you do with pollock?

Answer: We'll probably use it for our bait or fish reduction.

Question: What sort of price are you predicting?

Answer: We haven't projected a price yet. We will have to contact KMIDC first. They will have to determine how much we can pay for pollock.

Question: You said you're going to harvest about 130,000 or 130,000 metric tons and you expected also to generate $1,500,000. worth of income?

Answer: I said 130,000 is what we're proposing to catch.

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Answer: I don't know.

Comment: I interpret the law as meaning this vessel will be interpreted as a fishing vessel and therefore will require a permit. So I presume that will mean some modification of the present fishing vessel permits that the Koreans have at the present time.

Question: Secondly, do you consider that the Koreans will deliver their catch to this vessel as well as American fishermen. That is, will Korean fleets in the area as well as domestic fishermen or just domestic fishermen deliver to your processor?

Answer: Just from the American fleets.

Question: Would it be only pollock or would it be substantial quantities of other species involved.

Answer: Pollock is the prime fish and of course we both know that there is going to be a side catch of some, hopefully small.

Question: Does the plan contemplate that you will furnish the gear to the American fishermen?

Answer: When we say furnish the gear, there has been talk that the nets will be brought over with the mother ship, but the nets will be paid for by the American fishermen and we don't even know that , we don't know which is the best net to use.

Question: Mr. Devanny, this processing vessel will be anchored or be drifting at sea, correct?

Answer: Right.

Question: Why can't the Koreans come into U.S. ports and pick up their pollock there? Why does it have to be at sea and if so, what is the difference from an economic standpoint between the two types of operations?

Answer: Now, are you talking about a process in local plants?

Question: I'm talking about the landing let us say, of pollock by U.S. vessels in a U.S. port after it is unloaded in a U.S. port then it can easily be processed there or the Koreans can buy it in unprocessed form.

Answer: Well I can't answer you the amount of dollar difference of bringing the pollock into port, unloading it, loading it on and taking it out to a factory ship, but I would be very concerned with the spoilage by the time I got there.

Question: Your part now, the fishermen would sell to you and you would sell to the Koreans but this would be sort of a paper transaction. What service do you perform let us say, in this arrangement?

Answer: Well, I am the exporter and there has to be one person that kind of takes the bull by the horn and make this whole project go and that's me, or my company.

Question: Mr. Chairman, since this is a public part of the meeting would it be appropriate to ask a very brief question, a couple of questions?

Answer: No, this is not a public participation ~~and~~ in discussion. This is a public hearing before this Council, if we should do what you suggest I'd loose all control and somebody else better come up here.

Question: Mr. Chairman, I have one or two more questions.

Question: Mr. Devanny, how many vessels do you anticipate will operate in this fishery? (Fishing Vessels?) (Yes)

Answer: ~~I'd say about~~ I would think around 30 but that hasn't been determined and

won't be determined until after we make some assessment fishing costs.

Comment: I see.

Question: And did I understand that these will operate as ~~blow~~ trawls, that is, two boat trawls?

Answer: I'd didn't say.

Question: No, no, you didn't but I 'd heard that.

Answer: They won't be pair trawls, not to my knowledge, they'll be single boat trawls.

Question: Are diny seins involved?

Answer: You're getting over my head because I'm not a fishermen I'd don't know what a Danish trawl is.

Question: Is the 30 boat fleet that you talk about, is that about the maximum number with the appropriate power and so forth your understanding or not?

Answer: That is an estimation.

Question: Of the maximum fleet that would be available?

Answer: Probably.

Question: In the area where the ships would be?

Answer: Oh its about 30, to the best we know now.

Question: Mr. Chairman, I have one last question. In your presentation you said "I am confident it will lead in the future to an American Owned fishing industry from ship to shore based processors." I'm a little bit uncertain as to how it will benefit a shorebased processor if this arrangement succeeds, why will they then change to shore-based rather than processor based at sea?

Answer: This is strictly my opinion. In the first place you happen to have a market before you can make an operation succeed. I think we're going to show the way of how this is done and I for one, really hope that the American fishing industry will finance the plan to process pollock on shore and the American fishing industry will double or triple or quadriple the amount of money they can get out of the pollock harvest, and I think this is absolutely a way to have it done. But you have been having pollock swim out there for a million years and you haven't harvested it at all. This is just an iterim means of getting something to the Americans that you're giving away. This is the problem, why not get half a loaf of bread instead of none.

Question: What you're proposing here can be done by anyone else with reference to other species of fish, in other words, if this succeeds then we already have a proposal in the Pacific Council on hake, this one here on pollock, what's to prevent

someone else from bringing mother ships into our fisheries zone and pick up fish from the U.S. fishermen, where does this leave ~~or~~ ON processing?

Answer: ~~By~~ Buy (?) halibut out there.

Sure

OTHER SIDE OF TAPE

Answer: I think there's a time that you can take your shore based plants and utilize the allotment given to foreign nations This Council should be making plans to start a factory ship right out in the water. This is my sincere belief. You made a 200-mile limit, you ought to be able to limit what you do with the fish in it.

Question: Realistically, when do you expect that processor to be over here.

Answer: I would think around 60 days.

Question: It seems to me that you've got to get their act together in an awful hurry to get it here in 60 days because you presently don't know who the American fishermen are, the gear isn't here, there hasn't been any exploratory fishing done, there may still be problems with customs and immigration it's going to certainly take a little time to develop the

regulations that would be necessary to control the U.S. fishermen, there are so many things that are going to have to fall together it just didn't seem to me realistic that you could expect to be here that soon.

Taxes

Answer: I'm sure that you have much broader knowledge of this than I do and my forecast might be all wet, I hope not, but we're struggling with that.

Question: Mr. Chairman, I hate to ask but there are two or three things that have been raised. What is the question of taxes? Our fishermen would be catching this fish outside of State waters, and would be delivering them to a foreign flat vessel on the high seas, the zone is the high seas, so there would be no taxation, I suppose, levied on the catch of those fish, is that correct.

Answer: I don't know.

Comment: I would think that I'm correct about that.

Comment: Oh not if Mr. Devanny sells it, because he'll be selling it at a profit, he'd have to pay the tax on it.

Comment: Now, if those fish don't come into U.S. waters, I'm not sure, I'm not trying to (you mean the delivery isn't) They're catching the fish outside of three miles of course, the territorial sea, and they're being delivered on the high seas, and so I guess

there would be a question in my mind, would there not?

About 3 1/2 percent, on the license that he has to get from the government wouldn't he have to pay the 3 1/2 percent of the fair market price?

No, because they're not foreign caught, they're U.S. caught you see. Now, the other thing of course is that obviously this should lead with good entrepreneurs to taking king crab, tanner crab, and salmon in the same way. I would see no reason whatsoever if this were successful and profitable I would think that such floaters, this by the way occured some years ago in pacific sardines, some of us are old enough to remember the floater problems in California, but I should think could, if its efficiently operated with foreign fleets and foreign labor replacing our shore plants generally, would it or could it not?

Clem: No, we've sold our salmon directly to Japanese vessels both in Cook Inlet and Prince William Sound and the Yukon Kuskiowim. We still have this legal under federal law, but our state is not going to allow a vessel registered under the laws of this state to sell to operate out there unless there is no shore facilities capable of handling it. We have invited the Japanese in when our shore canneries could not handle the salmon. They were not invited in during the normal run. I don't think that we as a Council or my state is going to stand by and watch it go to offshore processing when there are onshore plants ready

and willing to take the pack, but we're not, we can't make a permanent management plan in less than 120 days so therefore, we're not going to be regulated in this first year. They're legal under the law. We better be taking a look at it, you're right, but I can , you know I don't doubt at all that when there are american processors available on shore, you know shore plants, we will be encouraging it and there are several ways to make sure its done.

Time is running on here and I'm going to make a comment which I hope the Council will agree with me on, I think technically the Council does not have jurisdiction of this matter at the present time. The Preliminary Management Plans have to do with foreign fishing only and we're, this is domestic fisheries. It is a problem though of great concern I think, to not only Alaska but to the State of Washington and presumably other areas. I think that it's something that we have to consider and be studying we'll know a lot more as this year goes by. I think your adminition is well taken as a practical fishery manager, Jim, but we've got a job to think of.

tjat

that we've got a job to take 130,000 pounds this season, but we will know more later on and certainly this question will come up when we've had more input on it, I hope that you will agree with me that this is a mute question as far as this Council at this meeting, but not later on.

Mr Chairman, I just wanted to say that I do think that the

Council does have a legitimate responsibility here, because these vessels are fishing vessels as defined by the law, and the management plan itself and the Council's responsibilities to carry out the policies under the law, at least as I interpret them make this a question that the Council should comment on and should make recommendations on at some appropriate point, I don't argue...

Well, I would think the State Department might have a problem if they have granted licenses for x number of Korean vessels and then new vessels want to come in this year, but I didn't think that was our Council's problem.

In regard, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask one question from Mr. Devanny. What action if any, either by your company or by your contacts in KMIDC, has been taken to ascertain the availability of a permit, for the processing vessel which you propose to have in the area. Have you received any assurances that such a permit would be made available.

Answer: No we haven't we have written the State Department my attorney has, inquiring whether the vessel even needs one.

Comment: Oh it definitely will need a permit, there's no question.

I don't know if it does or we'll have to

I don't think there's any question at all but what the vessel will be required to have a permit. I think the law is abundantly clear on this point. I ask because my office of the State Department is the one which receives all permits applications and all inquiries related thereto and to date, now I left my office on Thursday to start up here, I had not seen anything that looked like it represented an application or an inquiry on an application for such a vessel.

Answer: Well, I'll have a copy of the letter to you tomorrow.

Of course it does take some time to process.

.....maybe it will speed things up a little bit to give you a copy.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Can we go on to another witness. Thank you Bob.

I just want to thank you for your time gentlemen, I can here merely for information

We will ccnsider this in the future I'm sure.

UNITED STATES KING AND TANNER CRAB FISHERY IN THE EASTERN BERING SEA, 1976

by Jack Lechner and Paul Tate
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

KING CRAB FISHERY

Description of the Fishery

The 1976 United States fishery for king crab in the "eastern Bering Sea" encompasses the area north of the latitude of Cape Sarichef and east of the International Date Line by INPFC description (Fig. 1). This fishery is further described by the State of Alaska as all waters of the Bering and Chukchi seas north of the latitude of Cape Sarichef (54° 36' N. lat.) including all tributary bays, except Bechevin Bay and Isanotski Strait south of a line from Chunak Point to Cape Krenitzen. The Bering Sea is managed as statistical area "Q" for king crab and is one of the three non-exclusive king crab registration areas of the State. Thus, any vessel may fish area "Q" regardless of other statistical area registration.

The Bering Sea king crab fishery harvests two species. The major fishery is dependent upon the red king crab Paralithodes camtschatica, and is conducted in the Bering Sea and Bristol Bay waters north of Unimak Island and the Alaska Peninsula from Cape Sarichef to Port Heiden. In 1973, the U.S. king crab fishery expanded to the Pribilof Islands, where primarily blue king crab P. platypus are harvested (Fig. 2).

U.S. Historical Development of the Fishery

United States fishermen began taking king crab in the Bering Sea with trawling gear in 1947. Catches were small and catch statis-

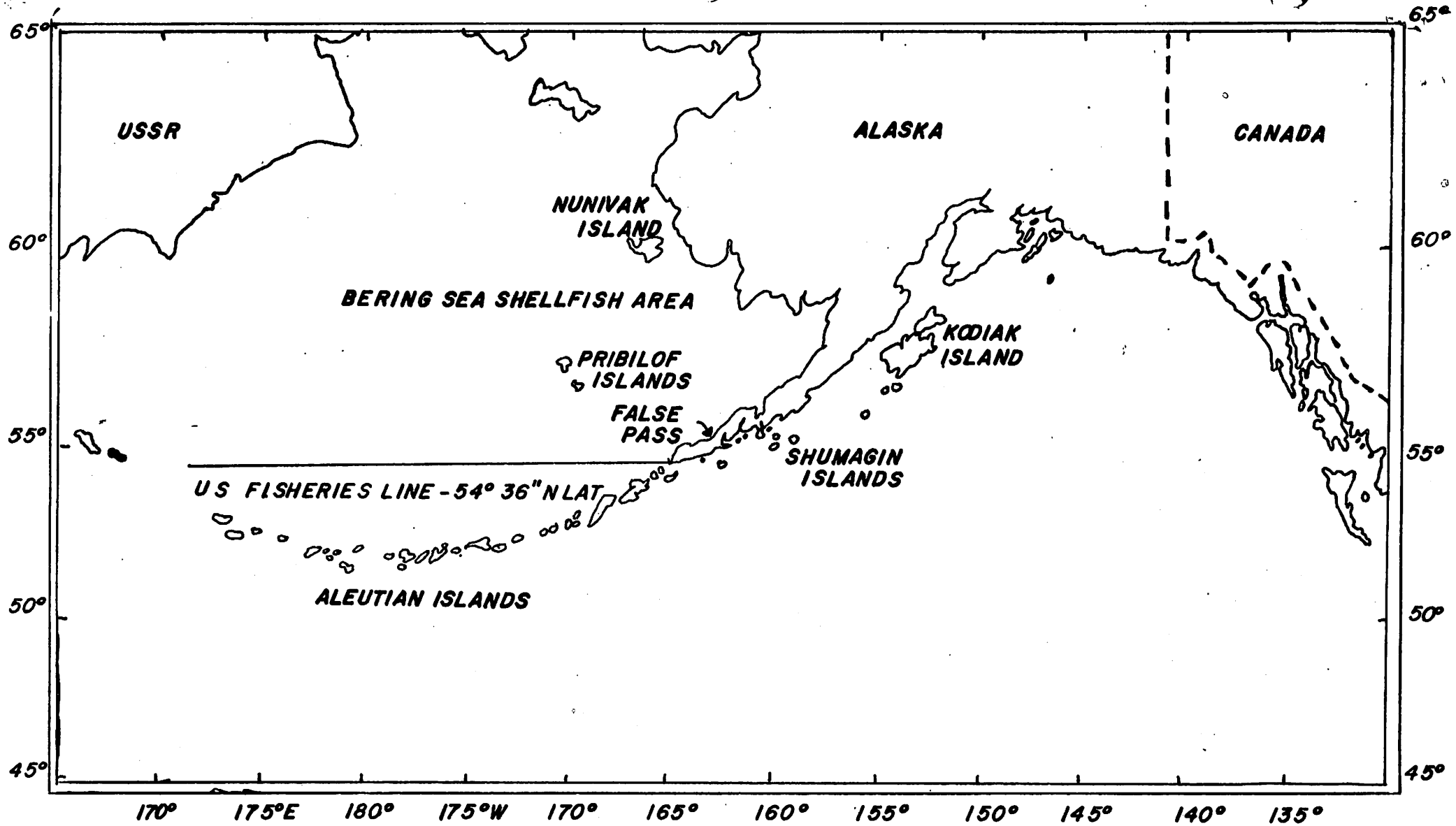

FIGURE 1-- DELINEATION OF AREA AVAILABLE TO UNITED STATES CRAB FLEET IN THE EASTERN BERING SEA.

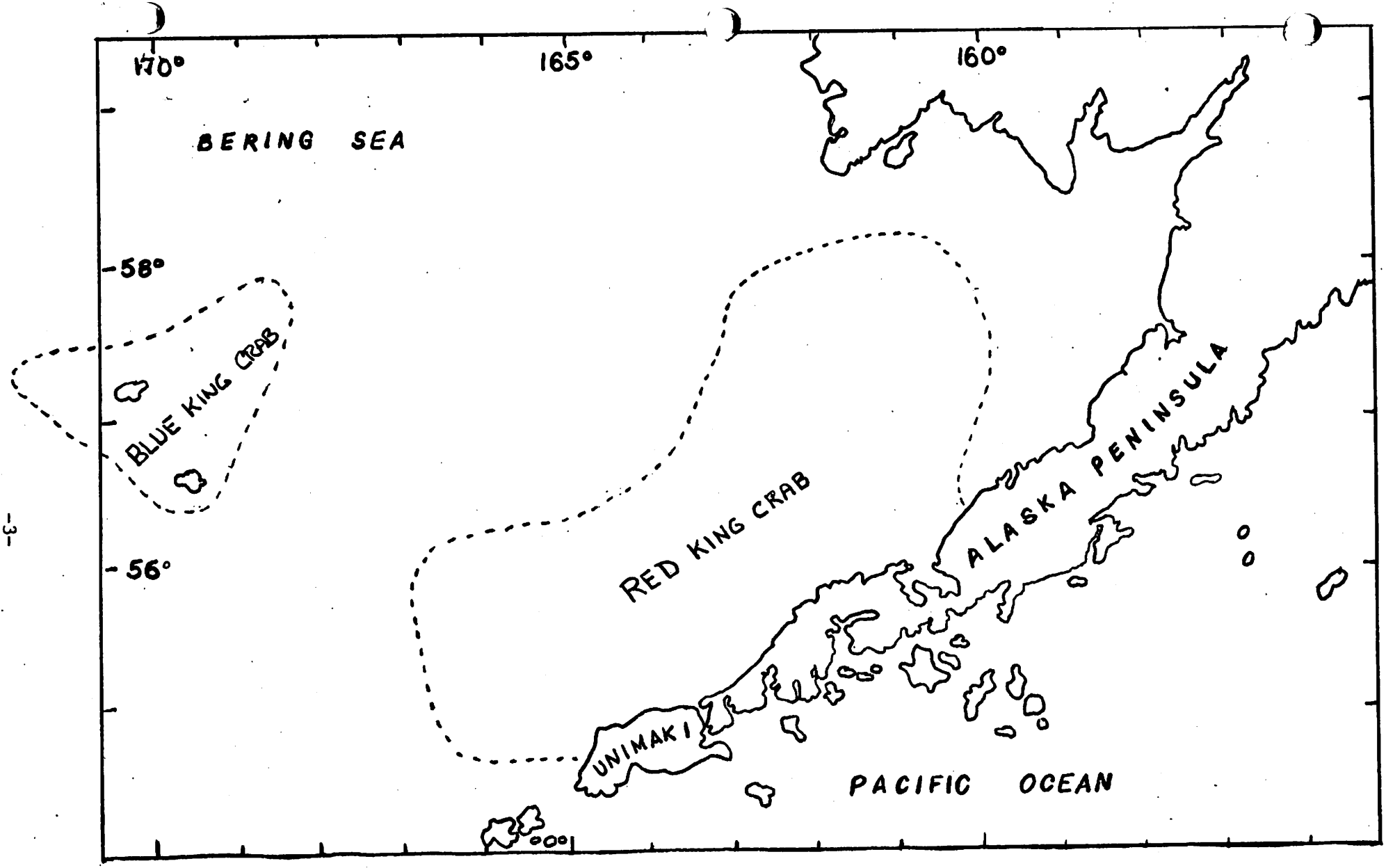

FIGURE 2. PRIMARY AREAS OF DISTRIBUTION OF THE TWO SPECIES OF KING CRAB IN THE EASTERN BERING SEA.

tics were unreliable prior to 1953. In 1953, the catch was nearly 3 million pounds (1361 metric tons). There was a gradual decline in catch and effort until 1959, when no king crab were taken by U.S. fishermen because available markets were filled by the rapidly growing fisheries around Kodiak Island and the south side of the Alaska Peninsula in the Gulf of Alaska. A series of fluctuating low U.S. catches followed through 1966 and foreign harvest increased during this period (Table 1). The present-day U.S. king crab fishery began in 1967 when interest in the Bering Sea was renewed as the size of crab vessels increased and catches began declining in other U.S. king crab fisheries. From 1967 through 1975, with the exception of 1970, there was a steady, rapid increase in catch and effort. Prior to 1973, the fishery operated year-round except for a closure in April and May to protect soft shell crab. In 1973, the catch was 28.2 million pounds (12,791 metric tons) and was prevented from going higher by the imposition of the first catch quota, which was reached in less than three months. The 1974 quota was established at 31 million pounds (14,062 metric tons) of red king crab, with no quota on blue crab. The quota was increased during the season as biological information obtained from fishery monitoring suggested a larger quantity could be harvested and the catch of red crab was allowed to reach 42.3 million pounds (19,187 metric tons). For the 1975 season, a harvest level guideline of 45-50 million pounds (20,412-22,680 metric tons) was established after evaluation of the pre-season NMFS king crab trawl survey population estimates and biological sampling of the commercial harvest by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. The 1975 red king crab harvest totaled 49.7

Table 1.--Annual king crab catches in the eastern Bering Sea by United States, Japan and U.S.S.R., 1953-1976[1]

Year	United States	Japan	U.S.S.R.	Total
1953	2,935	10,374	0	13,309
1954	2,535	8,202	0	10,737
1955	2,269	8,185	0	10,454
1956	2,146	7,877	0	10,023
1957	749	8,197	0	8,946
1958	7	7,808	0	7,815
1959	0	9,031	4,334	13,365
1960	600	13,292	13,606	27,498
1961	427	20,884	23,708	45,019
1962	68	33,716	20,559	54,343
1963	653	35,430	19,533	55,616
64	823	39,438	18,732	58,993
1965	1,429	27,025	14,269	42,723
1966	997	26,330	16,026	43,353
1967	3,102	23,638	9,998	36,738
1968	8,686	24,043	3,426	36,155
1969	10,403	12,210	2,173	24,786
1970	8,559	11,253	1,731	21,543
1971	12,946	4,722	1,412	19,080
1972	21,745	4,720	0	26,502
1973	28,190	228	0	28,418
1974	49,344	476	0	49,820
1975	52,120	0	0	52,120
1976	70,411	0	0	70,411

[1]All catch shown in thousands of pounds.

million pounds (22,544 metric tons), with an additional take of 2.4 million pounds (1089 metric tons) of blue king crab.

1976 Season and Harvest

The 1976 Bering Sea king crab season began with a continuation of the September 15, 1975 open season for blue king crab through the third week of May followed by a re-opening of the blue king crab fishery for the remainder of the calendar year after September 15. The red king crab season opened August 15, 1976, with initial effort being curtailed by price negotiations. A harvest level guideline of 40 to 65 million pounds (18,144 to 29,484 metric tons) was established for the 1976 season by the Alaska Board of Fisheries for the Bering Sea red king crab fishery. Despite the slow start, the October catch totaled 29 million pounds (13,154 metric tons); the November catch was 22 million pounds (9979 metric tons); and 7 million pounds (3175 metric tons) were delivered in December. The catch was allowed to surpass the lower end of the guideline harvest level as analysis of NMFS population estimates, fishing mortality rates from tagging studies, and composition of the commercial catches suggested the harvest could continue to the upper end of the range.

The blue king crab fishery harvested 2.4 million pounds (1089 metric tons) from January through May and 5 million pounds (2268 metric tons) from September 15 through December, for a total calendar year harvest of 7.4 million pounds (3357 metric tons).

A total king crab harvest of 70.4 million pounds (31,933 metric tons), or 11,554,019 crab were taken from the Bering Sea during calendar year 1976. This poundage exceeds all previous recorded by the United States or combined all-nation harvest (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 2.--Annual catch, pounds per crab, and catch per pot lift for the U.S. king crab fishery in the eastern Bering Sea, 1966-1976.

Year	Total Catch		Average No. of pounds/crab	Catch/pot lift	
	number	pounds		number	pounds
1966	140,554	997,321	7.1	51.7	366.7
1967	397,307	3,102,443	7.8	37.4	292.1
1968	1,278,592	8,686,546	6.8	26.9	182.9
1969	1,749,022	10,403,283	5.9	17.8	105.7
1970	1,682,591	8,559,178	5.1	17.4	88.6
1971	2,404,681	12,945,776	5.4	20.3	109.2
1972	3,994,356	21,744,924	5.4	19.5	106.0
1973	5,000,383	28,190,214	5.6	24.9	140.5
1974	8,613,489	49,343,648	5.7	33.3	191.0
1975	9,060,225	52,120,490	5.75	40.9	235.4
1976	11,554,019	70,410,769	6.09	29.3	178.7

Fishing Effort

One hundred forty-two vessels registered to fish king crab in the Bering Sea during 1976 which represents the highest U.S. crab vessel effort recorded for this fishery (Table 3). The average size of vessels fishing the Bering Sea was 90.8 feet (28.7 meters) in keel length and 136.3 net tons, similar to 1975. The U.S. fleet is composed almost entirely of large, modern steel combination vessels that fish king and Tanner crab. Many of these vessels are also rigged for trawling and do participate in shrimp fisheries in other management areas. These vessels represent a potential fleet for U.S. expansion into the bottomfish fishery when market conditions become favorable. The entry of larger new vessels constructed for the Alaska king and Tanner crab fishery appears to have stabilized.

RED KING CRAB

Geographic Distribution of Effort

The greatest concentration of fishing effort for red king crab has occurred progressively farther offshore and to the west each year since 1974. The largest portion of the catch was taken near Port Moller in 1974, more offshore during 1975, and from 30 to 100 miles north of Cape Mordinoff, Unimak Island, in 1976 (INPFC areas 5564, 5565, 5664, 5665 and 5666) (Fig. 3, Table 4 and 5).

1976 Catch

The 1976 red king crab catch totaled 63,044,401 pounds (28,597 metric tons) or 10,603,369 crab and exceeded the 1975 harvest by 3,357,625 pounds (6059 metric tons). Fishing effort, in terms of numbers of vessels and pot lifts, increased considerably; 142 vessels made 321,030 pot lifts for an average of 33 crab per pot lift Table 4 and 6).

Table 3.--Number and size of U.S. vessels engaged in eastern Bering Sea crab fishery, 1966-1976.

Year	Total Number	Size	
		Average keel length (feet)	Average net weight (tons)
1966	9	85.9	75.0
1967	20	95.8	114.1
1968	59	91.9	112.5
1969	65	93.0	116.3
1970	51	86.0	116.0
1971	52	85.0	117.1
1972	64	91.1	133.2
1973	67	92.4	141.0
1974	104	94.6	144.1
1975	104	90.5	131.0
1976	142	90.8	136.3

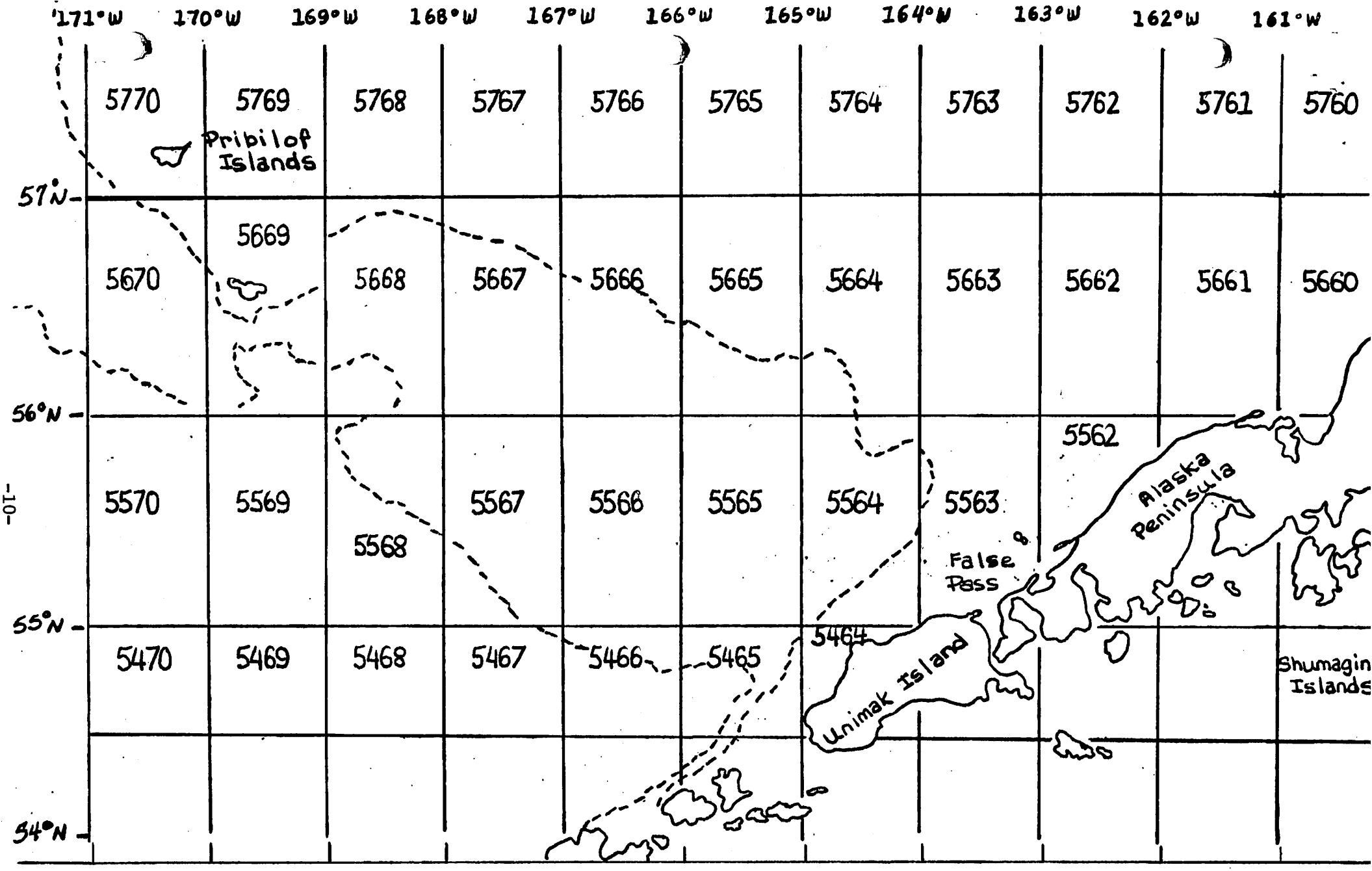

FIGURE 3. EASTERN BERING SEA INPFC KING AND TANNER CRAB FISHING AREAS.

Table 4.--Statistics from the 1976 U.S. king crab fishery in the eastern Bering Sea by species and month.

Month	Species	Number landings	Number vessels	Number crab	pounds	pot lifts	CPUE	Average Weight
Jan	Red			SEASON CLOSED				
	Blue	16	12	79,538	604,490	7,966	9	7.6
Feb	Red			SEASON CLOSED				
	Blue	13	12	77,514	575,087	6,773	11	7.4
March	Red			SEASON CLOSED				
	Blue			NO FISHING				
April	Red			SEASON CLOSED				
	Blue	2	2	1,213	9,515	120	10	7.8
May	Red			SEASON CLOSED				
	Blue	38	34	302,999	2,366,893	27,921	10	7.8
June	Red			SEASON CLOSED				
	Blue			SEASON CLOSED				
July	Red			SEASON CLOSED				
	Blue			SEASON CLOSED				
Aug	Red	4	2	35,764	214,014	1,722	20	5.9
	Blue			SEASON CLOSED				
Sept	Red	88	41	718,433	4,156,643	19,957	35	5.7
	Blue	1	1	8,387	64,747	500	16	7.7
	Total	89	42	726,820	4,221,390	20,457	35.5	5.8
Oct	Red	416	122	4,962,502	29,180,560	135,332	36	5.8
	Blue	3	1	45,621	376,420	1,777	25	8.2
	Total	419	123	5,008,123	29,556,980	137,109	36	5.9
Nov	Red	336	116	3,718,383	22,381,821	116,329	31	6.0
	Blue	10	7	95,183	729,461	4,296	22	7.6
	Total	346	118	3,813,566	23,111,282	120,625	31	6.1
Dec	Red	140	93	1,168,287	7,111,363	47,690	24	6.0
	Blue	45	29	340,195	2,639,755	23,606	14	7.7
	Total	185	103	1,508,482	9,751,118	71,296	21	6.5
YEAR	Red	984	141	10,603,369	63,044,401	321,030	33	5.9
	Blue	128	56	950,650	7,366,368	72,959	13	7.7
	Total	1,112	142	11,554,019	70,410,769	393,989	29	6.1

Table 5.--Statistics from the 1976 U.S. king crab fishery in the eastern Bering Sea by INPFC area and month.

Month	Area	Number					Average Crab/pot
		Landings	Vessels	Crab	Pounds	Pot Lifts	
JAN	5669	10.00	8	50,910	402,288	4,738	10
	5670	3.00	1	5,764	44,382	910	6
	5769	1.00	1	689	5,390	118	5
	5770	2.00	2	22,175	152,430	2,200	10
	TOTAL	16.00	12	79,538	604,490	7,966	9
FEB	5669	12.50	12	68,118	509,313	6,523	10
	5670	.50	1	9,396	65,774	250	37
	TOTAL	13.00	12	77,514	575,087	6,773	11
MARCH				SEASON CLOSED/NO FISHING			
APRIL	5669	2.00	2	1,213	9,515	120	10
MAY	5662	1.00	1	4,300	31,930	400	10
	5669	36.50	34	298,116	2,330,028	27,432	10
	5670	.50	1	583	4,935	89	6
	TOTAL	38.00	34	302,999	2,366,893	27,921	10
JUNE				SEASON CLOSED			
JULY				SEASON CLOSED			
AUG	5564	1.00	1	600	4,075	20	30
	5761	1.50	1	17,582	104,970	851	20
	5762	1.50	1	17,582	104,969	851	20
	TOTAL	4.00	2	35,764	214,014	1,722	20

Table 5.--continued

Month	Area	Number					Average
		Landings	Vessels	Crab	Pounds	Pot Lifts	Crab/pot
SEPT	5465	.33	1	9,634	57,127	184	52
	5562	9.83	11	71,686	416,454	2,205	32
	5563	12.50	10	91,119	525,489	2,969	31
	5564	14.00	8	123,981	712,350	3,122	40
	5565	1.33	2	16,746	97,534	561	30
	5660	3.50	2	23,737	132,483	852	27
	5661	3.34	5	36,422	210,274	1,187	31
	5662	9.00	10	111,501	627,146	2,906	38
	5663	2.00	2	17,606	102,537	670	26
	5664	3.50	4	33,219	197,509	659	50
	5665	3.00	4	33,800	193,349	458	73
	5669	1.00	1	8,387	64,747	500	16
	5761	10.17	7	61,501	359,504	2,048	30
	5762	15.50	2	87,481	524,887	2,136	41
	TOTAL	89.00	42	726,820	4,221,390	20,457	35
OCT	5464	1.00	1	700	4,645	25	28
	5465	.33	1	755	4,528	60	12
	5562	28.25	18	315,372	1,843,506	8,745	36
	5563	38.92	26	371,334	2,171,626	11,400	32
	5564	50.24	30	458,321	2,667,136	13,401	34
	5565	33.50	22	345,611	2,033,746	8,457	41
	5566	9.00	7	104,019	588,846	1,971	53
	5660	5.08	5	96,032	568,001	2,751	34

Table 5.--continued

Month	Area	Number Landings	Vessels	Crab	Pounds	Pot Lifts	Average Crab/pot
OCT	5661	22.08	15	297,608	1,731,459	9,411	32
	5662	52.98	37	649,101	3,741,544	18,401	35
	5663	5.33	7	61,861	356,278	1,842	34
	5664	30.50	19	359,179	2,168,053	10,512	34
	5665	55.68	30	761,611	4,496,419	19,056	39
	5666	16,83	13	306,964	1,827,818	6,661	46
	5667	.50	1	2,733	17,493	75	36
	5669	3.00	1	45,621	376,420	1,777	25
	5760	6.57	6	93,069	556,396	2,758	34
	5761	36.83	25	494,937	2,949,554	14,273	35
	5762	21.16	12	218,983	1,302,455	5,063	43
	5763	1.16	2	24,312	151,057	470	52
	TOTAL	419.00	123	5,008,123	29,556,980	137,109	36
NOV	5464	.33	1	1,225	7,351	100	12
	5465	1.83	3	13,730	87,819	316	43
	5562	2.83	5	19,281	115,972	732	26
	5563	21.53	18	184,034	1,073,312	7,251	25
	5564	62.12	22	488,168	2,908,154	16,863	29
	5565	63.58	44	747,102	4,416,900	23,760	31
	5566	13.75	16	171,797	997,884	5,532	31
	5660	1.00	1	4,329	27,335	200	21
	5661	13.50	9	195,619	1,160,527	5,310	37
	5662	15.11	17	118,105	711,691	4,678	25
	5663	3.78	5	44,611	272,660	1,540	28
	5664	22.5	18	328,193	2,040,795	8,899	36

Table 5.--continued

Month	Area	Number					Average Crab/pot
		Landings	Vessels	Crab	Pounds	Pot Lifts	
NOV	5665	61.92	32	752,894	4,618,598	21,561	34
	5666	32.67	25	482,412	2,922,041	15,119	31
	5669	6.83	5	75,272	578,694	3,055	25
	5670	1.00	1	13,373	100,835	600	22
	5760	2.00	2	15,395	94,233	314	49
	5761	16.12	14	148,172	903,736	3,981	37
	5762	1.00	1	900	4,505	50	18
	5770	2.50	2	8,954	68,240	764	11
	TOTAL	346.00	118	3,813,566	23,111,282	120,625	31
DEC	5464	1.00	1	800	4,529	41	19
	5465	2.00	2	26,980	165,770	1,250	21
	5562	1.00	1	10,290	62,685	395	26
	5563	5.25	5	42,173	251,865	1,927	22
	5564	21.58	23	219,443	1,331,579	8,286	26
	5565	46.83	41	339,683	2,042,588	14,218	24
	5566	4.68	7	46,961	268,916	2,355	20
	5661	4.50	6	43,367	259,155	1,563	28
	5663	.75	1	7,370	46,011	232	31
	5664	10.08	8	111,245	695,849	4,191	26
	5665	26.83	21	187,586	1,164,596	7,156	26
	5666	15.5	12	132,389	817,820	6,076	21
	5669	41.00	30	313,844	2,435,011	21,420	15
	5670	2.50	3	18,751	154,224	1,411	13
	5769	1.00	1	5,600	36,500	600	9
	5770	.50	1	2,000	14,020	175	11
	TOTAL	185.00	103	1,508,482	9,751,118	71,296	21
GRAND TOTAL		1,112.00	142	11,554,019	70,410,769	393,989	29

Table 6.--Catch and effort for red king crab by the U.S. fleet in the eastern Bering Sea in 1976 by INPFC area.

Area	Number of crab	Pounds of crab	Number pot lifts	Number landings	Average weight	CPUE
5464	2,725	16,525	166	2.333	6.1	16
5465	51,099	315,244	1,180	4.999	6.2	28
5562	416,629	2,438,617	12,077	41.915	5.9	34
5563	688,660	4,022,292	23,547	78.199	5.8	29
5564	1,279,619	7,562,144	41,292	147.941	5.9	31
5565	1,460,036	8,651,918	47,376	146.243	5.9	31
5566	322,777	1,855,646	9,858	27.428	5.7	33
5660	124,098	727,819	3,803	9.583	5.9	33
5661	573,014	3,361,415	17,471	43.415	5.9	33
5662	878,707	5,080,381	25,985	77.114	5.8	34
5663	131,448	777,486	4,284	11.865	5.9	31
5664	831,836	5,102,206	24,261	66.611	6.1	34
5665	1,735,891	10,472,962	48,231	147.429	6.0	36
5666	921,765	5,567,679	27,856	64.998	6.0	33
5667	2,733	17,493	75	.50	6.4	36
5669	2,416	18,308	123	.333	7.6	20
5760	108,464	650,629	3,072	8.584	6.0	34
5761	722,192	4,317,764	21,153	64.613	6.0	34
5762	324,946	1,936,816	8,100	39.165	6.0	40
5763	24,312	151,057	470	1.166	6.2	52
TOTAL	10,603,367	63,044,401	321,010	984.	5.95	33

Regulations concerning the minimum legal size have been different each year since 1974 in the Bering Sea which has had some influence on the parameters sampled during the season. In 1974, the entire red king crab catch was taken with a 6¼-inch size limit as compared to a 6½-inch size limit in 1975.

The decrease in numbers of crab per pot lift from 40.9 in 1975 to 29.3 in 1976 is partially a function of a larger legal size. Shipboard sampling during the 1976 season showed that the number of male crab between 6¼ and 6½ inches, which were returned to the sea, averaged 20 percent of the total male catch above 6¼ inches carapace width.

Composition of Catch

The average red king crab delivered during 1976 measured 148 mm in carapace length and weighed 5.95 pounds or 2.7 kilograms. This depicts an increase of 2 mm over the 1975 season (Table 6 and Fig. 4).

The percentage of oldshell (skipmolt) crab increased from 21 to 27 percent and a slight reduction in the percentage of recruit crab occurred compared to 1975. This data when related to NMFS annual king crab abundance surveys which indicates increasing abundance of legal size crab in the Bering Sea, suggests a continued multiple age class harvest by the commercial fishery.

Processing

Twenty-one processing plants are located along the South Peninsula and Aleutians with an estimated daily processing capacity of 1.7 to 2.0 million pounds of king crab. Other processing facilities are available at Kodiak and other Gulf of Alaska locations.

Deadloss observed in 1976 decreased 47 percent from that of 1975.

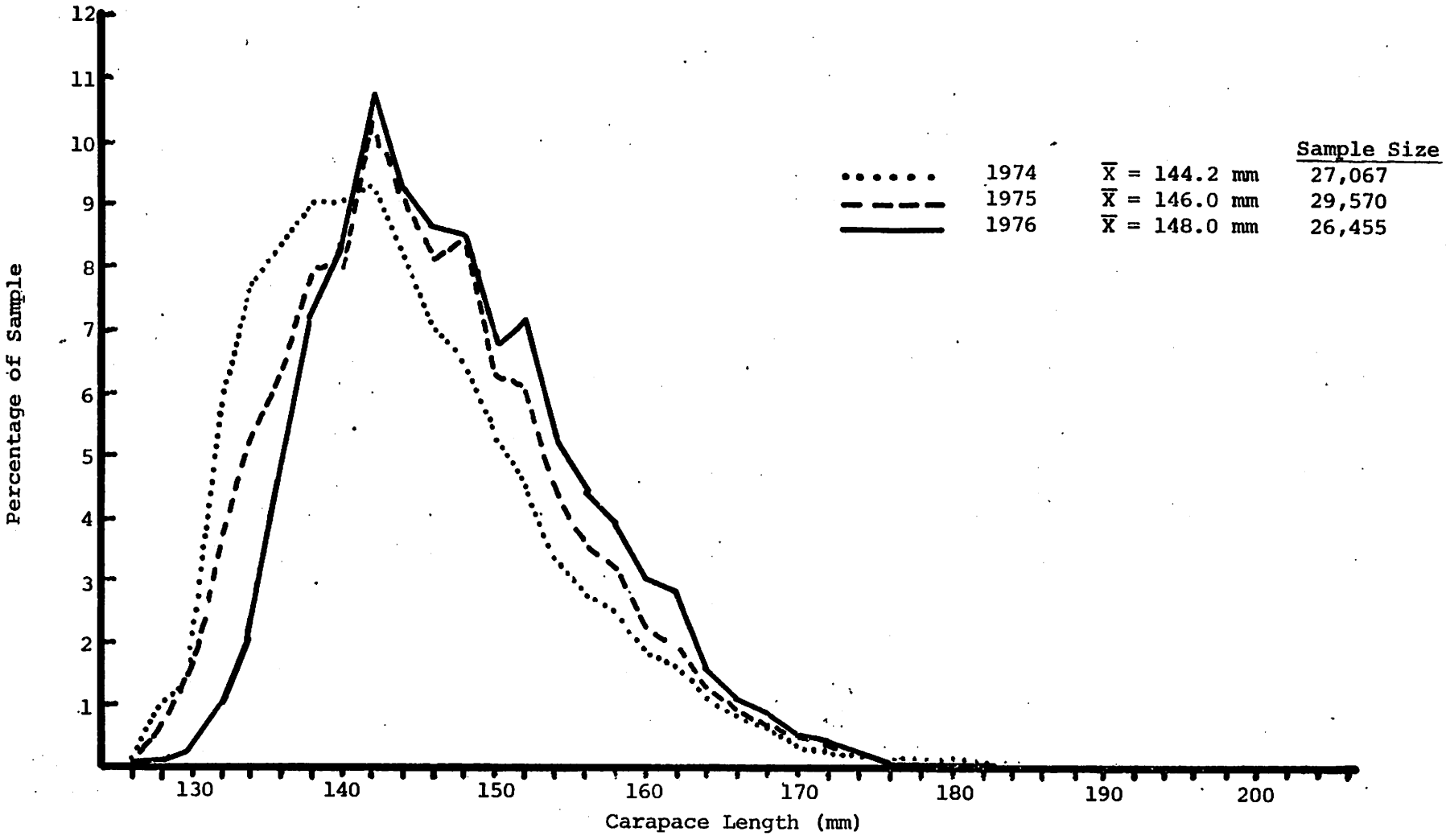

Figure 4. Comparative length frequency curves for red king crab from the Bering Sea commercial fishery samples for the years 1974, 1975 and 1976.

The single greatest contributing cause of this improvement was that vessels were able to unload their catches immediately upon arriving at the processing plants during 1976, whereas in 1975 vessels experienced delays in unloading. Because of decreased catch per pot causing longer trips in 1976, and increased processing potential, nearly all vessels were able to unload soon after entering port.

BLUE KING CRAB

1976 Harvest

The 1976 Bering Sea blue king crab harvest totaled 7,366,368 pounds (3341 metric tons). The fishery was closed on May 21 with a harvest to that date of 2,366,893 pounds (1074 metric tons) and re-opened on September 15, 1976. The annual molting and mating period was evident by mid-May and a closure was justified for the protection of the stocks until the established fall opening date. The major catch areas were INPFC areas 5669 and 5770 (Fig. 3 and Table 7).

Effort

Effort levels increased from 17 vessels during 1975 to 56 vessels in 1976. A peak monthly effort of 34 vessels was recorded during May (Table 5). This increased effort was related to the availability of the vessels participating in the expanded 1976 Bering Sea Tanner crab fishery.

The 1976 blue king crab effort totaled 72,959 pot lifts, producing a catch of 950,650 crab for an average of 13 crab per pot (Table 7). The 1975 fishery totaled 16,297 pot lifts with a take of 314,931 crab for an average of 19 crab per pot. The reduction

Table 7.--Catch and effort for blue king crab by the U.S. fleet in the eastern Bering Sea in 1976 by INPFC area.

Area	Number of Crab	Pounds of Crab	Number of pot lifts	Number of landings	Average Weight	CPUE
5662	4,300	31,930	400	1.0	7.4	10
5669	859,065	6,687,708	65,442	112.5	7.8	13
5670	38,471	304,376	3,010	7.0	7.9	12
5769	6,289	41,890	718	2.0	6.7	8
5770	42,525	300,464	3,389	5.5	7.0	12
TOTAL	950,650	7,366,368	72,959	128.0	7.7	13

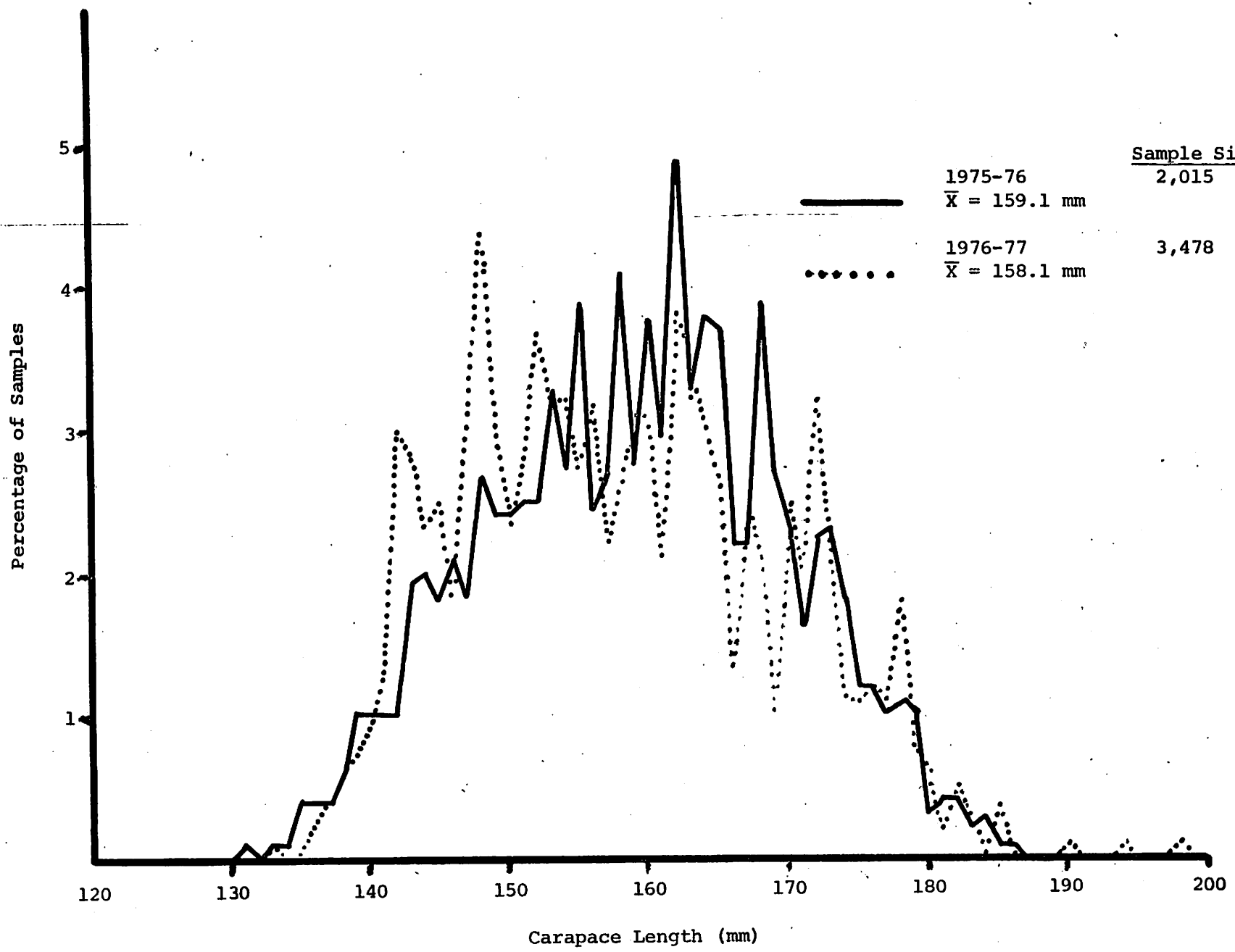

Figure 5. Comparative length frequency curves from blue king crab commercial fishery samples from the 1975-76 and 1976-77 seasons.

in CPUE for the 1976 season was influenced by increased competition between fishing gear and to some degree joint Tanner crab and blue crab fishing where one species was more incidental in catches.

Composition of Catch

The average weight of the blue king crab harvest was 7.7 pounds (3.49 kilograms) per crab, which was comparable to the 1975 average weight per crab of 7.73 pounds (3.51 kilograms).

The sampling parameters of the blue king crab have been influenced by changing size limit regulations similar to red king crab. Average size of blue king crab harvested during the 1976-77 fishing year averaged 158 mm in carapace width, a slight decrease from 159 mm during the 1975-76 season (September 15 through May 21) (Fig. 5). In general, the blue king crab fishery appears stable with an annual harvest of 5 to 7 million pounds (2268 to 3175 metric tons).

TANNER CRAB FISHERY

Previous to 1974 the eastern Bering Sea Tanner crab harvest occurred primarily as an incidental catch to the king crab fishery. Improved market conditions have accelerated the harvest from 5,044,197 pounds (2288 metric tons) during 1974 to a take of 22,341,475 pounds (10,134 metric tons) for 1976 (Table 8). Two species, Chionecetes bairdi and C. opilio are harvested but market demand for larger crab has made the fishery more selective for the larger C. bairdi.

Geographic Distribution of Effort

The U.S. domestic harvest of Tanner crab during 1976 was predominantly from INPFC areas 5564 and 5565 north and northwest of Unimak Island, and INPFC areas 5669 and 5620 near St. George Island (Fig. 3 and Tables 9 and 10). This is the third successive season the

Table 8.--Historic U.S. Tanner crab catch in the eastern Bering Sea, 1968-1976

Year	Number				Crab per pot lift	Average Weight
	landings	pot lifts	crab	pounds		
1968	7.0	1,426	6,408	17,858	4.5	2.78
1969	131.0	29,851	353,273	1,008,898	11.8	2.86
1970	66.0	16,372	482,307	1,410,721	29.4	2.92
1971	22.0	7,343	61,347	166,058	8.4	2.71
1972	30.0	6,728	42,561	119,170	6.3	2.80
1973	44.5	16,530	132,941	301,868	8.0	2.27
1974	69.3	22,014	2,531,825	5,044,197	115.0	1.99
1975	80.0	38,462	2,773,770	7,028,378	72.1	2.53
1976	305.4	141,179	8,949,886	22,341,475	63.4	2.50

fleet has targeted on Tanner crab. The fishery began in the Pribilof Islands during 1974, then shifted to the area from Cape Sarichef to Amak Island in 1975. Both of these were utilized in 1976 with more offshore effort north and northwest of Unimak Island. It is anticipated the fishery will expand to the northern Bering Sea during the 1977 season.

1976 Catch

The 1976 Tanner crab harvest totaled 22,341,475 pounds (10,134 metric ton) or 8,949,886 crab. This harvest represents a 15 million pound (6804 metric ton) increase over the 1975 season. The peak of the 1976 Tanner crab harvest occurred during April through June, indicating a trend towards an earlier effort than the previous two years. Effort during the month of May was suppressed due to diversion of vessels for blue king crab fishing in the Pribilof Islands, which may have reduced the potential season's harvest by several million pounds.

Sixty-six vessels participated in the 1976 Tanner crab fishery in the eastern Bering Sea. The average size of vessels was 93.4 feet (28.5 meters) in keel length and 140 net tons. Three hundred five landings were made, with 141,179 pot lifts averaging 63.4 crab per pot, 8.7 crab per pot less than 1975 (Tables 8, 9 and 10).

Composition of Catch

The average C. bairdi delivered during 1976 was 154.2 mm in carapace width and contributed 94 percent of the Tanner crab harvest. The remaining 6 percent of the harvest was C. opilio which averaged 128.1 mm in carapace width(Fig. 6). The average size of the crab delivered was 2.5 pounds (1.13 kilograms) per crab, which was comparable to the previous season (Table 8). The width frequency

Table 9. --Catch and effort for Tanner crab by the U.S. fleet in the eastern Bering Sea in 1976 by INPFC area.

Area	Number Landings	Number Crab	Number Pounds	Number Pot Lifts	Average Crabs/Pot
5464	55.32	1,159,483	2,988,034	21,220	54.6
5465	2.75	36,786	90,797	744	49.4
5562	.50	3,023	7,708	28	108.0
5563	18.0	251,504	657,604	4,732	53.1
5564	87.76	2,633,555	6,544,546	43,744	60.2
5565	49.94	1,957,070	4,776,500	28,278	69.2
5566	10.09	368,752	909,468	4,760	77.5
5567	4.0	146,214	358,935	1,336	109.4
5666	3.0	127,845	314,232	1,666	76.7
5668	1.0	19,052	39,920	300	63.5
5669	34.67	935,879	2,345,823	14,438	64.8
5670	36.33	1,259,098	3,181,223	17,968	70.1
5770	2.0	51,625	126,685	1,965	26.3
TOTAL	305.36	8,949,886	22,341,475	141,179	63.4

Table 10. Catch and effort for Tanner crab by the U.S. fleet in the eastern Bering Sea by month and INPFC area, 1976.

Month	Area	Number Landings	Number Vessels	Number Crab	Number Pounds	Number Pot Lifts	Average Crabs/Pot
Jan.	5669	1.0	1	16,442	41,954	200	82.2
	5770	1.0	1	7,000	13,130	1,200	5.8
	TOTAL	2.0	2	23,442	55,084	1,400	16.7
Feb.	5464	8.0	7	177,909	450,516	2,853	62.4
	5562	.50	1	3,023	7,708	28	108.0
	5563	9.0	3	89,991	243,105	1,513	59.5
	5564	.50	1	4,807	13,219	80	60.0
	5565	1.0	1	23,776	65,985	250	95.1
	5669	1.0	1	6,000	16,656	83	72.3
	TOTAL	20.0	11	305,506	797,189	4,807	63.4
March	5464	17.66	11	299,190	802,452	5,662	52.8
	5465	1.0	1	6,502	16,985	200	32.5
	5563	2.0	2	18,760	50,053	800	23.5
	5564	5.68	7	169,951	440,606	3,417	49.7
	5565	.66	1	3,325	8,503	183	18.2
	TOTAL	27.0	16	497,728	1,318,599	10,262	48.5
April	5464	15.58	12	347,056	896,681	5,851	59.3
	5564	43.16	28	1,336,734	3,369,818	20,803	64.3
	5565	17.29	19	837,057	2,047,875	10,455	80.1
	5566	.84	2	22,911	56,893	419	54.7
	5669	1.0	1	4,800	11,740	100	48.0
	TOTAL	77.87	42	2,548,558	6,383,007	37,628	67.7

Table 10. Continued

Month	Area	Number Landings	Number Vessels	Number Crab	Number Pounds	Number Pot Lifts	Average Crabs/Pot
May	5464	6.58	7	182,290	439,871	4,086	44.6
	5465	1.75	3	30,284	73,812	544	55.7
	5563	1.0	1	27,571	67,550	800	34.5
	5564	25.42	19	718,848	1,748,560	12,832	56.0
	5565	21.49	21	722,900	1,709,892	11,654	62.0
	5566	2.75	5	152,089	369,618	2,083	73.0
	5666	2.0	1	74,700	187,480	1,216	61.4
	5668	1.0	1	19,052	39,920	300	63.5
	5669	14.17	15	197,836	508,803	3,779	52.4
	5670	2.33	5	174,599	431,225	2,176	80.2
	TOTAL	78.49	42	2,300,169	5,576,731	39,470	58.3
June	5464	7.5	6	153,038	398,514	2,768	55.3
	5563	5.0	3	113,182	292,266	1,556	72.7
	5564	13.0	9	403,215	972,343	6,612	61.0
	5565	9.5	7	370,012	944,245	5,736	64.5
	5566	4.5	5	176,707	442,577	1,838	96.1
	5567	4.0	3	146,214	358,935	1,336	109.4
	5669	15.5	11	683,394	1,700,215	9,646	70.9
	5670	28.0	17	1,024,389	2,601,188	13,952	73.4
	5770	1.0	1	44,625	113,555	765	58.3
	TOTAL	88.0	43	3,114,776	7,823,838	44,209	70.5

Table 10. Continued

Month	Area	Number Landings	Number Vessels	Number Crab	Number Pounds	Number Pot Lifts	Average Crabs/Pot
July	5566	2.0	2	17,045	40,380	420	40.6
	5666	1.0	1	53,145	126,752	450	118.1
	5669	1.0	1	23,650	56,760	600	39.4
	5670	6.0	6	60,110	148,810	1,840	32.7
	TOTAL	10.0	10	153,950	372,702	3,310	46.5
Aug.				SEASON CLOSED			
Sept.				SEASON CLOSED			
Oct.				SEASON CLOSED			
Nov.	5563	1.0	1	2,000	4,630	63	31.8
Dec.	5669	1.0	1	3,757	9,695	30	125.2
GRAND TOTAL		305.36	66	8,949,886	22,341,475	141,179	63.4

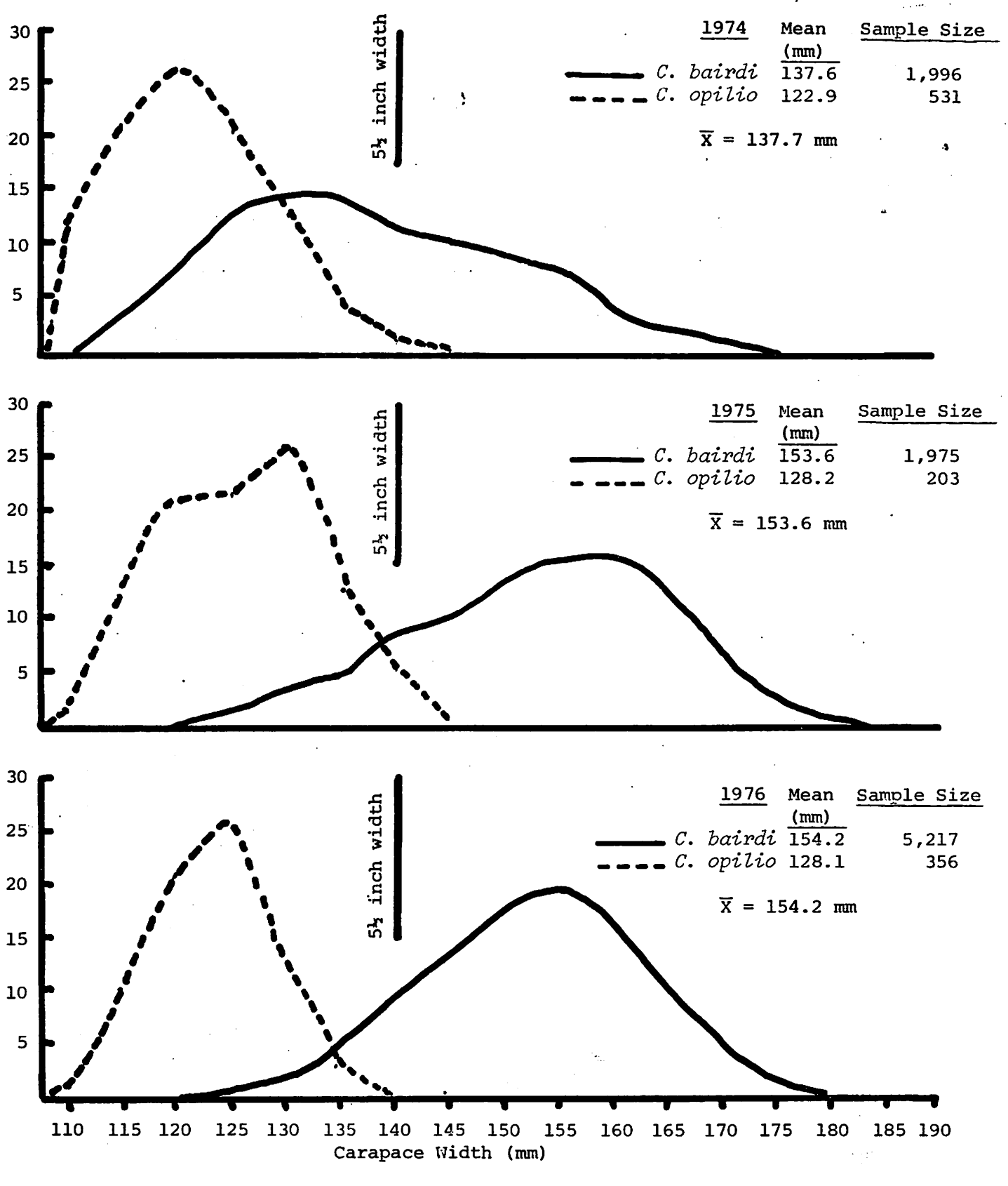

Figure 6. Comparative width frequency intervals for *C. bairdi* and *C. opilio* Tanner crab caught in the Bering Sea in the years 1974-76.

distribution of the 1976 samples is very comparable to 1975; eight percent of the C. bairdi sampled in 1976 were less than 140 mm in carapace width.

REGULATORY FUNCTIONS

The State of Alaska regulates the U.S. domestic fishery for king and Tanner crab in the Bering Sea. Both species of crab require vessels to be validly registered for the statistical area prior to fishing and meet landing and inspection requirements for purposes of fishery monitoring and regulation enforcement. Legal gear for taking of crab is restricted to pots, ring nets, and diving gear. Pot and ring net gear must be marked with the permanent registration number of the vessel. Pots must be removed from the water or stored in 25 fathoms or less with all doors secured open and all bait containers removed during closed seasons. Pot descriptions are utilized to define pot gear by species fished, along with other supporting regulations for fishery regulation enforcement.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game requires processors, buyers and fishermen to report on forms provided by the Department, information on processing and catch and effort statistics.

Regulations require the immediate return of female crab to the sea unharmed. Minimum size for taking and possession of male king crab is 6½ inches (165 mm) in greatest width of carapace. Tanner crab regulations were implemented effective June 22, 1976 that provide for a minimum size limit for C. bairdi of 5½ inches (140 mm) in greatest carapace width. This regulation was adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries to protect male crab until after this species reaches maturity and is available for breeding purposes at

least one year before being vulnerable to a commercial fishery. There were no minimum size restrictions adopted for C. opilio or hybrids of C. opilio and C. bairdi.

As a result of fishery monitoring, Tanner crab mating and molting periods were defined and additional restricts were placed on the U.S. fishery during the 1976 season. The portion of the eastern Bering Sea east of 166° W. longitude was closed to taking of Tanner crab after the third week of June and the portion west of 162° W. longitude was closed after the first week of July. The pre-molt condition of the male Tanner crab catches was evident for both geographic areas after mid-June. The entire eastern Bering Sea was closed to protect molting, mating and soft shell Tanner crab from July 7 until the beginning of the August 15 red king crab season. These restrictions were initiated by the Emergency Order authority established by Title 16 of the State of Alaska Statutes.

Alaska laws concerning commercial fishing regulations are initiated by four methods: 1. By Alaska Statute adopted by the State Legislature. 2. By the Alaska Board of Fisheries under authority of Alaska Statute Sec. 16.05.240., in accordance to the Administrative Procedures Act (AS 44.62). 3. Emergency regulation which allows immediate adoption of a regulation if a threat to the public peace, health, safety or general welfare requires it. This regulation has an effective period of 120 days when signed by the Lieutenant Governor of Alaska, by authority of AS 44.62.250. 4. By Emergency Order authorizing the Commissioner of Fish and Game or his authorized designee, to summarily open or close seasons or areas or to change weekly closed periods on fish and game. An Emergency Order has the

force and effect of law after field announcement by the Commissioner or his designee. Emergency Orders adopted under this section are not subject to the Administrative Procedures Act (AS 44.62.) and remain in effect until rescinded. These regulation changes involve biological justifications reflecting need for proper conservation of the resources.

FOREIGN FISHERIES

Initial foreign fishing effort for crab in the eastern Bering Sea was by Japan in 1930. This effort continued until interruption by World War II. Japanese fishing effort again resumed in 1953 and has continued through 1976. The USSR engaged in crab fishing in the eastern Bering Sea from 1959 through 1971 (Table 1). Since declaring crab creatures of the continental shelf and ownership of the Bering Sea crab resources was claimed by the United States, treaties were negotiated with Japan and the USSR which established the conditions of allowable harvest. Conversion from tanglenet gear to pot fishing and established quotas were treaty conditions.

Bilateral treaty negotiations in 1974 established catch quotas for the Japanese fisheries in 1975 and 1976. Although the Japanese achieved their Tanner crab catch quota of 10,200 metric tons for those years, they did not attempt to take their catch quota of 953 metric ton of king crab (Fig. 7).

The Soviet Union was unwilling to make the required investment for conversion to pot fishing as dictated by bilateral agreement, and by 1972 had phased their fleet out of the eastern Bering Sea crab fisheries.

The Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (P.L. 94-265)

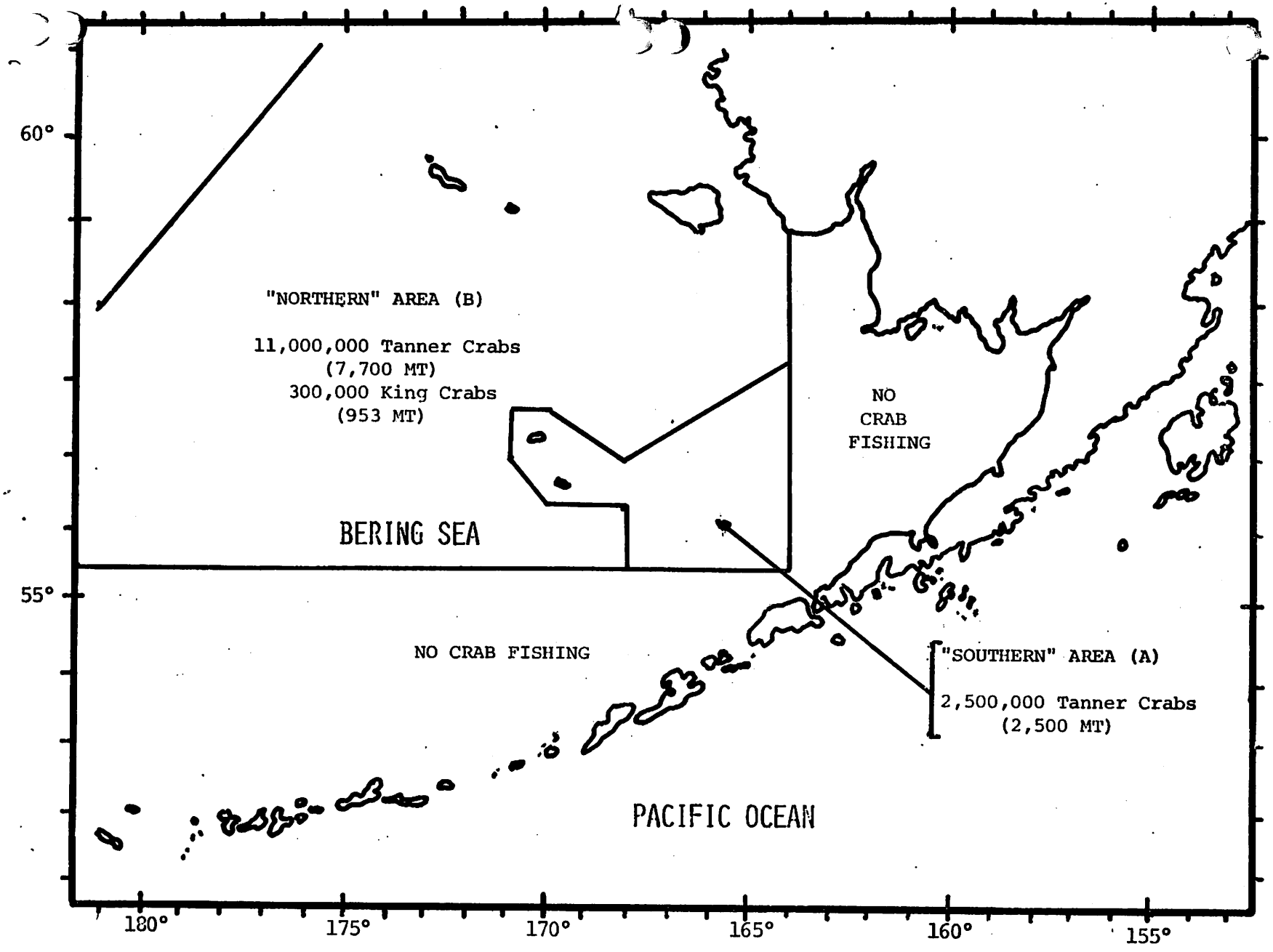

FIGURE 7. EASTERN BERING SEA CRAB QUOTAS FOR 1975 AND 1976 ESTABLISHED BY U.S.-JAPAN CRAB AGREEMENT DECEMBER 1974.

extended exclusive fishery management authority to 200 nautical miles from the baseline from which the territorial sea is measured. No foreign fishing is authorized within this fishery conservation zone, nor for anadromous species or continental shelf resources beyond the fishery conservation zone, unless such fishing is authorized under existing or governing international fishery agreements.

The only foreign allocation of crab in the eastern Bering Sea under the provisions of this Law (P.L. 94-265) is an allocation of 12,500 metric tons of Tanner crab to Japan. The Japanese allocation is restricted by area. No Tanner crab fishing is allowed south of 56° N. lat. and east of 164° W. long.; 2500 metric tons may be taken from area "A" and 10,000 metric tons from area "B" (Fig. 8). This allocation is subject to annual revision based on factors necessary and appropriate for the conservation and management of the fishery, taking into consideration the total allowable harvest for that species not utilized by vessels of the United States under an optimum yield concept.

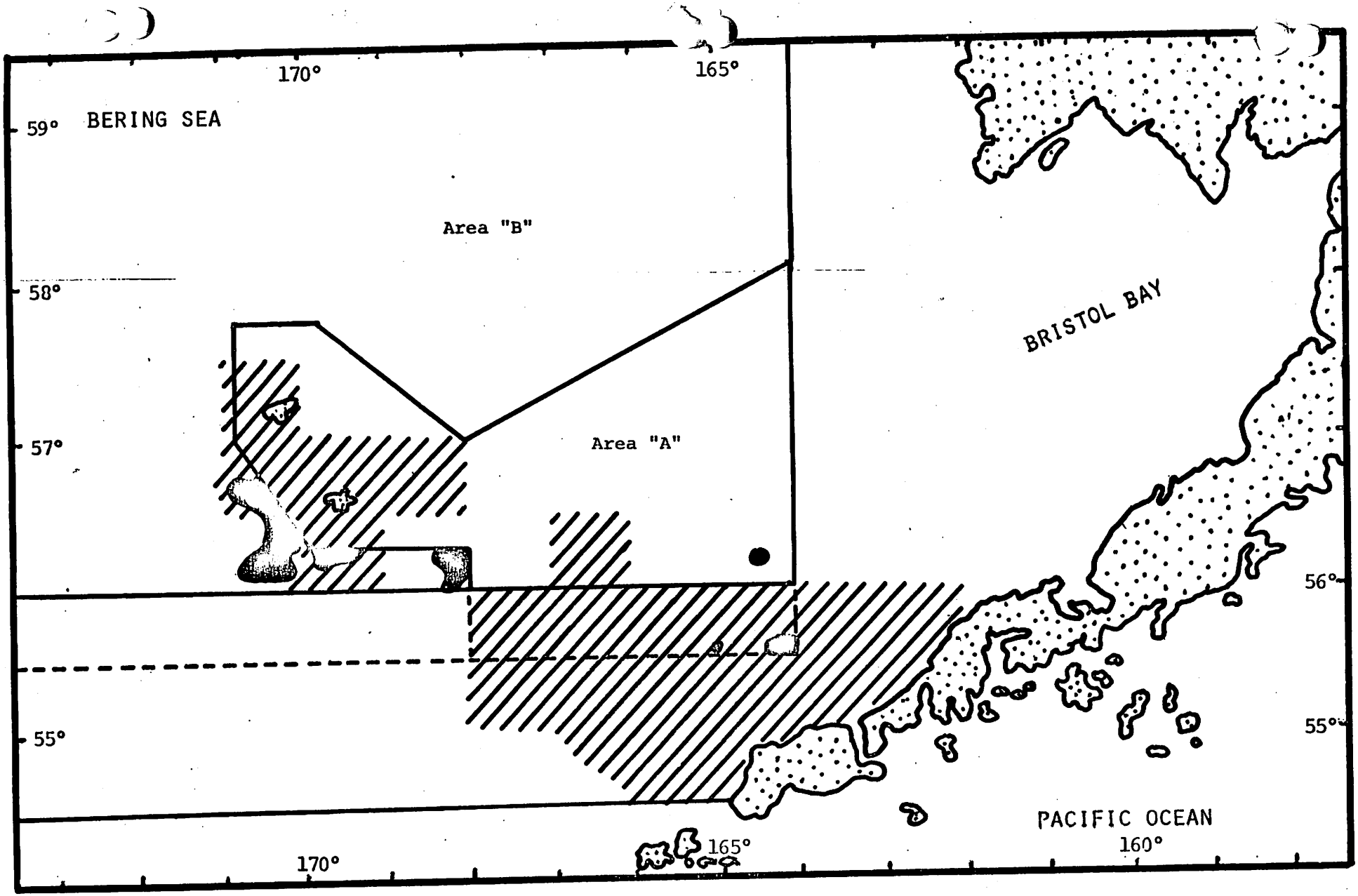

Figure 8. The eastern Bering Sea showing areas fished by the U.S. Tanner crab fleet (crosshatching) and the Japanese Tanner crab mothership fleet (solid black) in 1976. Dashed line illustrates boundaries of areas A and B in 1976; solid line indicates current boundaries.

The June 15 Closure of the Bering Sea Tanner Crab Fishery -

Surrounding Circumstances and Supporting Data

It is the policy of the Department and the Board of Fisheries to confine the commercial fisheries for tanner crab to periods which do not conflict with periods of peak mating and molting in areas where developed fisheries exist. In most areas of the state timing of the sensitive periods of the annual life cycle of tanner crab have been identified and protected from the impact of incidental handling mortality, deadloss, and lowered recovery rates by closed seasons. In 1976 the Bering Sea tanner fishery was still in a developmental stage, therefore the season was permitted to remain open until July 7 in a portion of the area for the purposes of encouraging expansion of the domestic industry and to provide an oportunity to observe the timing of mating, male molting, increasing deadloss, and reduced recovery. As a result of the observations made in 1976, and the full developement of the fishery in 1977, the Board of Fisheries set the closing date for the 1977 season at June 15.

The summarized observations of female egg clutches in Table 1 show that the peak of the breeding season for bairdi tanners in the Bering Sea during 1975 occured about the end of May or early June. This timing indicates only a slight lag from the timing of the peak mating period in Pacific Ocean waters near Kodiak Island and the Alaska Peninsula, where peak mating also happens in May.

The onset of molting adult male bairdi tanners has been observed in late May with increased appearance of soft-shelled crab in the fishery in June. Newly molted tanner crab were reported observed by scientists aboard the NOAA R/V Oregon in two widely separated research tows from the Bering Sea in late May 1976. An ADF&G biologist aboard a commercial tanner fishing vessel on

May 17, 1977 recorded a small group of legal-sized male bairdi tanners captured off the northwest corner of St. George Island in the Pribilofs. Fishermen have reported moving their strings of pot gear away from areas of molting male tanner crab in both the Pribilof and Southeastern districts of the Bering Sea in May 1977. The fleet is capable of avoiding areas where soft crab are concentrated, although with increasing frequency gear must be emptied of newly-molted crab and moved to a new locality. Large quantities of healthy male crab are easily caught into mid-June, but we know the molting season is underway and may peak in late June or early July.

In June 1976 tanner crab deadlosses observed at Dutch Harbor showed considerable increases over earlier months of the fishery (Table 2). The causative factors of these losses were varied, but the most significant were the weakened pre-molt condition of the male crab and increased surface water temperatures. Despite efforts by processors to quickly unload vessels and fishermen shortening trips, the crews were still often faced with quantities of dead crab upon opening their tanks. There appeared to be significant mortalities caused simply by handling or suffocation enroute to port. Most Unalaska and Dutch Harbor processors complained to the area biologist about the excessive deadlosses; some closed their plants, others requested a closure. By July there were only two processors operating in the area, and one of these reported that his records showed an appreciable drop in recovery after mid-June.

Table 1. Observations of egg clutches of female bairdi tanner crab from the Bering Sea in spring 1975.

Dates	N	Stage of Development: Full Clutch Eyed Eggs	Partial Clutch Eggs Hatching	Clean No Eggs	Full Clutch New Eggs-Orange
5/18-5/25	24	13 %	75 %	8 %	4 %
5/26-6/1	115	9 %	11 %	34 %	54 %
6/2-6/8	53	0 %	0 %	8 %	92 %
6/9-6/15	38	3 %	5 %	42 %	50 %

Table 2. Deadloss observations from deliveries of Bering Sea tanner crab at Dutch Harbor in 1976 and 1977 beginning in late May.

Stat. Week	Dates	1976 Total No. Crab	1976 No. Dead	1976 %	1977 Total No. Crab	1977 No. Dead	1977 %
22	5/23-5/29	160,000	1,900	1.2	756,000	14,800	1.9
23	5/30-6/5	66,000	2,450	3.7	816,000	63,600	7.8
24	6/6-6/12	207,000	3,700	1.8	812,000	20,450	2.5
25	6/13-6/19	149,000	9,600	6.4	*		
26	6/20-6/26	131,000	7,000	5.3			
27	6/27-7/3	25,000	15,000	60.0			
28	7/4-7/10	48,000	8,000	16.7			

* FISHERMAN INTERVIEWS INDICATE SHARP INCREASE IN SORTING OF NEWSHELL TANNER CRAB ON FISHING GROUNDS THIS WEEK.

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

EMERGENCY ORDER NO. 4-S-19-76 Issued at Kodiak June 30, 1976

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12:00 NOON JULY 7, 1976

Expiration date 12:00 Noon August 15, 1976 unless superceded by subsequent emergency order.

JUSTIFICATION:

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game crab management policy requires protection of crab stocks during critical periods of their life cycle. Protection of crab stocks during mating and molting periods and handling of crab during critical shell conditions are major points of this policy. Fishery monitoring of the Bering Sea District Tanner crab fishery west of 166° longitude for the period after June 23 has resulted in the following indicators of the present condition of these Tanner crab stocks:

1. Female Tanner crab observed carrying new egg clutches.
2. Appearance of newshell Tanner crab in commercial harvest.
3. Deadloss levels are increasing, with individual delivery mortalities as high as 20 percent.
4. Excessive leg shedding occurrence, verifying pre-molt condition of harvested crab.
5. Increased sorting of Tanner crab catches is occurring to obtain commercially acceptable shell condition.
6. CPUE levels have dropped to an unprecedented low, indicating reduced levels of pre-molt condition crab.

Therefore, the closure of the Bering Sea District Tanner crab fishery at this time is in line with Department policy.

REGULATION:

5 AAC 35.535 is therefore amended to read:

5 AAC 35.535. CLOSED WATERS. Tanner crab fishing is prohibited in those waters of statistical area J.

(b) All waters of the Bering Sea District.

James W. Brooks
Commissioner

by delegation to: Jack Lechner
Regional Supervisor
Westward Region

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes all waters of the Bering Sea north of 54° 36' N. latitude to the commercial harvest of Tanner crab at noon July 7, 1976. The Bering Sea District will re-open for Tanner crab fishing 12:00 noon August 15, 1976.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution of this emergency order is to all commercial processors, protection officers, Advisory Committees, fishermen associations, within the Westward Region and to the Kodiak Mirror, radio station KABC, Director of Commercial Fisheries, Commissioner of Fish and Game, Commander of Fish and Wildlife Protection, Lt. Governor, and broadcasted over 4136.3 and 3230 at Dutch Harbor. Copies are available from Fish and Game offices in Kodiak, Sand Point and Dutch Harbor.

STATE OF ALASKA

JAY S. HAMMOND, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME
COMMERCIAL FISHERIES DIVISION

P. O. BOX 686 — KODIAK 99615

June 22, 1976

WESTWARD REGION 1976 SHELLFISH FIELD EMERGENCY ORDER NO. 18

JUSTIFICATION:

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game crab management policy requires protection of crab stocks during critical periods of their life cycle. Protection of crab stocks during mating and molting periods and handling of crab during critical shell conditions are major points of this policy. Current monitoring of the Bering Sea District Tanner crab fishery has resulted in the following indicators; primarily in those waters east of 166° longitude.

1. Female Tanner crab are carrying high levels of new egg clutches.
2. Increasing appearance of new shell Tanner crab in commercial harvest.
3. Deadloss of Tanner crab at delivery has increased.
4. Excessive leg shedding occurrence, verifies the pre-molt condition of currently harvested Tanner crab.
5. Increased rate of handling of king crab in Tanner crab fishing gear has been noted.
6. Current CPUE of Tanner crab catches is rapidly declining, indicated reduced levels of pre-molt condition crab.

Therefore the following emergency order is in line with Department policy.

EMERGENCY ORDER:

Under authority of AS 16.05.060, the following emergency order is adopted effective noon June 23, 1976:

5 AAC 35.535. CLOSED WATERS. Tanner crab fishing is prohibited in those waters of statistical area J.

(b) those waters of the Bering Sea District east of 166° longitude.

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
James W. Brooks, Commissioner

By: Jack Lechner
Jack Lechner
Regional Supervisor
Westward Region

EMERGENCY ORDER NO. 4-S-44-76

Issued at Kodiak, November 8, 1976

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12:01 a.m. November 11, 1976.

Expiration date, June 15, 1977 midnight unless superseded by subsequent emergency order.

JUSTIFICATION:

Monitoring of the Bering Sea tanner crab fishery catches has indicated the approach of the peak of mating and molting of Bairdi tanner crab by mid-June. In keeping with the crab management policy of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the resultant closure of the Bering Sea tanner crab fishery for protection of the stocks during the mating, molting and required recovery period was announced during the 1975-76 Bering Sea tanner crab fishery. Although the regulation adopted placing the Bering Sea in closed waters for taking of tanner crab was rescinded, 5 AAC 35.510 FISHING SEASONS (5) requires the Bering district fishing season shall be opened by emergency order issued by the Commissioner. Since adequate time has elapsed for recovery of the stocks from the molting period, and ample stocks are available for commercial harvest, the following emergency order is justified.

REGULATION:

5 AAC 35.510 (5) amended to read:

5 AAC 35.510. FISHING SEASONS. Tanner crab may be taken:

(5) in the Bering Sea district: from November 11, 1976 through June 15, 1977.

James W. Brooks
Commissioner

by delegation to: Jack Lechner
Regional Supervisor
Westward Region

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order opens the Bering Sea district tanner crab season on November 11, 1976 and establishes the district closing date of June 15, 1977.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution of the emergency order is to all commercial processors, protection officers, Advisory Committees, fishermen associations within the Westward Region and to the Kodiak Mirror, Radio KVOK, Director of Commercial Fisheries, Commissioner of Fish and Game, Commander of Fish and Wildlife Protection, Lt. Governor, Attorney General, Board of Fisheries, Director of Fish and Wildlife Protection and broadcasted over appropriate fleet frequencies. Copies are available from the Fish and Game offices at Kodiak, Sand Point and Dutch Harbor.

Packet of materials for Meeting.

See agenda, as it is complete, and will not be listed here. Agenda is under Tab II.