

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council, SSC and AP Members
FROM: Chris Oliver *for*
Executive Director
DATE: September 29, 2010
SUBJECT: BSAI Crab Issues

ESTIMATED TIME 2 HOURS

ACTION REQUIRED

Review and approve BSAI Crab SAFE report and annual catch specifications

BACKGROUND

The Crab Plan Team met at the Alaska Fisheries Science Center in Seattle, WA from September 13-16, 2010 to review the status of stocks and to compile the annual Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation (SAFE) report. The Crab SAFE report was mailed to you September 20th. This is the third year of the new process for annual determination of Crab OFLs and the Crab Plan Team is part of the newly established review process for BSAI crab assessments. There are 10 crab stocks in the BSAI Crab FMP and all 10 must have annually established OFLs. Six of the ten stocks have OFLs established following the summer survey information availability. Two of the ten stocks (Norton Sound red king crab and AI golden king crab) have OFLs which were established following review and recommendations by the CPT and SSC in June of 2010 in order to allow for the summer fisheries for these stocks while the remaining two stocks (Adak red king crab and Pribilof Islands golden king crab) have OFLs recommended in June 2010 based on Tier 5 formulation (average catch). The CPT compiles the introduction to the SAFE Report and provides stock assessment and OFL recommendations within it with additional recommendations and discussions included in the CPT Report. The introduction to the SAFE Report is attached as Item C-2(a). The Crab Plan Team Report is attached as Item C-2(b).

Four of the ten stocks are estimated to be below B_{MSY} in the 2010/11 fishing year (EBS snow crab, EBS Tanner crab, Pribilof Islands red king crab, Pribilof Islands blue king crab). Of these, both Pribilof Islands blue king crab and EBS Tanner crab have an estimated mature male biomass (MMB) below the minimum stock size threshold (MSST) and are considered overfished. Two stocks (EBS snow crab and Pribilof Islands blue king crab) remain under current rebuilding plans. Both rebuilding plans are action items at this meeting under different agenda items (see C-3 for EBS snow crab and D-1 for Pribilof Islands blue king crab). Three stocks are estimated to have MMB above the B_{MSY} (Bristol Bay red king crab, St. Matthew blue king crab and Norton Sound red king crab). Status determination for assessing stock status for the remaining three stocks (Aleutian Islands golden king crab, Pribilof Islands golden king crab and Adak red king crab) is unknown.