

Pacific Northwest Crab Industry Advisory Committee (PNCIAC)

Meeting Minutes and Recommendations

5.30.2023 9-11am AKT

ATTENDEES

Committee Members: Sean Dwyer (*Chair*), Lance Farr (*Vice Chair*), Elizabeth Reed, Jake Jacobsen, Mark Casto, Jamie Goen (*Secretary, non-voting*)

(Committee members not in attendance: Steve Minor, Brett Reasor, Edward Poulsen, Mike Simpson, Gary Painter, Dean Fasnacht)

Quorum = greater than or equal to 50%

Others in Attendance:

Council staff - Sarah Marrinan, Sarah Rheinsmith

ADFG – Kendall Henry

NOAA Fisheries – Alicia Miller

NOAA General Counsel - Henry Tashjian

Ernie Weiss, Lenny Herzog, Linda Kozak

AGENDA

1. Crab Plan Team recap
2. Crab specifications
3. BBRKC area closures initial review
4. C-shares active participation exemption
5. Facility & IPQ use caps
6. Crab Rationalization Program review discussion
7. Other business

MINUTES

There was not a quorum for this meeting. The group met for information sharing and discussion only.

1. Crab Plan Team recap

Council staff provided a summary of the recent CPT meeting that included harvest specifications for golden king crab, ABSC's climate resilient fisheries work, and an update from BSFRF and their recent winter/spring crab pot sampling research. The CPT supported the resilient fisheries work and noted further investigation could be done into the vulnerability across fleets (socio-economic analysis to understand diversification & vulnerability), perhaps as part of the upcoming Crab Rationalization Program review. PNCIAC discussed the unobserved fishing mortality interagency working group and its status. It is not yet formed and probably wouldn't happen before early 2024.

2. Crab specifications

No discussion

3. BBRKC area closures initial review

PNCIAC discussed the analysis. Some members noted discrepancies in the purpose and need statement for the analysis not speaking to the need for habitat protections nor minimizing disturbance. The group discussed static versus dynamic closed areas, noting dynamic closed areas could be used to reduce crab bycatch but static closed areas help protect habitat. The group discussed cod, salmon, and yellowfin sole predation on crab and wanted hard data/estimates that could complement observations. The group talked about the need for the Council and industry to prioritize crab as a bycatch species to be avoided. How incentivize? Right now, the way the regulations are structured, salmon, herring, and halibut are prioritized above crab even though herring and halibut are not at a conservation concern like crab. The group thought this bycatch prioritization was worth exploring further, especially for herring which could relieve some constraints and potentially help prioritize crab. Consider discussing with the Ecosystem Committee.

4. C-shares active participation exemption

Council staff provided a review of the action and emergency rule. PNCIAC discussed the issue and the initial review analysis, noting the intent to have active participation in the fishery and facilitate new entrants. These last few years there have obviously been less vessels on the water and less opportunities for crew. NMFS plans to notify C-share holders of their standing. Given this will happen before the Council/NMFS decide on a more permanent solution, there was concern over forcing sale of C-shares negatively affecting QS markets and value during the season closures. Individuals were encouraged to testify to the Council.

5. Facility & IPQ use caps

This is scheduled for the October Council meeting. Council staff provided an overview and asked if there is concern over processor consolidation if custom processing does not count toward use caps. Intent is to allow flexibility not consolidation. Talk of attaching triggers to it. Processors noted adding flexibility to custom processing shouldn't be a problem. Noted there are existing emergency relief provisions for regionalization but that they haven't been working as intended.

6. Crab Rationalization Program review discussion

The Council workplan for the review is expected in Oct or Dec 2023. There is an opportunity to weigh in on the scope during the workplan phase. The Review itself will take place in 2024 with Darrell Brennan as the lead Council staff. After the Program Review, the Council may consider regulatory actions to improve the Program.

7. Other business

Members agreed to meet again after the September CPT meeting and before the October Council meeting (i.e., between Sep 18-29).