

Frank Kelty
Unalaska Fishery Consultant
fvkelty@gmail.com
907-268-8718

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To: Chris Hladick, City Manager, Asst. Manager Marjorie Veeder, Michelle Price

CC: Mayor Tutikoff and City Council Members

From: Frank Kelty, Fisheries Consultant

Subject: Fishery Activities and Fishery Articles for 9-11-2022

Crab Task Force Sub-Committee meeting on August 6th via Zoom.

The Crab Committee was Chaired by Linda Kozak of Kodiak. After the committee took care of housekeeping issues that moved on to. This was the Crab Sub-Committee final meeting they sent their recommendations to the full taskforce for their approval and changes.

Old Business: Recommendations on Kodiak Tanner Crab, they discussed two especially key areas for Tanner Crab fishing on Kodiak Island, and what measures could be taken to project those areas, from impacts from the groundfish harvesting. They discussed items such as additional observers, on both crab and groundfish vessels, rationalization of the GOA groundfish fisheries, additional closed areas to protect crab stocks, and additional research work.

New Business: Bering Sea Bycatch Management Measures

1. Addressed observed and unobserved mortality by gear interaction.
2. Continued research on critical crab habitat to better inform on open and closed areas for commercial fishing activity.
3. Studies to help reduce /avoid interactions and associated mortality and unobserved mortality percentages for all fishing sectors.
4. Analysis of bycatch cap percentages adjustment based on strengths of the directed fishing allocations.

5. Support a rationalization plan for the 60' Pot Cod fleet.
6. Examine PSC limits and seasonal area closures for the for the Pot Cod gear in both federal and state waters.
7. Recommend examination of spatial management for all trawl fisheries in the Bering Sea.
8. No consensus by committee of setting a 10% limit on Pelagic Trawlers on bottom contact.

State Bycatch Engagement Recommendations:

1. Develop state bycatch research priorities to share with funding entities that would help identify and acquire research funds. ADFG could create a process where industry, communities, and tribes could participate in developing priorities from the states perspective.
2. Implement strategies to encourage and facilitate industry/agency cooperation to reduce bycatch and associated mortality. Encourage a more streamlined industry cost recovery process for proposed industry/agency projects.
3. Create methods, for collaboration with other research entities to better track bycatch research proposed or funded along with developing opportunities for cooperative projects and combined reporting of findings. Host an annual workshop between agencies and research entities and industry to better collaborate on research projects.
4. No consensus by committee on if the State should have a bycatch policy position either in the Governor office possible in the portfolio of the existing fishery advisor position, or at existing position at ADFG.
5. The Committee support a formation of an ongoing bycatch committee that would meet 2-4 times a year with public involvement.

Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation (BSFRF) Meeting Thursday August 8th Via Zoom.

The BSFRF directors met to discuss the upcoming North Pacific Fishery Management Council Crab Plan team meeting on September 12-15-2022 in Seattle WA. Executive Director Goodman walked us through the four-day agenda I will be attending via zoom. On Monday, the main agenda item will be the over by NMFS of the BSAI survey overview and the ecosystem and

2021 fishery summary with bycatch reports. On Tuesday, the Plan Team will be looking at the climate model updates. The Snow Crab Safe document, and the Bristol Bay Red King Crab Report Card. Wednesday, they will lead off with update on the Snow Crab Rebuilding Plan. Will overfishing status updates on Western Aleutian Red King Crab, Pribilof Island Golden King Crab, and Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab. They will also review the Bering Sea Tanner Crab Safe Document. Thursday BSFRF will give a presentation on the research work the foundation is doing. The Plan Team will review BSAI essential fish habitat, and they will be looking at timing of the crab assessment work. The Plan Team will review the Norton Sound Red King Crab model runs. The Plan team will finish up with a review of the GMAC model for Snow Crab. We then moved on to a quick overview of the NMFS Tech Memo on the summer survey results that were depressing. We looked at the Snow Crab assessment which show a continued decline in mature males and females a review of the assessment we believe we will have a fishery, but it may be reduced form the 5.5 million pounds in 2022 the preliminary numbers may support a fishery in the 2.5- to-3.0-million-pound range.

Tanner Crab assessment may support, a small fishery in both the east and western districts 700,000-1.0 million pounds for each district. Mr. Goodman gave the board and overview of the Crab Science Symposium that the BSFRF is sponsoring on September 16th for harvesters and processors in Ballard with speakers on crab from NMFS, ADFG and University of Washington. The last item we cover was a research paper the staff at BSFRF has been working on that has to deal with unobserved fishing mortality from Pelagic trawl gear during the Pollock A season in the King Crab Saving area. we agreed to send the paper out for a peer review before the document may be released to the public. The meeting adjourned at noon on Thursday.

Ad-hoc Crab Committee Chaired by the Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers Meeting Via Zoom Friday September 9th at Noon. The group reviewed the minutes from the last meeting. Then moved on to a discuss on retention of smaller crab and the retention of multiply crab species on the percentages allowed by ADFG. The discussion really did not go anywhere with the group. The processors were concerned on if the smaller crab were retained there could be market implication on price and that could affect ex-

vessel price for harvesters. On keeping small percentages of different crab species, as an example 35% of Opilio Snow Crab is allowed when fishing Baiardi Tanner crab. Most other species are at 5% allowance that can be kept of other species. Processors were concerned on impacts to processing will it slow down processing by starting and stopping to change processing cook times for varied species, unloading could be slowed down by having to sort varied species which could lead to dead loss issues. The group could not come to a consensus on this topic.

We then moved on to a discussion on any additional ideas how to reduce bycatch and discards. Once again mesh sizes were brought up to get smaller crab out of the pots. A new idea that had some support was a five day bait up before the season started to let the pots a chance to sort the small crab out of the gear, one concern is you don't know what you have set your gear on if you set on a bad area you would have to move all the of the gear. Lastly the group discussed a group letter to NPFMC at the October meeting on the issues that can be taken to reduce crab bycatch. The consensus was each group will send in their own letter if they choose to comment. We adjourned at 1:00PM.

Regards

Frank Kelty

Attachments:

1. Fishery Articles for the week ending 9-11-22