

November 2-3, 1978

AGENDA ITEM: 14

ACTION REQUIRED: Act on proposed amendments.

SUBJECT: Tanner Crab FMP

SUMMARY: Two documents have been included:

- ✓ (a) Proposed amendments to the Tanner Crab FMP -
Memo from Branson 11/2/78, and
- ✓ (b) A background document entitled "Status (report)
of the U.S. Tanner & King Crab Fishery in the
Eastern Bering Sea 1978" ADF&G - Jack Lechner

The Japanese Tanner Crab Industry will also distribute information at the public hearing.

*9-29-78 memo to Leitzel from Smith - Action Memo
and 10-23-78 ltr. to Branson from Leitzel - Japan Comments
BS #75 word file.*

COMMENTS: This subject was discussed by the SSC and their recommendations are attached (Agenda Item #7). Additionally the AP comments of August and September could be summarized as "no change" with respect to the 58° lines and 15,000 ton quota.

A different proposal is also being submitted by the SSC dealing with a relaxation of the bairdi size limit for an exploratory U.S. fishery west of 171° West longitude during 1979.

*Korea: want
allocation to fish T. crab. N 58°*

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Agenda Item #14
November 2-3, 1978

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 2, 1978

TO: Council, Scientific & Statistical Committee and
Advisory Panel

FROM: Jim H. Branson, Executive Director 

SUBJECT: Proposed Amendments to 1979 FMP for Tanner Crab off Alaska

The amendments proposed by the Council at the August 24-25 meeting which changed the 1978 Tanner Crab FMP to a 1978/79 Tanner Crab FMP have not yet been published in the Federal Register. The 1978 FMP is expected to be implemented on November 1 for the remainder of the year. The 1979 amendment changes are then scheduled to be implemented before January 1, 1979. If that happens, the following are proposed amendments to the 1978/79 Tanner Crab FMP.

The amendments deal with two themes: (1) request by the Japanese Tanner Crab Association for expanded fishing areas and catches in the eastern Bering Sea for 1979, and (2) a change in the regional Tanner crab OY (Kodiak district). There are no amendments proposed for C. bairdi and C. opilio OY's in the eastern Bering Sea. The National Marine Fisheries Service and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game have not completed the stocks survey analysis for Tanner crab in the Bering Sea for 1978.

The following amendments are proposed to the 1979 Tanner Crab FMP:

1. Proposal: Foreign Fishing. Amend the FMP to allow foreign fishing in the area west of 173° West longitude for the entire season.

Proposed by: Japanese Tanner Crab Industry.

Comment: This proposal and the accompanying rationale are contained in Attachment 1.

2. Proposal: Foreign Fishing. Amend the FMP to allow foreign fishing in the area between 173° West longitude and 171° West longitude south of 58° West longitude after the U.S. fishery has terminated.

Proposed by: Japanese Tanner Crab Industry.

Comment: See Attachment 1.

3. Proposal: Foreign Fishing. Amend the FMP to allow foreign fishing for C. bairdi west of 173° West longitude.

Proposed by: Japanese Tanner Crab Industry.

Comment: See Attachment 1.

4. Proposal: Domestic Fishing. Amend the OY for Tanner crab in the Kodiak district to 35 million pounds.

Proposed by: Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Management Plan Drafting Team.

Comment: According to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game, the most recent stock surveys and catch reports indicate the resource is capable of sustaining a catch up to 35 million pounds. The increase is considered conservative and is supported by the SSC.

Additionally, an SSC recommendation has come forth to amend the 1979 FMP to allow an "experimental" U.S. fishery on C. bairdi west of 171° West longitude with no minimum size restriction. This proposed amendment will be advertised as a decision to be made on the November 30-December 1 Council agenda. It is supported by the SSC which discusses it in their report, Agenda Item #7.

We have also received a request by the Republic of Korea for 15,000 MT of Tanner Crab C. opilio to be taken in the area from 58°30' to 59° N. latitude and eastward of 175° W longitude. The request came with a general application for vessel permits (9/19/78) but without individual vessels listing crab as a target species.

Attachments

MIH

TAKEN FROM SSC REPORT

TANNER CRAB FMP

The SSC again considered proposed amendments to the Tanner Crab FMP for 1979. Apparently the only significant modifications bearing on management strategy were a change in the OY for Kodiak and a request by the Japanese for fishing south of 58° N in the Bering Sea.

Present interpretation of the law is that the OY is a quota limiting maximum harvest. Given the annual variability of natural population abundance and the lack of precision in preseason estimates of this abundance, the Committee does not consider a quota as a viable management tool in most cases and therefore, OY should be set high enough to allow for anticipated harvest variability. The Committee reviewed the data presented by ADF&G on Kodiak Tanner crab and considering the 1978 harvest level, the indications of strong recruit year class abundance and the expansion of the fishery to new areas, agrees that the OY range should be raised to an upper figure of 35,000,000 pounds. The Committee noted that appropriate changes to MSY and ABC would be required.

Regarding the Japanese request, the Committee reviewed information presented to it by the Japanese industries on size of bairdi and opilio crab in the area south of 58° North and west of 171° West. It is apparent that bairdi crab are smaller west of 173° West and are roughly comparable to opilio crab in weight although somewhat larger in shell width. The question of allowing Japanese harvest west of 171° West south of 58° seems to be an OY consideration based on anticipated performance of the U.S. fleet. Based on the 1978 fishery, U.S. effort west of 173° West, particularly in March and April, appears unlikely.

JUSTIFICATION FOR INCREASE OF THE KODIAK AREA TANNER CRAB OY

The Kodiak management area for Tanner crab has sustained an average commercial harvest of 25.9 million pounds annually since the more full utilization of the stocks during the 1972-73 season. This average

included a reduced harvest of 13.6 million pounds which resulted from a lengthy price negotiation which delayed the 1974-75 season. The historic performance of the fishery suggests an MSY of 25 million pounds.

A decline in CPUE rates during the 1976-77 season prompted a more conservative allowable harvest of 20,720,000. This resulted in establishing a 15 to 25 million pound harvest range for the 1977-78 fishing season by the Alaska Board of Fisheries that was subsequently included in the draft of the Tanner Crab Management Plan as an OY harvest range.

The performance of the 1977-78 fishing season indicated an excellent population of available legal size crab and distribution of harvest of these crab depicted an expansion of fishing effort to previously under-utilized fishing grounds. The increase of the Kodiak area Tanner crab OY level from 15 to 25 million pounds to 20 to 35 million pounds is required to provide for the possible occurrence of a harvest similar to the 33,281,000 pounds 1977-78 fishery.

Factors which support this increase are as follows:

1. Commercial fishery catch per pot data indicates no signs of overharvest when comparing the trend compared to increase of effort level.
2. Expansion of the fishing effort to new grounds to more fully utilize available stocks.
3. Fishing mortality estimates have shown an exploitation rate of 18 percent by actual tag returns. When considering a tag loss estimate of 15 percent and unrecovered harvested tagged crab amounting to approximately 10 percent during the 1977-78 season from stocks surveyed would suggest an exploitation rate of less than 40 percent.
4. Width frequency sampling at the 1977-78 commercial harvest has been comparable to past years.

Attachment #1:

STATEMENT BY THE JAPANESE TANNER CRAB INDUSTRY
on the
FMP FOR TANNER CRAB OFF THE COAST OF ALASKA FOR 1978-79

Prepared for the Public Hearing of the North Pacific Council
August 24, 1978

Mr. Chairman, members of the Council. My name is Shoji Ono.

During the June meeting, our proposal was accepted by the Council. We thank you very much for the opportunity allowing the Japanese fleet to fish south of 58° N and west of 173° W beginning from the 7th of July.

Our hope for the 1979 FMP is as follows:

1. In the fishing ground west of 171° W and south of 58° N, we would like to make the following proposal:
 - (a) At least in the area west of 173° W, we would like to fish for the entire season.
 - (b) In the area between 173° W and 171° W, we would also like to propose that we be allowed to fish after the U.S. fishery has terminated.
(See attachment A)
2. With regard to the catch of C. bairdi:
 - (a) In the area west of 173° W, we would like to retain the catch of C. bairdi.
 - (b) In the area east of 173° W, we will return all C. bairdi.

Rationale for the area proposal:

- (a) In spite of the fact that the new area was opened as of July 7th, due to the late period and the concentrated fishing effort in the area north of 58° N, the CPUE decreased and one of our mothership fleets is still operating. (See attachments B1, B2, and B3)
- (b) The drift ice condition for this year was the exception and we still have fear for the conditions that may persist during 1979 and the future.
- (c) Rather than concentrate our fishing effort in a small area, we believe it is more reasonable to utilize the vast C. opilio resources over a wider area.

Rationale for retaining the catch of C. bairdi:

- (a) In the area west of 173° W, the size of C. bairdi and C. opilio was found to be almost the same in our fishery this year. (See attachment C) Since the market price is determined by the size of the crab rather than the species, we do not believe that the smaller C. bairdi captured by the Japanese fleet will be competing with the larger size C. bairdi of the U.S. fleet.

(b) Since we will not retain C. bairdi in the fishing area between 171° W and 173° W, we will concentrate our fishing effort on C. opilio in order to avoid the problems encountered in separating and returning C. bairdi.

We thank you very much for your consideration of our proposal and trust that your decision will be reasonable.

Japanese Tanner Crab Industry,

Shoji Ono

Shoji Nagata

Attachments (5)

STATUS OF THE
UNITED STATES TANNER AND KING CRAB
FISHERY IN THE EASTERN BERING SEA
1978

BY: JACK LECHNER
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

The 1978 United States fishery for king and Tanner 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). The 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, except that vessels registered for statistical area "H", are not allowed to fish king crab in any other registration area.

In the Tanner crab fishery, the Eastern Bering Sea is a district of statistical area "J". Statistical area "J" has Cape Douglas as its eastern boundary and extends west, including the Kodiak, South Peninsula, Eastern Aleutian, Western Aleutian and Bering Sea districts. The Bering Sea district encompasses the same geographic area as the statistical area "Q" defined for king crab.

The Alaska Board of Fisheries established subdistricts in the Eastern Bering Sea for administrative separation of Tanner crab stocks. These subdistricts were defined as the Southeastern, Pribilof and Northern subdistricts. The Southeastern subdistrict was defined as all waters of the Eastern Bering Sea east of 168° W. long. and south of the latitude of Cape Newenham (58°39' N. lat.),

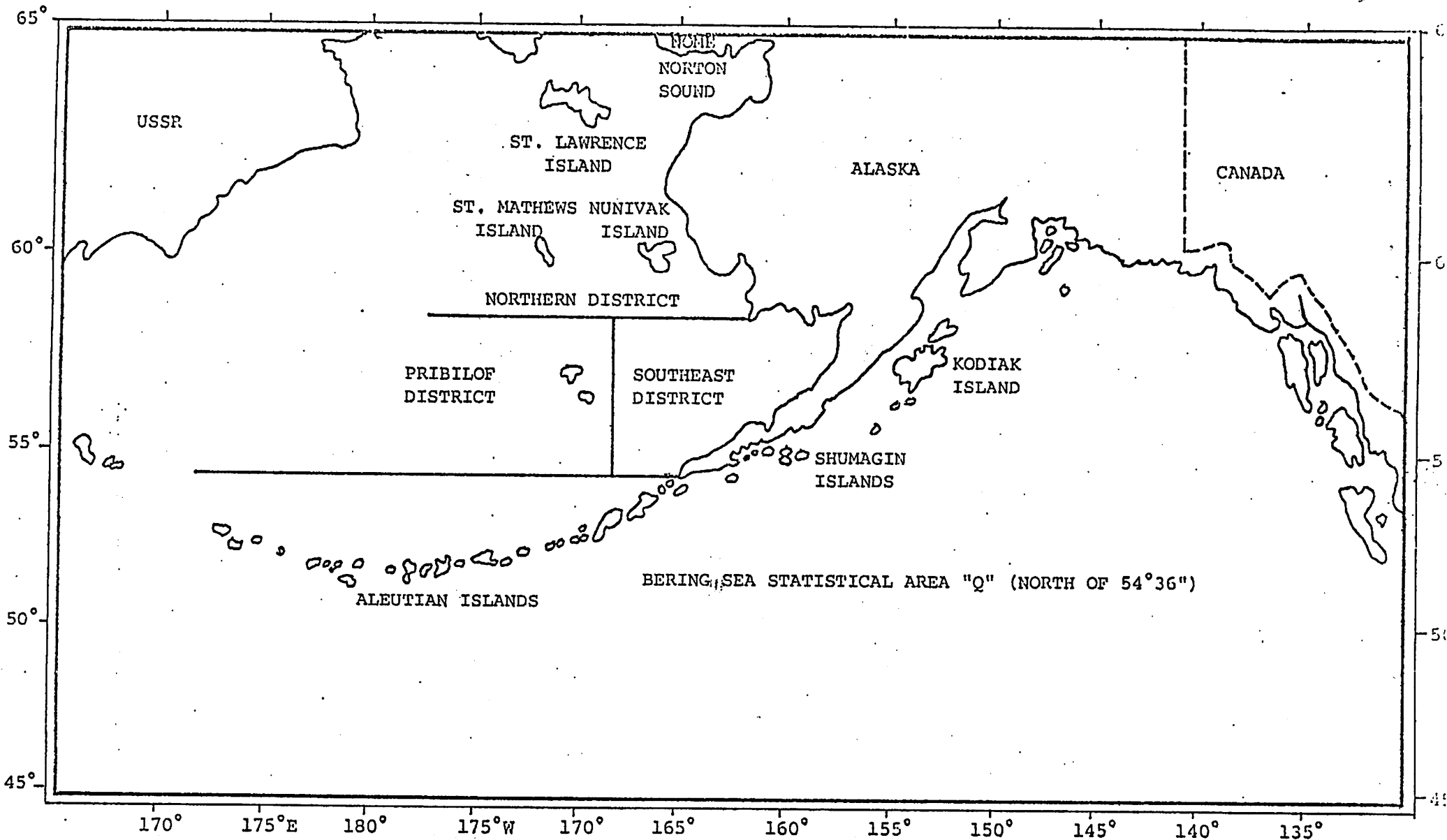


FIGURE 1-- Description of United States Fishing Districts in the Eastern Bering Sea 1977.

including the waters of Bristol Bay; the Pribilof subdistrict as all waters of the Bering Sea, west of 168° W. long, and south of the latitude of Cape Newenham (58°39' N. lat.); and the Northern subdistrict as all waters of the Bering Sea north of Cape Newenham (58°39' N. lat.), (Fig. 1).

In the king crab fishery these Tanner crab subdistricts were termed districts of statistical area "Q". The Northern district for king crab was further divided into a Nome section and a general section. The Nome section includes all waters of Norton Sound between the longitude of Penny River and the longitude of Topkok Head. The Nome section represents an administrative area for winter fishing through the ice and subsistence regulations, (Fig. 1).

Until 1977, the Eastern Bering Sea had been regulated as one management unit and the closure of the crab fisheries north of the Alaska Peninsula and west including the Pribilof Islands, precluded any exploration of fishing grounds north of Cape Newenham. The Board adoption of the subdistrict and district concept provided three areas that geographically separated the currently utilized king and Tanner crab stocks by the U.S. fleet.

The Bering Sea crab fishery harvests two species of king crab and two species of Tanner crab. The king crab fishery is most dependent upon the red king crab Paralithodes camtschatica in the Southeastern district. In 1973 the U.S. king crab fishery expanded to the Pribilof Islands where primarily blue king crab P. platypus are harvested. 1978 saw continued expansion of the fishery by the U.S. of the blue crab fishery in the St. Matthews Island area and a red king crab fishery in Norton Sound, (Fig. 2). In the Tanner crab fishery Chionoecetes bairdi is the target species, with incidental harvests of C. opilio during the bairdi season, with a developing target fishery for opilio during the summer months. This fishery primarily exists in the Southeastern and Pribilof districts, (Fig. 1).

TANNER CRAB

The 1978 U.S. domestic harvest of Tanner crab to date totaled 67,944,289 pounds (30,819 mt) or 27,455,739 crab. This represents a 16,068,054 pound (7288 mt) increase over the 1977 harvest. This years harvest totaled 54,357,026 pounds (24,656 mt) from the Southeastern district and 13,587,263 pounds (6163 mt) from the Pribilof district (Fig. 1). The species composition of the harvest was 66,228,040 pounds (30,041 mt) or 26,188,543 of C. bairdi Tanner crab and 1,716,249 pounds (778 mt) or 1,267,196 C. opilio Tanner crab (Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4). An effort of 118 vessels participated to date in the 1978 Eastern Bering Sea Tanner crab fishery.

Bairdi Tanner Crab

In the Southeastern district 51.3 percent of the harvest was from INPFC areas 5564 and 5563, with 18.5 percent from an expanded fishery to the east, in INPFC area 5661. In the Pribilof district 61.2 percent of the harvest occurred in INPFC area 5669, which represents the area surrounding St. George Island (Fig. 2).

The average C. bairdi delivered during 1978 was 153.6 mm in carapace width and 2.5 pounds (1.13 kg), (Fig. 3). The fishery to date totaled 823 landings with 521,923 pot lifts, for an average of 51 crab per pot. This represents an increase of 216,871 pot lifts and a decrease of 16 crab per pot in comparison to 1977. The more intensive effort during the 1978 season demonstrated a significant reduction in CPUE for the period from April through June. In past seasons these months have reflected continued high CPUE rates with less vessel effort, (Fig. 4 and Table 5).

Table 1 : Historic U.S. Tanner crab catch in the eastern Bering Sea, 1968-1978.

Year	Number of			Pounds	Crab per Pot Lift	Average Weight
	Landings	Pot Lifts	Crab			
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
1977	580.0	305,052	20,412,566	51,876,235	66.9	2.54
1978	823.0* ¹	508,776	26,188,543	66,228,040	51.0	2.50
	37.0* ²	13,177	1,267,196	1,716,249	96.0	1.3

*¹bairdi

*²opilio

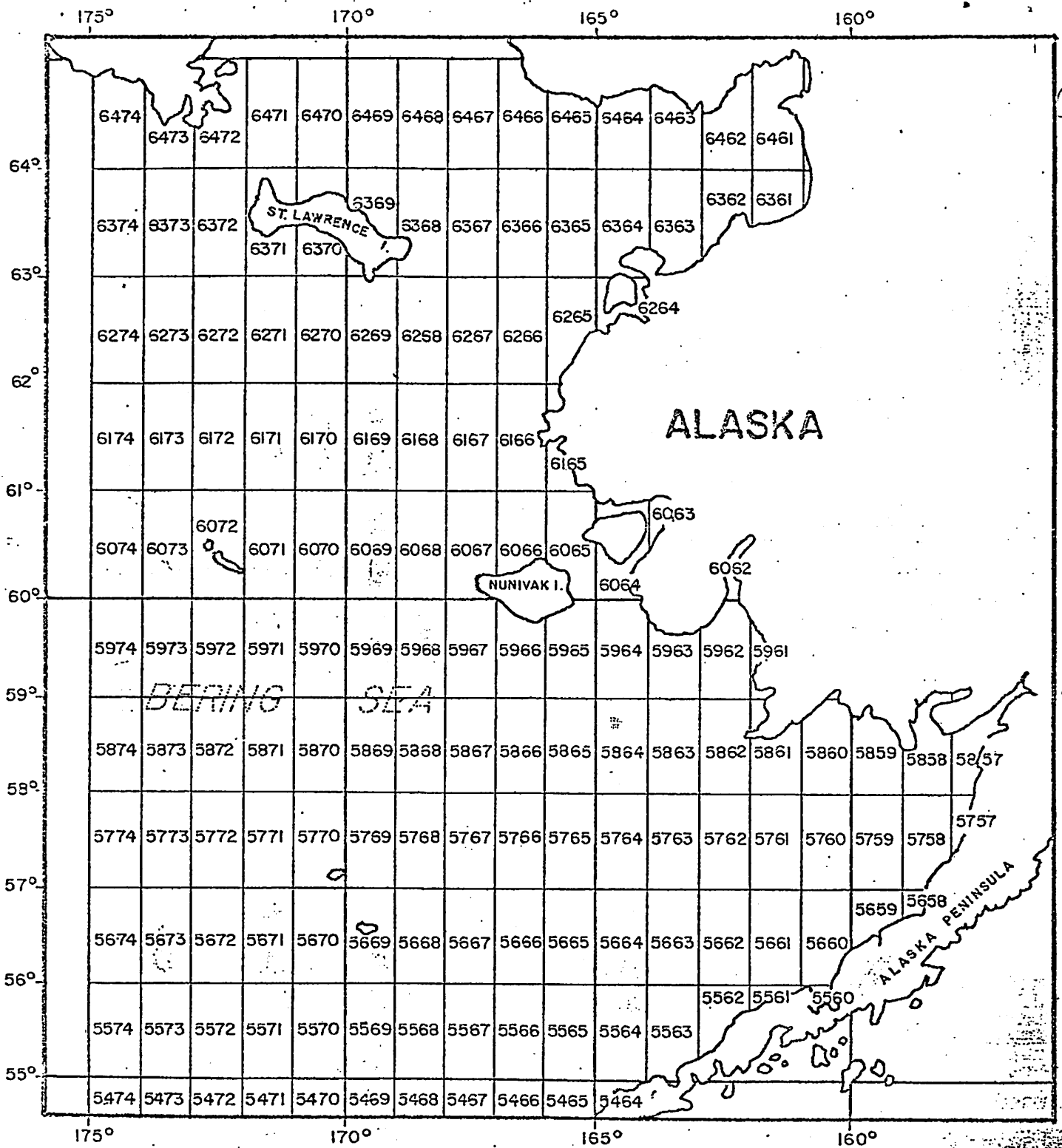


FIGURE 2. INDFC Areas for the Eastern Bering Sea King and Tanner Crab, 1977.

Table 2: Catch and effort for all species of Tanner crab by the U.S. fleet in the eastern Bering Sea by INPFC area, through September 1978.

<u>INPFC Area</u>	<u>Number of Landings</u>	<u>Number of Vessels</u>	<u>Number of Crab</u>	<u>Number of Pounds</u>	<u>Number of Pot Lifts</u>	<u>Average Weight</u>	<u>Average Crab Per Pot</u>
5464	53.28	23	1,972,006	4,982,454	29,302	2.5	67
5465	4.50	3	62,577	135,885	1,237	2.1	50
5562	10.84	11	337,118	877,509	6,271	2.6	53
5563	162.74	60	5,516,312	13,909,934	100,534	2.5	55
5564	195.71	65	5,964,623	14,427,327	110,891	2.4	54
5565	26.83	22	725,422	1,817,426	15,926	2.5	46
5566	.50	1	14,380	33,214	429	2.3	33
5567	.50	1	14,380	33,214	439	2.3	32
5661	130.89	58	3,870,083	10,088,083	78,746	2.6	49
5662	48.73	34	1,199,470	3,083,936	28,784	2.6	42
5663	16.37	15	463,944	1,174,273	9,839	2.5	47
5664	10.28	11	212,559	498,336	5,920	2.3	40
5665	14.66	9	472,509	1,163,660	9,998	2.4	47
5666	12.50	6	612,414	990,372	5,408	1.6	113
5667	5.00	3	69,142	98,545	1,900	1.4	36
5668	1.50	2	65,335	164,188	1,350	2.5	48
5669	94.17	32	3,931,613	9,579,358	73,189	2.4	54
5670	25.99	11	923,637	2,257,140	17,514	2.4	53
5761	10.50	6	388,792	998,758	5,920	2.5	65
5764	2.00	1	19,025	44,100	600	2.3	31
5768	2.00	1	79,720	204,355	1,862	2.5	42
5769	3.50	4	83,992	217,661	2,379	2.5	35
5770	21.33	17	314,611	804,339	10,781	2.5	29
5771	5.68	3	142,075	360,222	2,734	2.5	51
TOTAL	860.00	118	27,455,719	67,944,289	521,953	2.5	53

Table 3: Catch and effort for bairdi Tanner crab by the U.S. fleet in the eastern Bering Sea by INPFC area, through September 1978.

<u>INPFC Area</u>	<u>Number of Landings</u>	<u>Number of Vessels</u>	<u>Number of Crab</u>	<u>Number of Pounds</u>	<u>Number of Pot Lifts</u>	<u>Average Weight</u>	<u>Average Crab Per Pot</u>
5464	53.28	23	1,972,006	4,982,454	29,302	2.5	67
5465	4.50	3	62,577	135,885	1,237	2.1	50
5562	10.84	11	337,118	877,509	6,271	2.6	53
5563	162.74	60	5,516,312	13,909,934	100,534	2.5	55
5564	183.21	64	5,631,038	13,970,096	106,065	2.5	53
5565	25.83	21	712,772	1,797,325	15,846	2.5	45
5566	.50	1	14,380	33,214	429	2.3	33
5567	.50	1	14,380	33,214	439	2.3	32
5661	128.89	58	3,855,278	10,066,798	78,385	2.6	49
5662	47.73	34	1,197,044	3,080,636	28,471	2.6	42
5663	16.37	15	463,944	1,174,273	9,839	2.5	47
5664	8.28	10	185,456	460,656	4,820	2.4	38
5665	14.16	8	463,946	1,150,520	9,648	2.4	48
5666	6.50	5	160,214	404,820	3,300	2.5	48
5667	1.00	1	6,000	14,430	800	2.4	7
5668	1.50	2	65,335	164,188	1,350	2.5	48
5669	88.17	32	3,605,943	9,129,683	70,725	2.5	51
5670	23.99	11	896,585	2,212,970	17,039	2.5	53
5761	10.50	6	388,792	998,758	5,920	2.5	65
5764	2.00	1	19,025	44,100	600	2.3	31
5768	2.00	1	79,720	204,355	1,862	2.5	42
5769	3.50	4	83,992	217,661	2,379	2.5	35
5770	21.33	17	314,611	804,339	10,781	2.5	29
5771	5.68	3	142,075	360,222	2,734	2.5	51
TOTAL	823.00	118	26,188,543	66,228,040	508,776	2.5	51

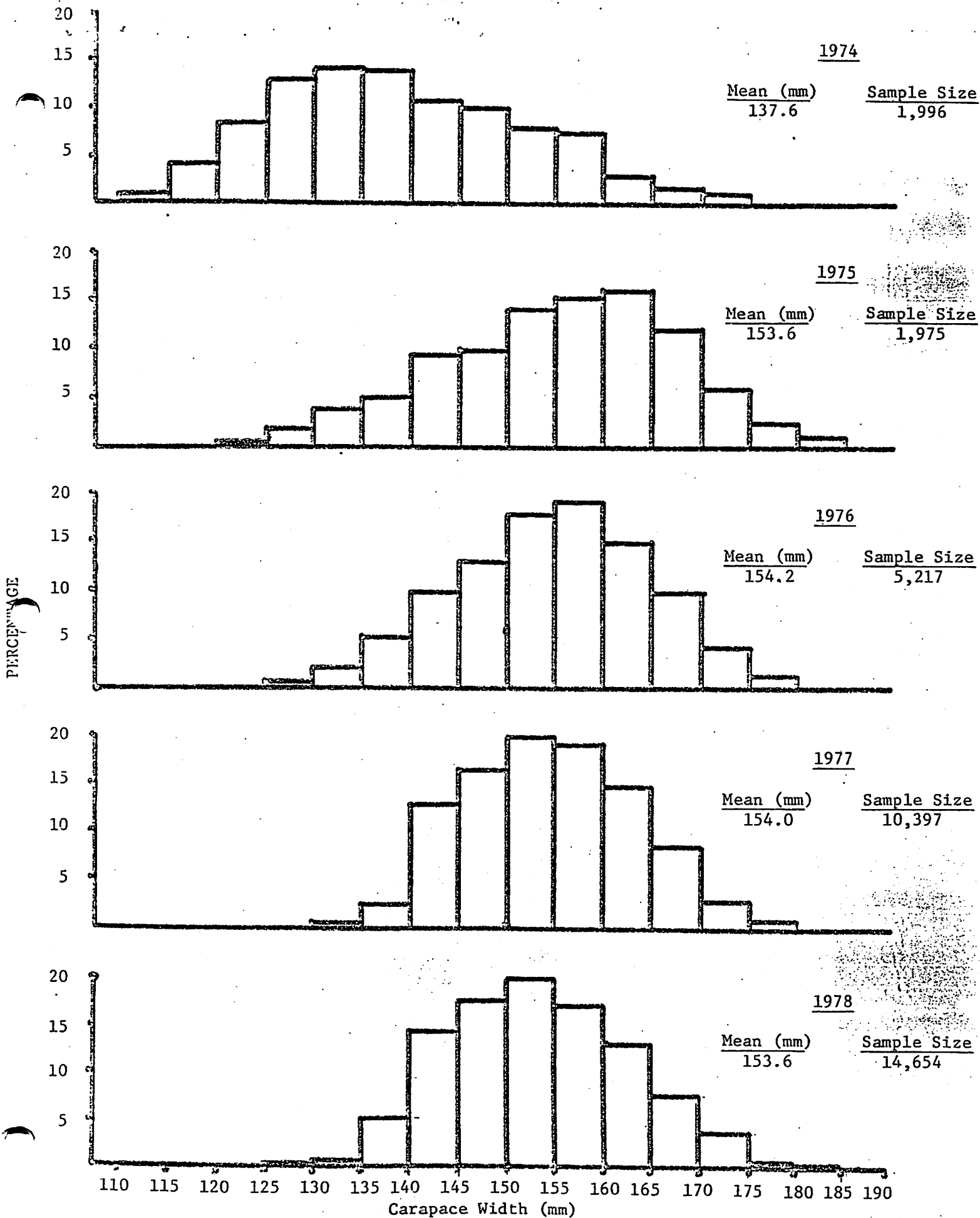


FIGURE 3. Comparative width frequency intervals for *C. bairdi* Tanner crab caught in Bering Sea in years 1974-78.

Table 4: Catch and effort for opilio Tanner crab by U.S. fleet in the eastern Bering Sea by INPFC area, through September 1978.

<u>INPFC Area</u>	<u>Number of Landings</u>	<u>Number of Vessels</u>	<u>Number of Crab</u>	<u>Number of Pounds</u>	<u>Number of Pot Lifts</u>	<u>Average Weight</u>	<u>Average Crab Per Pot</u>
5564	12.50	8	333,585	457,231	4,826	1.4	69
5565	1.00	1	12,650	20,101	80	1.5	158
5661	2.00	2	14,805	21,285	361	1.4	41
5662	1.00	1	2,426	3,300	313	1.3	7
5664	2.00	2	27,103	37,680	1,100	1.4	25
5665	.50	1	8,563	13,140	350	1.5	24
5666	6.00	2	452,200	585,552	2,108	1.2	214
5667	4.00	3	63,142	84,115	1,100	1.3	57
5669	6.00	3	325,670	449,675	2,464	1.3	132
5670	2.00	1	27,052	44,170	475	1.6	56
TOTAL	37.00	15	1,267,196	1,716,249	13,177	1.3	96

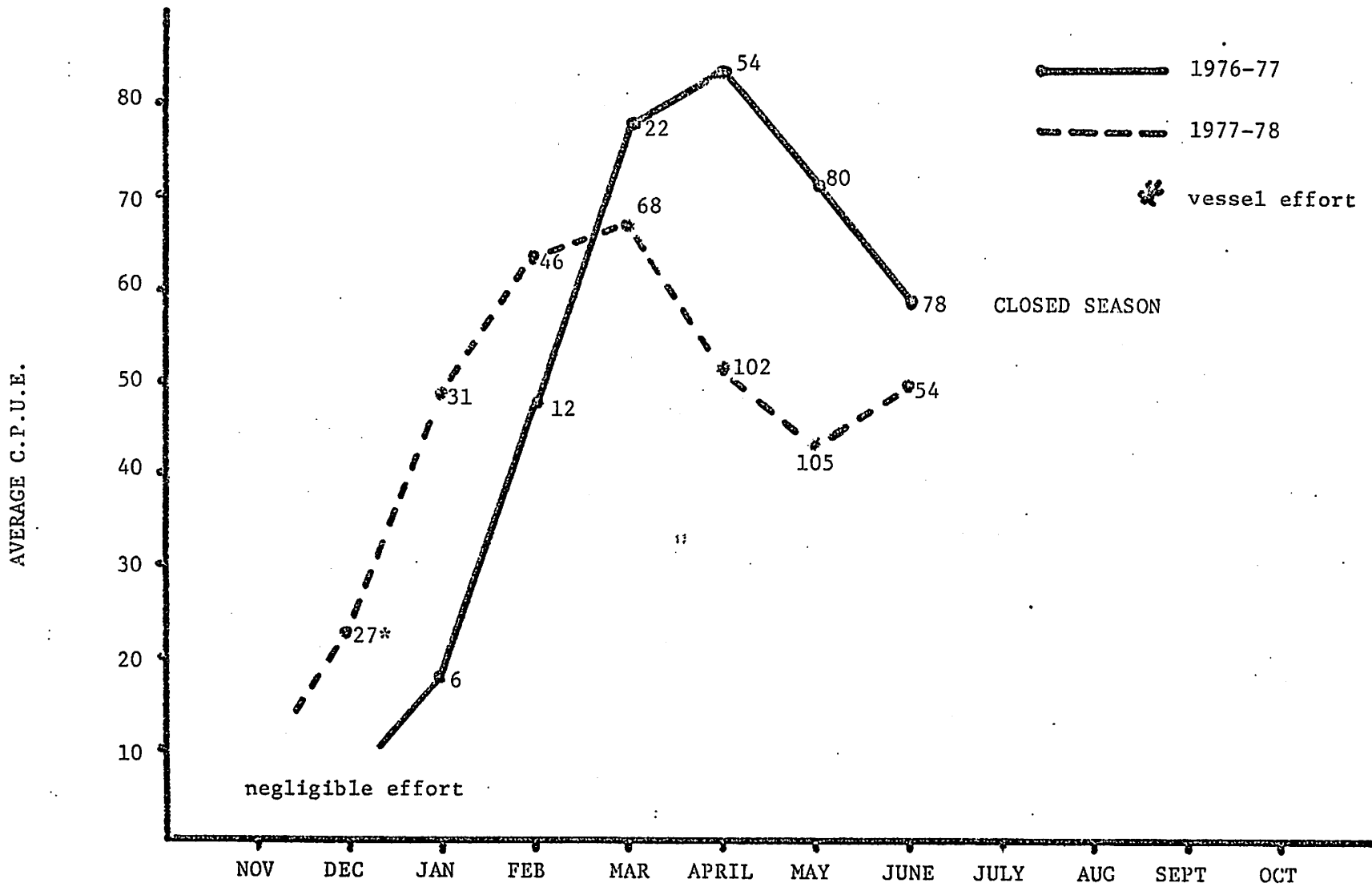


FIGURE 4. Average CPUE by month for bairdi Tanner crab, eastern Bering Sea, 1976-77 and 1977-78 season.

Opilio Tanner Crab

The majority of the C. opilio Tanner crab harvest was from INPFC areas 5564, 5666 and 5670. A total of 37 landings with 13, 177 pot lifts averaged 96 crab per pot. The directed fishery on C. opilio resulted in an average crab harvest of 113.0 mm carapace width and 1.3 pounds (0.59 kg) per crab, (Table 4 and Fig. 5).

KING CRAB

Previous to the season opening of September 10, 1978 in the Southeastern and Pribilof districts red king crab season, the Bering Sea king crab fishery saw the conclusion of the 1977-78 Pribilof Island blue king crab fishery on January 20, 1978, and the Northern district king crab season existed from July 15, 1978 through September 3, 1978.

Pribilof Island Blue King Crab Fishery

The conclusion of the September 15, 1977 through January 20, 1978 season represented a harvest of 1,792,890 pounds (813.2 mt) or 228,501 crab during January 1978 (Table 6). This brought the 1977-78 season harvest total to 6,297,469 pounds (2,857 mt). The seasons average weight per crab was 7.9 pounds (3.58 kg) and average carapace length was 147.9 mm, which is comparable to the previous season. The 1978-79 season opening of September 15, 1978 has seen no effort to date, but will develop towards the conclusion of the Southeastern district red king crab fishery later this fall.

Northern District Blue King Crab Fishery

The 1978 Northern district blue king crab fishery centered around St. Matthew Island, primarily in INPFC areas 6072 and 6073. A small exploratory fishery occurred in INPFC area 6371 south of St. Lawrence Island. This fishery produced 1,983,339 pounds (899.6 mt) or 441,928 crab. A total of 22 vessels fished, which

made 68 landings from 42,654 pot lifts. The average weight per crab was 4.5 pounds (2.04 kg) and the average catch per pot was 10.4 crab (Table 6).

Northern District Red King Crab Fishery

The 1978 red king crab fishery in the Northern district was composed of winter fishery through the ice by the residents of the City of Nome and a limited summer small boat fishery by Norton Sound residents. Additional effort of seven large king crab boats during the summer season in the Northern district harvested the majority of the catch. A harvest of 2,156,914 pounds (978.4 mt) or 713,307 crab by 12,166 pot lifts, represented an overall average of 58.6 crab per pot. Use of non standard crab pots decreased the catch per pot average, which will require further analysis to judge actual CPUE trends. The most significant factor in the 1978 season was the catch by large vessels that occurred further to the west than the 1977 season in INPFC areas 6466, 6467 and 6366, and that the average weight was 3.0 pounds (1.36 kg), which reflected a .5 pound (.23 kg) average weight increase over the 1977 fishery, (Table 6). Possibly the occurrence of the fishery further off shore was the primary factor that saw the 1978 fishery by large vessels exist with insignificant deadloss occurrence, compared to the more inshore 1977 fishery that resulted in high deadloss occurrence due to salinity variations.

Southeastern District Red King Crab Fishery

The 1978 Southeastern district red king crab season opened September 10, 1978. The fishery performance has been exceptional to date and reflects availability of crab for harvest that will produce a 1978 season harvest in the upper end of the 60 to 90 million pound (27,222 to 40,823 mt) harvest range. It is projected that a harvest of 80 to 90 million pounds (36,329 to 40,823 mt) will bring this season to a conclusion by the first week of November. The fishery has totaled 47 million pounds (21,319 mt) of landed crab as of October 8, 1978 and an estimated

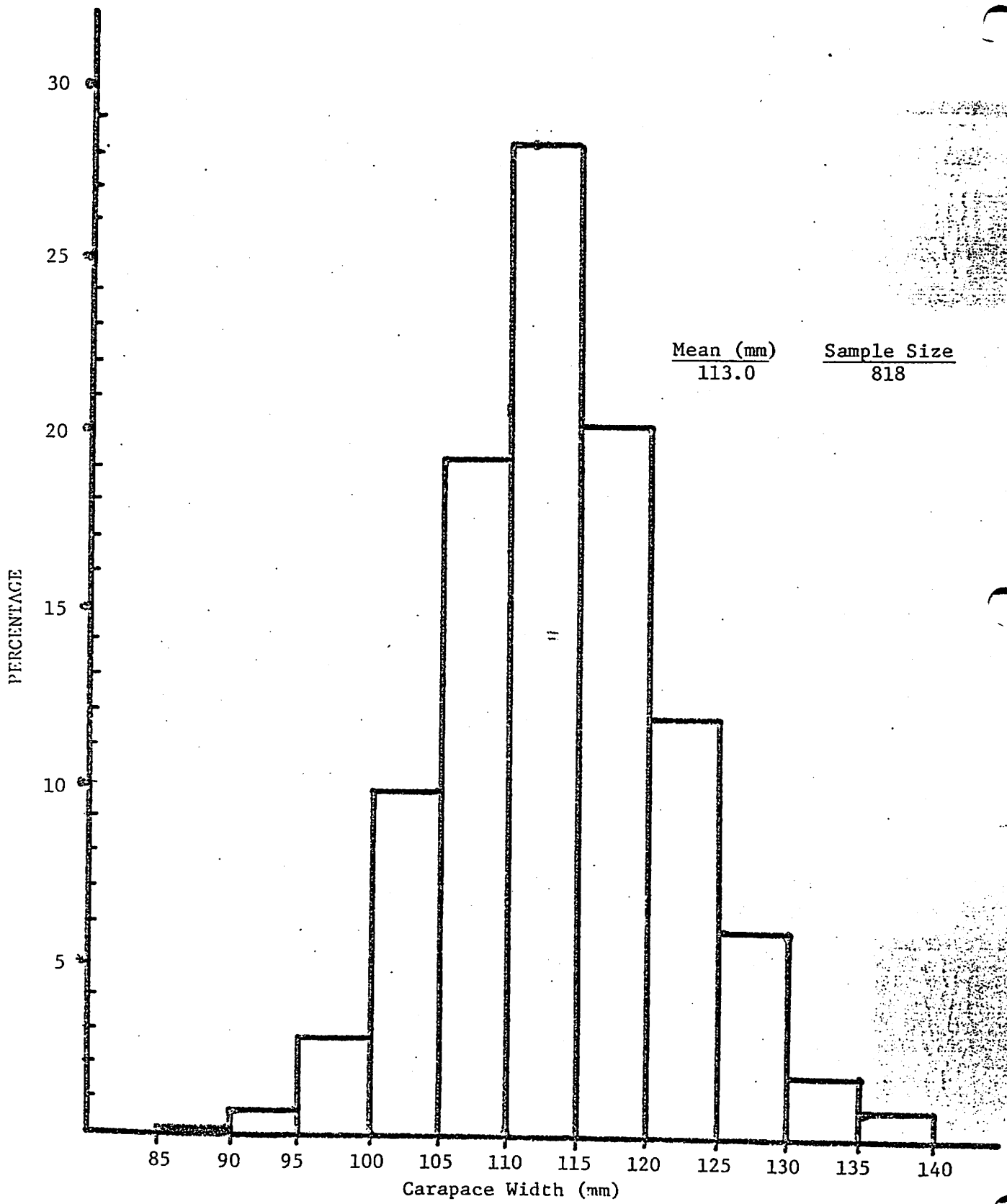


FIGURE 5. Comparative width frequency intervals for C. opilio Tanner crab caught in the Bering Sea, 1978.

Table 5. Catch and effort for Tanner crab by U.S. domestic fleet in the eastern Bering Sea by month, through August 1978.

<u>Month</u>	<u>Number of Landings</u>	<u>Number of Vessels</u>	<u>Number of Crab</u>	<u>Number of Pounds</u>	<u>Number of Pot Lifts</u>	<u>Average Weight</u>	<u>Average Catch Per Pot</u>
Jan.	41.00	31	828,395	2,125,695	17,279	2.6	48
Feb.	92.00	46	3,103,973	7,770,351	49,513	2.5	63
March	150.00	68	6,159,155	15,334,013	92,591	2.5	67
April	234.00	102	8,411,459	21,222,714	165,622	2.5	51
May	242.00	105	6,491,778	16,300,200	150,835	2.5	43
June	94.00	54	2,156,861	4,809,638	44,075	2.2	49
July*	7.00	3	304,118	381,678	2,038	1.3	149
August	NO HARVEST						
TOTAL	860.00	118	27,455,739	67,944,289	521,953	2.5	53

*C. opilio fishery

Table 6. Catch and effort statistics for king crab catch by U.S. fleet in the Northern district of the eastern Bering Sea, January through September 1978.

	<u>INPFC Area</u>	<u>Number of Landings</u>	<u>Number of Vessels</u>	<u>Number of Crab</u>	<u>Number of Pounds</u>	<u>Number of Pot Lifts</u>	<u>Average Weight</u>	<u>Average Crab Per Pot</u>
Pribilof Blue	5668	.34		2,602	21,082	300	8.1	8.0
King Crab	5669	13.33		96,261	767,254	9,694	7.9	9.0
Fishery	5670	3.33		27,553	215,080	3,090	7.8	8.0
	5770	16.50		96,270	742,374	14,837	7.7	6.0
	5771	5.00		5,815	47,100	600	8.0	9.0
SUBTOTAL		<u>34.00</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>228,501</u>	<u>1,792,890</u>	<u>28,521</u>	<u>7.8</u>	<u>8.0</u>

St. Matthew-								
South St. Lawrence	6071	2.00		12,213	55,835	1,060	4.5	11.0
Island Blue	6072	39.34		224,101	1,009,219	21,692	4.5	10.0
Crab Fishery	6073	25.66		203,388	908,355	19,722	4.5	10.0
	6371	1.00		2,226	9,930	180	4.5	12.0
SUBTOTAL		<u>68.00</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>441,928</u>	<u>1,983,339</u>	<u>42,654</u>	<u>4.5</u>	<u>10.4</u>

Norton Sound	6266	1.00		29,025	83,957	407		
Red King Crab	6362	.33		5,031	15,246	120	3.0	41.0
Fishery	6366	5.00		168,282	515,811	1,650	3.1	102.0
	6367	1.00		16,542	49,296	123	3.0	135.0
	6465	279.00* ¹		45,241	126,673	1,806	2.7	25.0
	6466	16.17		230,692	694,990	4,395	3.0	52.0
	6467	15.5		218,494	670,941	3,692	3.1	59.0
SUBTOTAL		<u>318.0</u>	<u>7*²</u>	<u>713,307</u>	<u>2,156,914</u>	<u>12,193</u>	<u>3.0</u>	<u>58.6</u>

Blue King Crab		102.0		670,429	3,776,229	71,175	5.6	9.4
Red King Crab		<u>318.0</u>		<u>713,307</u>	<u>2,156,914</u>	<u>12,166</u>	<u>3.0</u>	<u>58.6</u>
SUBTOTAL		<u>420.0</u>		<u>1,383,736</u>	<u>5,933,143</u>	<u>83,341</u>	<u>n/a</u>	<u>n/a</u>

*¹Represents many small landings by winter ice fishery.

*²Represents actual crab vessels participating in fishery.

60 million pounds (27,215 mt) will be landed by October 14, 1978. Addition to this landed amount, an estimated 10 million pounds (45,359 mt) of harvested crab will be aboard vessels.



F36/CB

SEP 29 1978

TO: F - Terry L. Leitzell
FROM: F3 - *Roland F. Smith*
SUBJECT: Approval of an Amendment to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Commercial Tanner Crab Fishery off the Coast of Alaska to extend the Plan into 1979--ACTION MEMORANDUM (By September 29, 1978)

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council, at its August 24-25 meeting, discussed and approved an amendment to the FMP for Commercial Tanner Crabs off the Coast of Alaska to extend the plan to October 31, 1979. The purpose of this memorandum is to seek your concurrence in my recommendation to approve the amendment.

BACKGROUND

The Tanner crab FMP was approved earlier this year (April 18, 1978) and proposed regulations were published on May 16, 1978 (43 FR 21170). The comment period on the proposed regulations expired June 30, 1978 and implementation has been delayed pending resolution of outstanding issues such as "in-season" adjustments and delegation of authority. The amendment extends the effective time period of the plan to October 31, 1979, and establishes a new fishing year covering the period November 1, 1978, to October 31, 1979. No other changes are proposed.

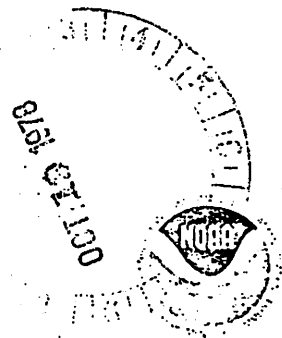
ISSUES

1. The Validity of the Extended Estimates

The figures used to extend through 1979 the optimum yield (OY), total allowable level of foreign fishing (TALFF), and U.S. capacity are essentially interim figures that in the future will change to reflect new survey data. To date, however, no new evidence is available to support changes in OY, TALFF, and U.S. capacity; therefore, extension of the current estimates is necessary at this time to allow implementation of the plan as early as possible in November 1978, when the fishing season starts in several management areas.

cc: Tallian
Wakken

NPFMC



2. Waiver of the APA "cooling off" period.

In order to implement this amendment by early November and allow for the 45-day comment period for the proposed regulations that will arise from this amendment, a waiver of the 30-day "cooling off" period as required by the Administrative Procedure Act is necessary. There is "good cause" to waive the "cooling off" period because of the following: (a) This amendment is not controversial although the Tanner crab plan itself is. There will be only one change in the regulations and that change is to delete the date "1978" in one sentence. (b) Implementation by early November will minimize disruption of fishing seasons because three of the four registration areas for crab fishing open shortly after November 1--specifically November 15, December 1, and January 1. The fourth area opened September 1.

3. Sufficiency of the Notice and Hearing Procedures

The notice of the August 24-25 North Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting (43 FR 3059) indicated that this item would be discussed. The public had an opportunity during the meeting to comment on this action. The Council has adequately met FCMA notice and hearing requirements.

PREDICTED REACTIONS

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

The Council is very anxious to have the Tanner crab plan implemented and is quite concerned that this amendment be quickly approved and effected.

Foreign Nations

Although the Japanese (the only foreign nation concerned with the Tanner crab plan) are opposed to the FMP, they are unlikely to object to this amendment.

Department of State

We expect no adverse comments from State.

Domestic Fishermen

Domestic fishermen will generally support the implementation of the FMP.

RECOMMENDATION

In order to be able to implement the Tanner crab FMP, I recommend that you approve the amendment and publish proposed regulations in the Federal Register. If you concur please also sign the attached information memorandum advising the Administrator of your decision. The amendment will then be implemented after completion of the comment period for the proposed regulations.

CONCURRENCE

I concur

I do not concur

I wish to consult with _____

Date

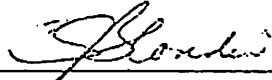
10/2/78


Terry L. Leitzell
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

CLEARANCES

DATE

F4 - DWallace




9/29

F36 - RFinch



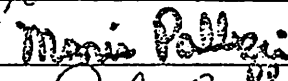
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F37 - DMoore



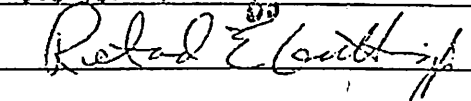
9/29

F35 - MPallosi



9/29/78

GCF - R Gutting



9/28/78

Prepared by Clem Bribitzer, 254-8554, 8/12/78
Revised by Jim McCallum, 254-5086, 9/22/78:ba

cc: F, F3(2), F36 (3), F4, F37, F35, CCF, FAK, NPFMC

F36:NPFMC:CBribitzer:254-8554:8/13/78:ba
Revised:Bribitzer:9/20/78:bv
Revised:Eribitzer:9/21/78:ba
Revised:McCallum:9/25/78:ba
Revised:McCallum:9/26/78:ba
Retyped:McCallum:9/27/78:ba



AGENDA ITEM 14 NOV 1978

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

October 23, 1978

PG 10F3

14#15



Mr. Jim Branson
Executive Director
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
P. O. Box 31360T
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Jim:

We have been asked by the Central Office to forward to you the following comments by Mr. Sano, Director, Oceanic Fisheries Department, JFA. The comments pertain to the Groundfish and Tanner Crab Regulations and Allocations off Alaska for 1979.

1. Groundfish fishery

(1) Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Area

(i) Allocations

- a) To rescind the regulation "---500 mt or 5% of the OY (whichever is the greater) of each species will be held in reserve for allocation---", to allocate the total reserve of 73,000 mt to the TALFF initially and to increase the TALFF.
- b) In case the above reserved quantity is maintained in the regulations, to reallocate it to foreign nations as soon as possible.
- c) To decrease the DAH in each species to a more realistic level (24,600 mt of the total DAH seems to be over-estimated) and to reallocate promptly the uncaught domestic allocation.
- d) To reassess the stocks of POP and other species (to increase ABC for these stocks).
- e) Especially, to increase the Japanese allocations for pollock, sablefish, Pacific cod, flounders and Pacific herring.

(ii) Regulations

- a) To remove the prohibition of longline fishery in the "Winter Halibut-savings Areas", landward of the 500m isobath in winter from December 1 to May 31.
- b) To release a portion of the closure area (east of 168° w) for Pacific herring (above all, for the gillnet fishery).

TO: JIM BRANSON
FROM: HARRY RIETZE

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c) To relax the closed area within 12 miles and the closed season in all Aleutian Islands area (especially for the landbased trawl fishery, i.e. Hokuten trawl fishery).

(2) The Gulf of Alaska

(i) Allocations

a) To increase the ABC, and to raise the OY up to the ABC level.

b) To reestimate DAH and reserves (with respect to joint ventures for foreign at-sea processing, to reduce the reserve (130,000 mt) of pollock to a more appropriate amount).

c) To remove the reserve restrictions (or reduce it to, at most, around 5% of OY) and to reevaluate and reallocate promptly excessive DAH and reserves early in the season.

d) To set up national allocations on the basis of actual catch records.

e) To increase the Japanese allocations for pollock, POP, other rockfishes for the trawl fishery, and sablefish and Pacific cod for the longline fishery.

f) To increase the Japanese allocation of Pacific squid up to around 500 mt and, if impossible, to include squid in the "other species" category (with regard to fishery closure procedures in case of exceeding catch allocations).

(ii) Regulations

a) To remove the regulation to use only pelagic trawl and the limit of 25% of the total Japanese allocation in winter, from December 1 to May 31.

b) To remove or reconsider the apportioning of OY into 5 INPFC Statistical Areas and the accompanied regulation of fishery closure procedures.

c) To open the sanctuary of Davidson Bank (for the longline fishery).

d) To release the waters from 3 to 12 miles between 169° w and 170° w for foreign fishing.

TO: JIM BRANSON
FROM: HARRY RIETZE

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- e) To grant a 20% (100 m) allowance for the 500 m isobath restriction of the directed fishery for sablefish.
- f) To open the waters east of 140° W during the off season of U.S. longline vessels (for the longline fishery).
- g) To permit fishing of Pacific cod in the waters east of 157° W and Landward of 500 m isobath.

2. Tanner crab fishery in the Bering Sea

(i) Regulations

To open the fishing ground south of 58° N and to allow the Japanese harvest of *C. bairdi*.

(ii) Allocation

To increase the OY and the Japanese allocation.

3. Fee schedule

(i) To set up reasonable ex-vessel prices which reflect the actual situation in Japan (specifically, pollock, flounders, tanner crab and sablefish).

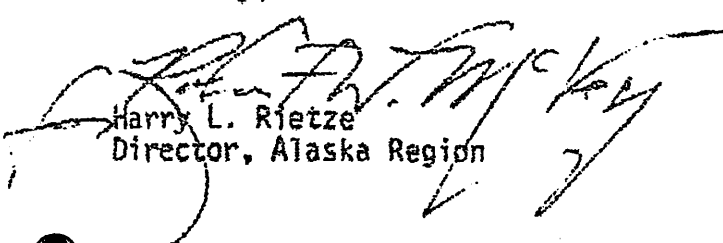
(ii) To reduce the poundage fee (no more than 1.5% of ex-vessel value).

(iii) To reduce the burden of the observer costs.

4. Requests for 1978

To review the reserves in the Gulf of Alaska and DAA's in the Atlantic Ocean, and to reallocate unharvested domestic allocations to foreign nations early in the fishing seasons.

Sincerely,


Harry L. Rietze
Director, Alaska Region