

ADVISORY PANEL
Motions and Rationale
December 5-8, 2023 - Anchorage, AK

C2 Crab Facility Use Cap - Final Action

Motion:

The AP recommends Council take Final Action and select it's preliminary preferred alternatives, Alternatives 2 and 3, as it's final preferred alternatives (shown below).

Alternatives:

Alternative 2. Remove the EAG and WAI processing facility use caps at 50 CFR 680.7(a)(9).

Alternative 3. Exempt custom processing of BSS IPQ with a south-region designation, BBR IPQ, and WAG IPQ processed east of 174° W longitude from the PQS/IPQ and processing facility use caps under the program. Regionalization would still apply.

Motion Passed 14/0 (1 abstained)

Rationale in Favor of Motion:

- *All six written public comments and both oral comments were in support of moving forward with final action and Alternatives 2 & 3. In October there was also no opposition to moving forward and the Council chose Alternatives 2 & 3 as their preliminary preferred alternatives*
- *While fishermen prefer more processors and more competition, in this case there is more risk to leaving crab unprocessed, increasing inefficiency, and increasing the carbon footprint of the fishery in current operations – the benefit of moving forward with this action outweigh any risks of consolidation. This action meets national standards 1, 5, 6, 7 and 8.*
- *The PNCIAC supported alternative 2 and 3 and noted that the recent Bristol Bay Red king crab fishery had difficulties meeting caps that would have benefited from Alternative 3 and made the fishery more profitable for harvesters. In the past we have heard that some participants of the Aleutian golden king crab fishery cannot access the more profitable live market without alternative 2.*
- *While processing caps can serve an important function in preventing processor consolidation in some fisheries, there are currently a multitude of existing issues that are forcing processor consolidation for other reasons. In this particular fishery, the processing cap is unwarranted and has the potential to strand quota.*
- *The AP appreciated that Regional Staff were looking at efficient ways to get this to rulemaking; given the likelihood of quota being stranded in future years, the AP expressed concern that this should be implemented as quickly as possible.*