

North Pacific Fishery Management Council

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Agenda Item #8

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 25, 1978

TO: Council, Scientific & Statistical Committee
and Advisory Panel

FROM: Jim H. Branson, Executive Director *MA*

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

(BACKGROUND)

The amendments proposed by the Council at the last meeting (Anchorage, August 24-25) which changed the 1978 Tanner Crab FMP to a 1978/79 Tanner Crab FMP have not yet been published in the Federal Register. The plan will now be in effect sometime in mid to late November. In anticipation of that happening, the following are proposed amendments to the 1978/79 Tanner Crab FMP. *MITO A/10/11*

The amendments deal with three themes: (1) requests made by the Japanese Tanner Crab Association for expanded fishing areas and catches in the eastern Bering Sea for 1979, (2) a single change in a regional Tanner Crab OY (Kodiak district) and (3) non-substantative technical updates to the plan. Noticeably absent are any amendments 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 at this time determined that there is no additional information which would lead to a change in any OY figure for the Bering Sea. *20/6*

(SUBJECT)

The following amendments are therefore proposed to the 1978/79 Tanner Crab FMP for your consideration and Action: *20/6*

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.

No

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: Foreign Fishing. Amend the FMP to allow foreign fishing for C. bairdi west of 171° West Longitude south 58° North latitude.

Proposed by: Japanese Tanner Crab Industry.

Comment: See Attachment 2.

5. Proposal: Domestic fishing. Amend the OY for Tanner crab in the Kodiak district to 15 - 30 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 in the range of from 15 - 30 million pounds. The previous 1978 OY range was 15 to 25 million pounds. The increase is considered conservative.

6. Proposal: Domestic fishing. Amend the FMP to include the most current harvesting, processing, economic, employment and supporting data.

Proposed by: Management Plan Drafting Team.

Comment: These amendments are detailed in Attachment 3. They serve only to update the plan in terms of such things as vessel characteristics, gross income figures, total employment and labor income, statewide employment statistics, value of ex-vessel catch, description and value of product, consumption figures, etc. No changes are proposed in this section which would deal with management measures or quotas.

(SPECIAL NOTE) The actual information updating the plan did not arrive in time to put with this memo. It is expected that the information will be delivered to Sitka on Thursday.

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)

Attachment #2:

Tanner Crab Fishing Industry

With respect to the operation of the Japanese mothership-type crab fishery in 1979, we request that in the sea area south of 58°N, the region west of Long. 171°W. be opened for our fishing operation including C. Bairdi.

(Reason)

1. As is seen from the result of fishing operation in 1978, the fishing ground in which a commercial catch can be realized north of 58°N, is restricted to a very narrow range. This fact not only makes a mothership-type fishery there extremely difficult, but also requires increasingly large fishing efforts for this fishing ground and, as a result, the fishery resources within a specific sea area only are heavily exploited. On the other hand, in the sea area south of 58°N a tremendous tanner crab resource will be left unutilized. According to FMP of 1978, M.S.Y. of C. opilio is 102,000 metric tons, while its D.A.H. is only 10,000 metric tons.

We consider that a full use of such unutilized resources agrees with the benefits of both Japanese and U.S. fishermen.

2. In the sea area west of Long. 171°W. it is anticipated that there will be no fishing gear conflicts occurring between Japanese and U.S. vessels. We learn that in 1978 only one U.S. fishing boat carried out fishing in the waters west of Long. 171°W.

3. On *C. bairdi*

- (a) The present catch of *C. bairdi* is presumed to be at a level far below that of the allowable catch. Furthermore, *C. bairdi* living in the waters west of Long. 171°W. are greatly different in size and distribution density from those living in the waters east of Long. 171°W., and can be regarded to be an ecologically different stock. Therefore, also from the standpoint of the conservation of resources, it is not considered that the catch of *C. bairdi* west of Long. 171°W. will have a great influence on the resources of large-sized *C. bairdi* distributed in high density in the sea east of Long. 168°W., which is the main fishing grounds of the U.S. tonner crab fishery. Thus, there is no reason at all why the Japanese fishing for *C. bairdi* should be prohibited in the waters west of Long. 171°W.
- (b) *C. bairdi* living west of Long. 171°W. are generally small-sized as compared with those living east of Long. 171°W. Going further to northwest, the size of *C. bairdi* becomes smaller. Even if the Japanese fishery catches *C. bairdi* in the waters to the northwest, their commercial value is approximately the same as that of *C. opilio* and has no influence on the price of *C. bairdi* which U.S. fishermen catch.

4. Fortunately in 1978, owing to an abnormal meteorological phenomenon, no floating ice went southwards and our fishing operation could be conducted in safety. But if the weather is as usual, there will inevitably be the southward flow of floating ice. Therefore, if the fishing ground is limited to the sea north of 58°N., it will

become impossible to conduct operation in the important fishing season in early spring. This will strike a death blow against the Japanese tanner crab fishing fleet.

In case F.M.P. for 1978 becomes effective, our fishing grounds for tanner crabs will be limited, even though for a short period, to the waters north of 58°N. Therefore if the above F.M.P. must come into effect this year, we demand that its contents be altered similarly to those of P.M.P. which have been changed this time.

We strongly urge you to the full examination of our above-mentioned requests, and demand that necessary measures be taken so that the traditional Japanese crab fishery may continue its fishing operation in the future.

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2. In the sea area west of Long. 171°W. it is anticipated that there will be no fishing gear conflicts occurring between Japanese and U.S. vessels. We learn that in 1978 only one U.S. fishing boat carried out fishing in the waters west of Long. 171°W.

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- (b) *C. bairdi* living west of Long. 171°W. are generally small-sized as compared with those living east of Long. 171°W. Going further to northwest, the size of *C. bairdi* becomes smaller. Even if the Japanese fishery catches *C. bairdi* in the waters to the northwest, their commercial value is approximately the same as that of *C. opilio* and has no influence on the price of *C. bairdi* which U.S. fishermen catch.

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Attachment #3:

Non-substantative technical updates to Tanner Crab FMP

1. Page vii - The paragraph dealing with management measures and rationale for foreign fishing must be updated.
2. Page vii - The paragraph dealing with description, condition and capacity of the fishery must be updated.
3. Page viii - Table A must be updated in terms of domestic annual capacity, OY, domestic annual harvest and foreign allowable catch.
4. Page 12 - Section 3.2.1 - Domestic Fishery. This paragraph should be updated to include 1978 information.
5. Page 16 - Section 3.2.1.3. This paragraph dealing with catch trends should be updated.
6. Page 17 - Section 3.2.2.2 and Section 3.2.2.3. This paragraph dealing with catch trends and description of fishing effort should be updated to include the foreign Tanner crab quota for 1978.
7. Page 20 - The paragraph dealing with jurisdiction should be given careful review to see if the language contained is still suitable.
8. Page 29 - Section 3.5.1.1. The paragraph dealing with value of catch ex-vessel should be updated with 1977 information.
9. Page 29 - Section 3.5.1.2. This paragraph dealing with description and value of product should be upgraded with most current information.
10. Page 29 - Section 3.5.1.3. These paragraphs dealing with markets, domestic and foreign, should be updated with 1977 information.
11. Page 30 - Table 2 should reflect 1976 and possibly 1977 shellfish production values.

12. Page 33 - Table 3a should contain 1977 Tanner crab consumption figures.
13. Page 34 - Table 3b should reflect 1977 estimated Japanese Tanner crab consumption figures.
14. Page 35 - Section 3.5.2.1. These total gross income figures for the Tanner crab fleet should be updated.
15. Page 35 - Section 3.5.2.2. This paragraph dealing with investment in vessels and gear should include 1977/78 information.
16. Page 36 - Table 4 should reflect 1977/1978 vessel characteristics of the Tanner crab fleet.
17. Page 37 - Table 5. This table should include 1977 values of Tanner crab catch and gross income.
18. Page 38 - Section 3.5.2.4. This paragraph, dealing with total employment in the Tanner crab fishery harvesting sector, should include 1977/1978 seasonal information.
19. Page 39 - Section 3.5.3.1. This paragraph dealing with the total gross income of area processors should include 1976 information.
20. Page 39 - Section 3.5.3.3. This paragraph, dealing with total employment and labor income, should include 1977/78 information.
21. Page 40 - Table 6 should include 1977/1978 seasonal harvesting and processing capabilities.
22. Page 41 - Section 3.5.8.2. This paragraph dealing with total employment should be updated to at least 1977 statistics.
23. Page 42 - Table 7 should reflect 1977 population information.
24. Page 43 - Section 3.5.8.3. This paragraph should include 1977 total workforce information.
25. Page 44 - Table 8 should reflect fourth quarter 1976 and the first three quarters of 1977 statewide employment statistics.
26. Page 45 - Section 3.7. The information on federal and state revenues derived from the Tanner crab fishery should be updated.
27. Page 58 - Table 11 should be corrected to include the most current DAC, OY, DAH and FAC information.
28. Page 60 - Section 4.8. Are the Bering Sea Tanner crab stocks in healthy condition capable of supporting current condition?

29. Sections A, B, C, D and E contained on pages 76 through 185 should all be updated to include 1977 and 1978 figures on total catch, total employment, total revenues, total effort, etc.

BERING SEA MANAGEMENT AREA (SECTION F)

30. Page 166 - Section F.3.1. The ratio of bairdi and opilio in the U.S. and foreign catch will probably change from what is currently in the FMP.

31. Page 167 - Section F.3.2.1.2. This paragraph dealing with general description of fishing effort should contain 1978 information.

32. Page 167 - Section F.3.2.1.3. This paragraph dealing with catch trends should reflect 1978 figures.

33. Page 167 - Section F.3.2.1.4. These paragraphs dealing with the description of vessels and gear should obviously be updated to reflect 1977/1978 seasonal information.

34. Page 168 - Table F1. The catches of Tanner crab in the eastern Bering Sea should be updated to include 1977/1978 figures.

35. Page 169 - Table F2. The Tanner crab quotas should be updated to reflect the 1976, 1977 and 1978 information.

36. Page 170 - Sections F.3.2.2.2 and F.3.2.2.3 should be updated to include 1977 foreign effort and harvest information.

37. Page 171 - The first paragraph on this page should be updated to reflect the 1978 Japanese quota.

38. Page 172 - Table F3. The history of the development of domestic regulatory measures should be updated to include the 1977/1978 regulations.

39. Page 173 - The first paragraph on this page should include the number of vessels fishing by Japan in 1978.

40. Page 176 - Section F.3.3.3.1. The second paragraph dealing with regulatory measures should be updated to include 1978 information.

41. Page 177 - The first paragraph on this page should be updated to include the 1978 fishery.

42. Page 178 - Section F.3.5.1.1. The estimated revenue for Tanner crab caught in the Bering Sea should be updated to 1977 information.

43. Page 179 - Section F.3.5.2.1. The total gross income figures should be updated to 1977 information.

44. Page 179 - Section F.3.5.3. Domestic commercial processing characteristics should include 1978 information.
45. Page 182 - Section F.4.7.1. The fourth paragraph in this section might change or at least should be considered in light of the reduced catch per unit effort of the foreign fleet in this particular area.
46. Page 183 - Table F4. The annual abundance estimates of Tanner crab in the eastern Bering Sea should be updated to 1977 and possibly 1978 information. The 1978 information however, will be premature and possibly speculative.
47. Page 186 - The first sentence on this page should be updated to reflect 1978 information.
48. Page 186 - Section F.6.2. This section dealing with optimum yield should be rewritten and updated. Some of the updating should occur in the areas of 1977 CPUE both domestic and foreign and the importance to both of economic density of crab.
49. Page 188 - The optimum yields for Tanner crab for 1979 should be prescribed as ranges for the domestic fishery and as a point estimate for the foreign fishery. I believe the rationale is obvious for this in that the domestic fishery is limited for C. bairdi in terms only of catchable crabs while the foreign fishery is limited by quota established by the U.S. considering such things as past fishing effort, influence on the world marketplace, etc.
50. Page 189 - Section F.7.0. Information dealing with the TALFF should be updated.
51. Page 190 - Section F.8.3.2. Paragraph number one should reflect the proposed changes for the 1979 season.
52. Page 192 - Section 9.0. We should possibly add a fifth statement of Council intent to review and include in this our intent to report on management plan performance.