



D2 BSAI Crab Rationalization 17-year Program Review

June 2024

Action Memo

- Council Staff: Sarah Marrinan
- Other Presenters: Darrell Brannan (Brannan & Associates LLC; lead), Dr. Mike Downs (Wislow Research Associates LLC), Caleb Taylor (NMFS SF)
Sean Dwyer (PNCIAC report)
- Action Required:
1. Receive Crab Rationalization Program Review presentation
 2. Receive PNCIAC report
 3. Recommend any changes to document prior to finalization
 4. Consider any proposed actions for the Crab Rationalization Program (under this agenda item or E Staff Tasking agenda item)

BACKGROUND

The Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Crab Rationalization (CR) Program is a Limited Access Privilege Program (LAPP) that requires a formal review every seven years as specified by Section 303A(c)(1)(G) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA). The document prepared serves as the program review that meets this MSA requirements. It also serves as the Allocation Review required under National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries Allocation Policy Directive 01-119 established in 2016 along with two associated Procedural Directives.

Program Reviews are intended to objectively measure the success of the program by addressing issues raised in the LAPP's problem statement and the standards set forth in the MSA, including the impact of this action on harvesting and processing sectors, and fishery dependent communities. Several program reviews have previously been conducted for the CR Program as highlighted in the document.

Development of Scope of Program Review

The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC), Advisory Panel (AP) and Council reviewed and approved a workplan for this CR Program Review in October 2023. Additional requests were made within this process to direct the content and scope of review. For instance, the [Council's motion](#) requested staff incorporate the [SSC recommendations](#) to the extent possible.

In addition, the Council's motion requested staff cite and incorporate information from the previous Social Impact Assessment (SIA) as appropriate. Members of the public and the AP recommended including an SIA as a part of the Crab Program Review. In response to both the Council request and the AP and public recommendations, the scope of the Social and Community section (Section 8 of the program review) was expanded to encompass key elements of the previous CR Program review stand-alone SIAs and recently produced SIAs for other Council actions. Specific requests to include a regulatory context section and community institutional and population, demographic, and income summaries similar to those produced in recent SIAs prepared for the Council have also been addressed.

In addition, feedback requested the Program Review include a framework that equally focused on the slices of the ‘three-pie structure’ that the program provisions were designed around, namely: harvesters, processors, and communities. Within this format, measures for the specific elements of the Purpose & Need of the Crab Rationalization Program have been incorporated as requested, including performance of key community and sector protection measures.

There were also additional requests in the Council motion which have been addressed including providing information on the elements and the process for the binding arbitration program. Analysts were also asked to incorporate information on costs associated with the crab program, including costs incurred from EDR data compliance, annual IPQ/IFQ application and matching, custom processing due to unaffiliated PQS holdings, and arbitration.

PNCIAC Report

The Pacific Northwest Crab Industry Advisory Committee (PNCIAC) met Wednesday, May 22, 2024 virtually to discuss the Crab Program Review. A report from the PNCIAC will also be attached under D2 when finalized and presented to the AP and Council.

The PNCIAC is an advisory committee established in the BSAI Crab Fishery Management Plan, sanctioned by and operating under the direction of the Council. This group, representing both crab harvesters and processors, has broad authority to provide advice and recommendations to both the Council and the Alaska Board of Fisheries on measures for the conservation and management of crab as described under “Functions” in the groups’ [Terms of Reference](#).

Action Required/Next Steps

At this meeting, public and the Council bodies may provide feedback on the review’s completeness of evaluating program impacts and the program’s ability to meet its objectives. The Council may recommend any changes before the document is finalized. Typically, program reviews are presented once in the Council process, after which recommendations for changes are made, and the final version of the review is linked on the [Council website](#).

A program review is not an “action document”; however, it provides a unique opportunity to consider the program holistically. From the review of this information and associated public testimony, any changes to the program that may be warranted could be considered for action separately from the review. This could occur through the initiation of a discussion paper, or if the action is defined enough to articulate a purpose and need statement and set of alternatives, through an analysis. Any separate proposal for action could be made during this agenda item or during ‘E Staff Tasking’ agenda item.

