

**PACIFIC NORTHWEST CRAB INDUSTRY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PNCIAC)**

March 13, 2022

Mr. Simon Kinneen, Chairman
North Pacific Fishery Management Council
1007 West Third, Suite 400
Anchorage, AK 99501

Re: PNCIAC Recommendation on Council Process

Dear Chairman Kinneen, Council Executive Committee, and AP/SSC Leadership,

The Pacific Northwest Crab Industry Advisory Committee (PNCIAC) is an Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) and North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) designated industry advisory committee, representing industry participants from Washington and Oregon. PNCIAC, since its beginnings, has worked productively with the BOF, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and the NPFMC.

PNCIAC appreciates that the Council is evaluating its process and considering changes in response to the pandemic and our return to in-person meetings. One of the concepts being considered is to shift the October Council meeting **earlier or later** to avoid potential government shutdowns (#4 in the [staff discussion paper](#)) or re-evaluating the timing of crab harvest specifications (#5 in the [staff discussion paper](#)). Both elements could affect the October 15 start of the Bering Sea crab fisheries.

PNCIAC supports an earlier Council meeting start date, and strongly opposes a later start date because of the severe impact a later start date would have on crab market timing and market value. Traditionally, the crab market peaks during the holiday season. The current October 15th season start date results in a very narrow window to supply these markets. The crab seasons have evolved over time to find the best balance for crab science, premier product with high meat fill, and the best time to supply key, traditional high-value markets. If anything needs to move, **we request that the Council October meeting should move to the last week of September to better accommodate crab harvest specifications and the October 15 season start for Bering Sea crab fisheries, and to reduce the risk of being affected by any potential government shutdown.**

Thank you for considering our comments.



Steve Minor, Chair
PNCIAC
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