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To: Erin Reinders, JR Pearson, Michelle Price,

From: Frank Kelty, Fisheries Consultant

Re: Fishery Activities for the week ending 4-29-2022 attended the Board of Directors Meeting Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation Board meeting.

Last Thursday April 21st I attended a Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation (BSFRF) the first item was to approve the February financials which once again little to no revenue coming in less than \$18,000 from the snow crab landings. The end of March fund balances was \$1.5 million dollars down from on 2021 March revenue of \$1.9 million dollars. The board moved and adopted a reduced FY22 budget \$527,516 that includes a drawdown from reserves of \$358,000 a reduction of 45%. This is due to the lack of revenue assessments from the harvesters and processors closure of the Bristol Bay Red King Crab and a 90% reduction on the Snow Crab fishery. The FY21 was set at \$1,170,000 the board hopes to receive additional funding from other state and federal agencies and organizations for research projects we can partner with.

We then moved on to a request from the Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers for list of the BSFRF top crab research needs from Executive Director Goodman, we discussed the projects and he received approval of the projects that will go to Senator Murkowski office for a potential appropriation in the \$2.5 to \$7.0 million dollars range. We have reached out for letters of support from various organizations to go along with this ask to the Senators office. I will include project the list with this memo.

The Board received an overview from Director Goodman, on the April NPFMC meeting and his take on the Bristol Bay Red King Crab issue that the Council addressed he discussed his testimony and the need for further

crab research, and a bycatch strategy needs to be developed by all sectors of the industry. We then moved on to the planning section of the meeting

Executive Director Goodman gave an update on the on going BBRKC tagging study which is completed on the male king crab and still waiting on the tags to pop up on the tagged female crab. We are also working with ADFG on getting three hundred Snow crab tags on Snow Crab which is ongoing right now since a few crab boats have returned to the ground this week, since the ice pack has receded.

The board discussed the ongoing relationship with North Pacific Research Board and at this time we do not have any cooperative projects schedule to work on. We then moved on to discuss the Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) program which is the certification program that covers all the BSAI crab fisheries finished product that carries the certification sticker on all finished product in the marketplace. The cost to the BSRF is close to \$70K which the board did approve funding in the budget we adopted and will continue to support this RFM program.

The BSFRF board reviewed the minutes of the Bycatch research group which includes members of the Amendment 80 Bottom Trawl, Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers, Scott Goodman of the BSFRF and agencies members of ADFG and NOAA. The purpose of this group is to conduct research to help find a balance between crab conservation efforts and flexible fishing options for the trawl sectors. This group will continue meeting and we hope they will make some progress. The Board also discussed a funding request for Madison Shipley a long-time researcher for the BSFRF for five years as she goes for her doctorate at the University of Washington School of Fisheries.

Lastly, we had a short update on Bairdi Tanner on stock dynamics and the Alaska Crabbers will be asking the Board of Fisheries (BOF) for a size reduction to four”1/2 inches from five” I believe this request will come up at the October BOF work session and hopefully this change will take for the 2023 crab season.

Regards

Frank Kelty

Attachments:

1. Crab Research Projects for Possible Funding to Senator Murkowski office.
2. Fishery Articles from the past week.