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To: Erin Reinders, JR Pearson, Michelle Price, Mayor Tutikoff and City Council

From: Frank Kelty, Fisheries Consultant

Re: Fishery Activities and Fishery Articles for the week ending 9-17-21

I been attending the North Pacific Fishery Management Crab Plan Team (CPT) meeting for four days the CPT make plan id made of biologist, scientist, from NOAA, ADFG University of Washington, North Pacific Council staff, and members from other Universities such as UAF. This group analysis the stock assessment survey information and they run the various models. They make recommendations on the Overfishing Limit (OFL and Allowable Biological Catch (ABC) to the North Pacific Fishery Management Scientific Statistical Panel (SSC) this panel has makes the final recommendations on OFL and ABC numbers for the full NPFMC to approve they usually make some minor changes to the recommendations from the CPT. The SSC will be meeting the first week of October. I wish I had some good news to report but very little good news.

**Snow Crab (Opilio Tanner Crab):** The population based on what the fishery managers saw in the 2021 survey is a total stock collapse. The overall stock shows 92% reduction from 2018 legal 4in males preferred size shows a 96% reduction from 2018 the female juvenile female crab showed a reduction of 99% to 2.6 million animals the lowest amount since 1980. The recommended from the CPT OFL is 16.53 million lbs. the ABC amount is 12.35 million pounds. The State of Alaska ADFG sets Total Allowable Catch my best guess will see at a harvest in the 10–12-million-pound allocation fishery about an 80% reduction from the 45-million-pound fishery in 2020. It really hurt that we didn't have a survey in 2020, I really have a problem with this drastic action based on 1 year's information. Many of us suspect that a large amount of Snow Crab in the Northern region goes but and forth across the boundary into Russian waters and may have been missed in the summer survey. We will have to address the increased losses after we have the final numbers from the SSC at the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and the TAC amount set by ADFG. I believe we should all consider working on asking the Governor for a disaster declaration or join with the harvesters and processors on a declaration the trouble with this declaration is it takes 3-4 years to see any funds. The fishery scientists will be looking at bycatch, massive die off, ecological issues and predation by codfish and other flatfish.

**Baiardi Tanner Crab:** CPT model runs saw increases on Baiardi Tanner this is based only on the 2021 fishery surveys and showed and OFL of 59 million pounds and ABC of

47 million pounds. ADFG will run these numbers through their harvest models, and they ADFG have stated that there will be a fishery in the Western District, last years was a harvest was 2.3 million pounds and it wasn't harvested. But the Eastern District area may be closed as it has been for last years.

**Bristol Bay Red King Crab:** As you are aware this fishery is closed due to the fact the female crab threshold amount of 8.4 million female crab wasn't met. The female biomass has been declining for the last 4 years and is a great concern for the fishery managers. The legal male crab met the threshold limit, but the male biomass has seen a 50% reduction since 2002. Recruitment for both females and males' crab has been declining for years the mature biomass and is expected to go below average fishery mortality of 0.25 per year.

### **Groundfish Update 9-11-21**

The Pollock B season continues progressing well with more harvesters and companies having completed their B season Pollock allocations, 2-3 plants in Unalaska have finished, and have begun sending out people. Unisea who has the largest allocation will probably be the last plant to finish. The Pollock harvest ending 9-11-21 came in at 37,082MT (82 million pounds) that is 5,500MT drop from the last few weeks harvests, which is due to harvesters finishing their allocations and dropping out of the fishery. The Pollock harvest through September 11<sup>th</sup> 676,565MT of B season Pollock has been harvested (1.51 billion pounds) leaving 61,000MT (136 million pounds) to harvest, 92% of the B season Pollock is complete. The season may be done the last week of September in 2-3 weeks. The 2021 season is 96,000MT a full 2 weeks ahead of 2020 B season Pollock harvest during the same time-period.

Pacific Cod is still slow last week harvest through 9-11-21 was 3,998MT (8.9million pounds) the increase from the previous weeks is due to the increased effort by the over 60' ft and under 60' pot boats fishing again. The major activity was in the freezer longline catcher processors sector which harvested 1,593MT the rest of cod harvest is mostly from the pot boats 1,653MT and bycatch in other trawl fisheries. The total cod harvest by all sectors stands at 107,509MT (240 million pounds) leaving 7,565MT to harvest (19.9 million pounds) 96.3% of the allocation has been harvested. The directed cod fishing in the Bering Sea for all sectors closed at noon today, the remaining cod allocation will have to be fished in the Aleutian Islands and for bycatch in other trawl fisheries in the Bering Sea.

The Bottom Trawl Amendment 80 fisheries are moving along a good pace, during the summer most of the activity has been Aleutians on Atka Mackerel and Perch and Rockfish but the Amendment 80 vessels are moving back to the Bering Sea fishing flatfish species. As of 9-4-21 Mackerel is at 48,148MT and Perch and Rockfish at 30,657MT and various Sole species totals for the BSAI 136,929MT down about 30,000MT from last year during the same timeframe.

The overall Groundfish harvest totals through 9-11-21 stand at 1.63MMT harvested (3.6 billion pounds) leaving 348,471MT (777 million pounds) 82% of the annual catch has been harvest, last week harvest was 49,137MT (109 million pounds) down 4,000MT from last week's harvest.

### **IFQ and Crab Update 9-17-21**

Aleutian Island Golden King Crab, through 9-17-21 the fishery with an allocation of 5.9 million pounds, 5 vessels are registered to participate in the fishery. We had 27 deliveries of Golden King Crab from the Eastern District for 1.46 million pounds harvested leaving 2.1 million pounds to harvest. The Western District has 5 landing for 400,000lbs. leaving 1.6 million pounds still to harvest. The total landing 33 landings for 1.86 million pounds leaving 4.0 million pounds to harvest.

IFQ Fisheries, through 9-17-21, Halibut is at 12.9 million pounds 70% of the allocation has been harvested leaving 5.57 million pounds to harvest. Halibut landings for Unalaska are still held confidential until 3 buyers purchase fish. The CDQ Halibut 73 landings have been posted for Areas-4 CDE 369,000lbs landed leaving 661,000lbs to harvest 36% of the allocation has been harvested.

Sablefish has seen a harvest of 22.7 million pounds leaving 20.6 million pounds to harvest 52% of the fishery is complete. Sablefish landings for Unalaska are still confidential until 3 buyers purchase fish. The State water Sablefish harvest is at 68,869lbs leaving 825,331lbs to harvest.

Regards

Frank Kelty

Attachments:

1. Fishery Outlook 9-16—21
2. Stock Assessment for Red King Crab, Snow Crab, Bairdi Tanner Crab
3. Fishery Articles
4. NMFS Closure Announcement for Bering Sea Pacific Cod