



C4 BSAI Crab Specifications

October 2020

Action Memo

Council Staff: Jim Armstrong
Other Presenters: Dr. Martin Dorn (Crab Plan Team Co-Chair, AFSC Seattle)
Action Required: 1. Review/approve 2020 BSAI Crab SAFE Report
2. Review Crab Plan Team Report
3. Recommend final 2020/21 OFL/ABC specifications for 4 stocks

BACKGROUND

The Crab Plan Team (CPT) conducted an online public meeting from September 14-17, 2020 in order to develop 2020/21 OFL and ABC recommendations for four stocks, finalize the 2020 BSAI Crab Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE), and review a range of other topics covered in the September 2020 Plan Team meeting report (attached). Importantly, at this meeting, the CPT considered adjustments to specified ABC for 2020/21 that may be necessary to address added uncertainty from the loss of survey data in 2020. Also at the meeting, CPT reviewed and discussed updates on crab fishery performance, ecosystem trends, ESP profiles for Bristol Bay red king crab and St Matthew blue king crab, Crab PSC in groundfish fisheries, among other issues.

SAFE/Stock Status Update

Final assessments are reviewed for crab stocks at three different meetings (February, June, October) during the year to accommodate the timing of crab fishery seasons and surveys. The attached final 2020 Crab SAFE report is considered current and complete for all ten BSAI crab stocks managed through the BSAI Crab FMP, including SAFE chapters reviewed earlier this year and those updated in previous years that are on a biennial and triennial review schedule.

The four stocks for which final 2020/21 specifications will be determined at this meeting are:

- EBS snow crab
- Bristol Bay red king crab
- EBS Tanner crab
- St. Matthew blue king crab

Currently, EBS snow crab, Pribilof Island red king crab, and Aleutian Islands golden king crab are estimated to be above B_{MSY} , while EBS Tanner crab, Bristol Bay red king crab, and Norton Sound red king crab are estimated to be below B_{MSY} , but above MSST. Rebuilding plans are in place for Saint Matthew blue king crab and Pribilof Islands blue king crab stock, which remain below MSST, and therefore, are overfished. OFL was not exceeded for any crab stock and, therefore, overfishing is not occurring for any crab stocks.

Crab Stock Assessments

The CPT has general recommendations for all assessments and specific comments related to individual assessments. The team recommends four stocks be placed in Tier 3 (EBS snow crab, Bristol Bay red king crab, EBS Tanner crab and Aleutian Island golden king crab), four stocks in Tier 4 (Pribilof Islands red king crab, Pribilof Islands blue king crab, St. Matthew blue king crab, and Norton Sound red king crab) and two stocks in Tier 5 (Pribilof Islands golden king crab, and Western Aleutian Islands red king crab).

The CPT developed general recommendations for all assessments and specific comments related to individual assessments. All of the CPT recommendations are intended for consideration in developing the next scheduled assessment update. Comments related to individual assessments are contained within the attached Crab Plan Team Report.