

ADF&G FISHERIES REPORT: SEPTEMBER 21, 1990  
PRESENTED TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Since the last Council meeting, the activities of fisheries managed under joint authority of the Council and the Alaska Board of Fisheries include: Crab, Demersal Shelf Rockfish, and Salmon.

The St. Matthew Blue king crab fishery occurred since the NMFS surveys conducted during June–August 1990 indicated that the population of blue king crab was above suggested threshold levels. The legal male crab estimate was 1.5 million crabs. The mature male population was estimated at 2.3 million crabs. The harvest projection, based on a 20% exploitation rate, was set at 1.9 million pounds. The fishery opened by regulation on September 1. Based on expected effort, a closure was announced by emergency order for September 7. There were 31 boats in the fishery, and very preliminary harvest figures put the final catch at about 1.7 million pounds.

In contrast, the Pribilof District blue king crab season did not open. A comparison of blue king crab abundance estimates between 1989 and the 1990 season showed no appreciable change in the estimates of total abundance, nor abundances of female and sublegal male crabs. Estimated legal male crab abundance did increase from 200,000 to 410,000 crabs. However, the population remains depressed when compared to historic catches and estimates of abundance. Additionally, the population of red king crab in this area is also depressed. After reviewing the 1990 NMFS survey information and consulting NMFS biologists, it was agreed that with the large variation in survey results for the Pribilof Islands, the stock's reproductive success may be jeopardized if a fishery occurred. Therefore, on September 25, 1990 it was announced by emergency order that the Pribilof District would not open to blue king crab fishing during the 1990/91 season.

The Bering Sea Tanner crab survey results were announced. The C. bairdi midpoint is 42.8 million pounds. The fishery opens 7 days after the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery closure in waters east of 166° W. Long. The Bering Sea, west of 166° W long opens to C. bairdi fishing on January 15.

The Southeast Demersal Shelf Rockfish fishery opened on August 14, there appears to be very little effort at this time. The Emergency Rule presently governing the fishery is good for 90 days, and will rescind on November 13th. NMFS has requested additional information on halibut bycatch occurring in this fishery to determine whether they have justification to continue the E.R. through the end of the year. ADF&G will be evaluating logbook information and attempt to attain additional observer information from this fishery.

The Southeast Alaska Salmon Toll Fishery closed on September 20th. A total of 339,363 chinook were harvested during the 1990 season; 83% of the harvest was taken by the troll fishery. Of this total, 39,457 were Alaska hatchery Add-on fish, those chinook which do not count against the quota. Harvests occurred during three general periods. A winter troll fishery from October to mid–April and restricted to waters inside the surfline. A June troll fishery, taking 41,618 chinook occurred during a series of area restricted 2–3 day

openings centered on returning Alaska hatchery fish. An additional 207,771 chinook were harvested during the general summer opening (July 1–22, and August 23–24).

For a point of interest to the Council, the Northern Southeast inside area sablefish fishery was conducted for 24 hours starting at noon on September 12th. It is anticipated that the 125 vessels will land nearly 900 tons (dressed weight) of blackcod. This is nearly 1450 tons round weight.