


MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, AP and SSC Members

FROM: Clarence G. Pautzke   
Executive Director

DATE: January 4, 1990

SUBJECT: Crab Fishery Management Plan

**ACTION REQUIRED**

Review State of Alaska's observer program for crab fisheries. Determine if expansion of federal observer program to include crab fisheries is necessary at this time.

**BACKGROUND**

Crab Observer Program

In September the Council received public testimony suggesting they consider expanding the developing federal domestic observer program to include crab fisheries. It was noted that the State of Alaska has an at-sea observer program for all catcher/processors and floating processors which participate in selected Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands king crab fisheries. The State also fields observers to sample catches delivered to shorebased processing plants. The Council requested that a report from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, which reviews the State's observer program, be presented to the Council at this meeting. The Council needs to determine if the existing State observer program is adequate for current management purposes or whether the federal program should be expanded to include crab catcher-vessels. Should a federal crab observer program be determined necessary, a Crab FMP amendment would be required.

1990 Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Shellfish Proposals

In March, the Alaska Board of Fisheries will meet and take action on 103 shellfish proposals. This will be the Board's first shellfish meeting following the approval and implementation of the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crab Fishery Management Plan. This FMP specifies three management measure categories: Category 1 has measures which are fixed in the FMP and require a plan amendment to change; Category 2 has measures which are frameworked and allow the State to utilize them following specific criteria; and Category 3 has measures which are left to the discretion of the State. A summary table which shows the three categories and the measures contained in each is provided as item D-3(a). Also shown in the table are the management measures where proposed changes have been presented to the Board. All proposals fall within Category 2 and 3, and therefore no formal Council action is needed or anticipated. We have copies of the proposals for those who are interested.

The Council's Pacific Northwest Crab Industry Advisory Committee will hold its first meeting on Friday, January 26, in Seattle. The purpose of the meeting will be to elect officers and prepare committee recommendations to the Board on Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands crab proposals. The committee intends to participate fully in the upcoming Board process. A report on the committee meeting and the board meeting will be provided in April.

Summary of King and Tanner Crab Proposals submitted to the Alaska Board of Fisheries for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Area for 1990 arranged by Crab FMP Category.

Category 1 (Fixed in FMP)	Category 2 (Frameworked in FMP)	Category 3 (State discretion)
Legal gear *	Minimum size limits	Reporting requirements *
Permit requirements *	66	Gear placement and removal *
Federal observer requirements *	Guideline harvest levels *	Gear storage *
Limited access (reserved) *	Inseason adjustments *	Vessel tank inspections *
	Districts, subdistricts and sections *	Gear modifications
	Fishing seasons	51
	50	87
	52	Bycatch limits (in crab fisheries) *
	53	
	54	State observer requirements
	56	
	67	76
	Sex restrictions *	77
		78
	Pot limits *	79
		80
	Registration areas *	81
		82
	Closed waters *	83
		84
		85
		86
		103
		Other
		60
		61
		64
		69 **

\* No proposal submitted

\*\* Management policy