

Agenda C 1 BSAI crab

I am an active captain/ owner in crab fishing program in Bering Sea, and operate fixed gear.

I have been fishing up here since 1983 and I am still fishing. I have recently purchased another vessel to fish crab with and now own two vessels. The Pacific Sounder & Confidence.

These closures and reduced quotas are going to have severe consequences to our business and crew and lease holders. I am not sure how we will survive thru this severe downturn and hope this comes into account when you make your decisions. Crab is the main source of income for us not having it will be devastating to us. We are frantically trying to figure out how to survive at this point.

I rely on crab fisheries as my main income. Pot cod and tendering helps round out my portfolio but I need income from crab to keep my boats operating and my crews working.

I feel strongly that we should have had a Bering sea red King crab and upcoming Snow crab season. I personally believe the survey was flawed, and that it always has been. We are not truly capturing what is out on the grounds. Council and state need to come up with additional method to survey the crab stocks, a pot survey would take care of this & it is desperately needed to add another component to judge how strong our crab resource really is. With one method that is way outdated a new methods is desperately needed.

we also need more protection for crab stocks on grounds and I urge the council to work and listen to Alaska Bering Sea crabbers organization to draft up protection of crab stocks. We know these stocks are moving and need to address, & expand surveys to adjust for this.

you also need to expand habitat protection for Female King crab North , West, and NW of king crab savings area. As well as areas around the priblof islands for snow crab.

On Bycatch of crab I ask that you get better observer coverage, on Amendment 80 vessels I ask that you step up coverage especially near king crab grounds and North West of St Paul island for Snow Crab. It is very disheartening when we get these weekly reports on heavy bycatch dump of crab by trawlers and we can't hardly fish.

Us as crabbers are asking why we are restricted from entering blue crab savings area around Priblof Islands and why trawlers are allowed to operate inside this box and we are not with fixed gear. It makes me wonder what the heck is going on. We all know there is bottom impact and these grounds need protection.

It seems like last few years the balance between trawlers and fixed gear has been way off and it's councils job to see that fairness is brought back into our fisheries and crab stocks as well as other species are protected and trawlers are keep within the bycatch allocations or get shut down. If this is not done I am afraid of our future looks grim for us all. Please take appropriate steps to keep a fair and equal balance.

Regards, Oystein Lone

F/V Pacific Sounder & F/V Confidence.