

Frank Kelty
City of Unalaska
Fisheries Consultant
fvkelty@gmail.com

Date: June 28, 2023

To: Bil Homka, Marjorie Veeder, Michelle Price,

From: Frank Kelty, Fisheries Consultant

Re: Fishery Activities Memo, and Fishery Articles for the week.

The Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation (BSFRF) met on Thursday June 22nd which was the regular monthly Board of Directors meeting. The directors received an update on the first leg of the NOAA Bristol Bay Red King Crab trawl survey, preliminary information only. Dr. Litzow provided raw catch numbers for BBRKC this morning for preliminary public sharing, and are as follows:

- 380 mature females (141 of the total were in a single tow)
- 217 mature males
- 161 legal males

This is a mixed bag of females up and males down, with more details coming up. As a reminder, these numbers have not been error-checked and are subject to change. But it appears that the females may make the threshold level amount that is set by ADF&G to open the Red King Crab fishery.

Scott Goodman will provide more insight into what these percent changes mean later next week. The Snow Crab part of the trawl surveys work will be starting this week. I believe that work will take about a month. We also had an update on the foundation tagging study that was done in March, on Red King Crab many of the sonar tags have been popping up in the Bristol Bay area and the data is being uploaded.

The BSFRF Board approved funding RFM crab certification program that keeps all BSAI Crab finished product with a certification on quality. The board was also updated on planning for research, especially the \$2.75 tanner crab disaster funding the board science team is working on recommendation on the next projects. We were also updated on bycatch research work with the trawl sectors. The BSFRF is also hoping to receive funding in the larger \$191 million Opilio and Bristol Bay Red King Crab Disaster Plan. Lastly Executive Director Goodman is working on an all-encompassing Crab Research Roadmap Strategy for Opilio, Tanner and Red King Crab including looking at exploitation comparisons various rates, and size limits especially on Snow Crab. This

work will be going on work the next few months. The meeting adjourned at 300PM, and we will meet again in the third week of July.

I have also attended two Ad Hoc Crab Disaster \$191million dollar spend plan allocation meetings to see if the various sectors Harvesters, Processors Communities, CDQ Groups and Research could reach agreement on percentages on the spend plan to report back to ADFG. At the first meeting no agreement was reached. During the first meeting last week, the communities had a lot of push back from the harvesters on why we deserved an increase from 4.75 percent for the much smaller Tanner crab Disaster funding. I explained that two years of no King Crab season and a lost year of Snow Crab had major revenue impacts to the community, not just lost fish taxes revenues, but major impacts to sales taxes losses especial on fuel sales, support sector businesses and employment in the community. The second meeting held yesterday, the 27th, went much better. We had support from the processors and some harvesters as well for 7% for communities plus an additional 1% for St Paul since there economy has been devastated; that additional 1% may come from reducing research funding from 5% to 4%. We are going to have one more meeting after the 4th of July to see if we can come to an agreement on the split that will be submitted to ADFG who works with NOAA and Pacific States Fisheries Commission on the distribution of the funds approved by Congress.

The Harvesters and Processors also still have issues to work on the Red King Crab split between their sectors. The way the spilt works is Community 7%, CDQ Groups 10% and Research 4-5% all come off the top. The harvesters and processors split the rest possibly at 75% harvesters 25% processors they are still working on that. The 7% for communities equals \$13.7 million Unalaska share of that could be close 45-50% of that amount which would be \$6.5 million range. I will keep you updated on how things progress.

Regards

Frank Kelty

Attachments:

1. Fishery Activity Memo
2. Fishery Articles for the week.