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Date: April 20, 2023

To: Bil Homka, Marjorie Veeder, Michelle Price,

From: Frank Kelty, Fisheries Consultant

Re: Fishery Activities Memo, and Fishery Information from NOAA and ADFG for the week ending on April 20, 2023.

On Wednesday afternoon April 19th I attended the meeting of the Alaska Marine Policy Forum, this is a regular one-hour monthly meeting zoom meeting sponsored by Alaska Sea Grant Program and Alaska Ocean Observation System (AOOS). We had about forty attendees and we were updated at this meeting about survey work done by the RV Norseman II, a former Bering Sea Crab boat, that now does just research work. They did charter work in the Norther Bering Sea and in the Southern Chukchi Sea for zoa plankton sampling, algae blooms, temperature studies and gathered and did samples of other marine life for studies. A major part of the program in the Norton Sound region was studies about Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning in clams, barnacles and shellfish in Nome, other Norton Sound villages, Kotzebue, and Gamble on Saint Lawrence Island. The communities have been involved with the sampling, testing and them getting the word out to the various communities on the shellfish areas that have been impacted by PSP and should be avoided. They have been successful in this work that has saved lives. Senator Murkowski Anchorage staff person gave a brief update on some of the projects for the waterfront area around the state that she has on her priority list for funding.

On Thursday morning April 20th I attended the regular Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation board meeting via zoom. We reviewed the house keeping issues such as reviewing the financials, and the budget we had elections I was reelected to the board of directors and will also continue as Vice President of the board of directors of BSFRF. The focus of this meeting was to review the Bristol Bay Red King Crab Charter Vessel Tagging Project that was wrapped up on April 7, 2023. The project was a success, the two charter vessels FV Summer Bay and FV Silver Spray completed tagging work all tags were deployed, no breakdowns or injuries to scientific team or the vessels crew members. The analysis of all the data work will begin soon, at this time we do not even have the CPUE average by post. The vessels have seen crab in many stations, but the crab was spread out, but they also had some areas with no crab at all and many blank pots. The first week of the charter they lost faced three days of delays due to severe weather in the Bering Sea. They have had mild weather the week of the charter and everything has been going well on the vessels, they have been working about 12-hour

days. They had to preclude crab pot gear change experiments they wanted to do due to lack of charter vessel time. They felt they are getting some valuable information on this first ever wintertime pot survey and tagging work. It will be interesting to see the data from the charter work on both vessels. We had around \$766,000 net dollars from ADFG and NOAA for the charter. The vessel charter cost was close to \$500,000 for both vessels the total cost with fuel, cost of the Satellite tags and gear work was over \$800,000. BSFRF still has not received the federal and state dollars we may pay the vessels up front the BSFRF reserves so they are made whole. The one disappointment was not having the time to the testing on various pot gear types for the reducing bycatch of small crab we hope to do the gear testing in the fall if we have a Red King Crab season or during the Tanner crab fishery in the fall. The board feels strongly on the need to evaluate various gear types in the hope of reducing bycatch in the direct crab and pot cod fisheries.

We wrapped up the meeting with a discussion on Opilio Tanner situation and what options we can look at to try and get a season in 2024. We received information from Eastern Canada that their Snow Crab industry excepted 3.74inch crab 95MM Alaska is at 4.0 size crab and Canada even allowed the harvest of skip molt females crab. The Board will continue to work on this Scott Goodman will be meeting with ADFG staff in Kodiak in a week or so. He just returned from Juneau where he attended a conference for a week. I am sure he met with ADFG and NOAA staff while at the Capital City.

Lastly the BSFRF is holding a Crab Research Open House on the afternoon of April 28th from 1:00PM to 5:00PM at Leif Erickson Hall in Ballard. To update industry harvesters and processors and the public on the crab research work the foundation has been doing for 16 years.

Regards

Frank Kelty

Attachments:

1. Fishery Activity Memo
2. ADFG April Report to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council
3. Chinook and Chum Salmon Genetics Report
4. NOAA Management Reports