

Saint Matthew Island Blue King Crab update 2025

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Summary

The Saint Matthew Island blue king crab (SMBKC) assessment is now on a biennial cycle occurring in even years (approved by the CPT in Jan 2021 and the SSC in Feb 2021). 2025 is the “off” year in the cycle, so only an update to determine overfishing status in the 2024/25 season is needed.

The most recent assessment was conducted in September 2024 (Stern and Palof 2024) and the model chosen for harvest specifications was model 24.1. In that assessment and this update, estimated total male catch is the sum of fishery-reported retained catch, estimated male discard mortality in the directed fishery, and estimated male bycatch mortality in the groundfish fisheries and other crab fisheries. Since the directed fishery is closed, the total catch is the sum of the bycatch mortality in the groundfish fisheries and other crab fisheries. The only crab fishery in which bycatch occurred was the snow crab fishery, so total catch is bycatch mortality from the snow crab fishery and the groundfish fisheries.

Total catch in 2024/25 was less than the OFL, therefore **overfishing did not occur**.

Table 1: Status and catch specifications (1000 t) for model 24.1.

Year	MSST	Biomass (MMB_{mating})	TAC	Retained catch	Total male catch	OFL	ABC
2020/21	1.65	1.14	0.00	0.00	0.0007	0.05	0.04
2021/22	1.63	1.18	0.00	0.00	0.0003	0.05	0.04
2022/23	1.48	1.31	0.00	0.00	0.0021	0.066	0.05
2023/24	1.47	1.41	0.00	0.00	0.0004	0.066	0.05
2024/25		1.53	0.00	0.00	0.0007	0.129	0.097
2025/26		1.53				0.129	0.097

Table 2: Status and catch specifications (million pounds) for model 24.1.

Year	MSST	Biomass (MMB_{mating})	TAC	Retained catch	Total male catch	OFL	ABC
2020/21	3.64	2.52	0.000	0.000	0.0015	0.112	0.08
2021/22	3.59	2.59	0.000	0.000	0.0007	0.112	0.08
2022/23	3.27	2.89	0.000	0.000	0.0047	0.146	0.11
2023/24	3.23	3.10	0.000	0.000	0.0009	0.146	0.11
2024/25		3.37	0.000	0.000	0.0016	0.285	0.214
2025/26		3.37				0.285	0.214

Literature cited

Stern CA, Palof K (2024) Saint Matthew Island blue king crab stock assessment 2024. North Pacific Fishery Management Council, Anchorage, AK. PDF.