

**BERING SEA/ALEUTIAN ISLANDS  
CRAB OBSERVER OVERSIGHT TASK FORCE**

REPORT TO THE ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES  
MARCH 2014

The Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Crab Observer Oversight Task Force (COOTF) was formed by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in 1999 and reaffirmed in March of 2011. The COOTF consists of crab industry members, including representatives of stakeholders, and is to interact and be advisory to the department and report to and be advisory to the Board of Fisheries. Copies of the originating finding in 1999 (99-186-FB), as well as the 2011 finding (2011-265-FB) are attached.

The current members of the COOTF are: Mark Gleason (Co-Chair), Linda Kozak (Co-Chair), Jeff Stephan, Jerry Bongen, Lance Farr, Dick Powell, Anne Vanderhoeven, Doug Wells, and Edward Poulsen.

The purpose of the COOTF is to review and recommend specific action for all aspects of the BSAI crab observer program as found at 5ACC.39.645, including the following:

- Funding mechanisms for observers
- Budget and reserve priorities
- ADF&G suggested program receipt requests

This report is being provided to the Board as part of the 2014 meeting cycle which addresses the crab fisheries of the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands.

The members of the COOTF met on March 10, 2014 to address several issues. Eight of the nine current members were present. A report was received from the department regarding funding levels and observer coverage in 2013 and anticipated needs for the 2014/2015 season. Several changes to the program were made in 2013 and these were discussed. Discussions were also held regarding the current test fish receipt authority requests before the Alaska State Legislature.

Following is a brief summary of the COOTF recommendations.

1. By a unanimous vote, the members of the COOTF request consideration by the Board of Fisheries to extend the task force for an indefinite period of time. It is believed that industry interactions with the department are beneficial and needed in addressing the crab test fish receipt authority which provides funding for the state managed BSAI onboard observer program, as well as needed research for the crab stocks of the BSAI.

2. The original membership of the COOTF consisted of 15 individuals, while currently there are nine members. The unanimous recommendation is for the Board to authorize the committee membership to be between nine and 15 individuals, with a quorum to consist of a simple majority. This provides flexibility for each species group to have representation, while not requiring a full complement of members to be appointed. It is expected that the Board may appoint additional members to the task force as needed and requested by the COOTF from time to time.
3. The term of membership for the COOTF was unanimously recommended to be for three years, coinciding with the BSAI crab meeting cycle set by the Board. This is not a change in current policy. In the event that the cycle for Board meetings is adjusted for a longer period of time, it is expected that the COOTF membership terms be extended as well.
4. As the term for current members of the COOTF are expiring, it is requested that all members as identified in this report be reappointed by the Board.



Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Crab Observer Oversight Task Force  
99 - 186 - FB

**APPOINTMENT**

The Alaska Board of Fisheries made initial appointment of the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Crab Observer Oversight Task Force at the October 1999 work session. After initial appointment, task force members shall be appointed by the board at the king and Tanner crab meetings currently scheduled for 2002, 2005, 2008, 2011 and beyond.

**TERM**

Initial term for task force members shall be until 2002. Beginning in 2002, appointments shall be for a term of three years, corresponding to the board crab proposal cycle. Any vacancies will be appointed annually at the March meeting and the term will be for the remainder of the three-year cycle.

**NUMBER OF TASK FORCE MEMBERS AND QUORUM**

The task force will comprise 15 industry members. A quorum will be eight. The Board of Fisheries will attempt to achieve a broad representation, but specific appointments recognizing residency or size and class of vessels will not be required. If a vacancy occurs, a nomination shall be referred to the BOF for approval.

Understanding that the crab fisheries are conducted in a manner different than many other state managed fisheries, the board shall not consider representatives of stakeholders to be technical advisors, but shall recognize representatives as members of industry.

**MEETING STRUCTURE**

The task force will operate with a chair and vice-chair to be elected for a three-year term by the committee. Issues will be determined on a voting basis, with vote tallies to be reported to the board.

**MEETING FREQUENCY**

To be determined by the task force. The task force will coordinate meetings with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Attempts will be made to schedule meetings in conjunction with appropriate meetings of the Board of Fisheries and North Pacific Fishery Management Council.

**FUNDING FOR TRAVEL**

Task force members will be responsible for their own expenses to attend task force meetings.

**TASK FORCE AUTHORITY**

The task force shall exercise the following duties, authorities and responsibilities placed on it by the Board of Fisheries in regard to all aspects of the development, implementation, and continued operation of the BS/AI crab observer program.

- Report to and be advisory to the board
- Interact with and be advisory to the department

- Review and recommend specific action for all aspects of the BS/AI crab observer program, including:
  - a) Funding mechanisms for observer.
  - b) Budget and research priorities.
  - c) Types of observers to be used in the crab fisheries.
  - d) Issues of observer coverage, as well as duties and responsibilities of observers in the various fisheries.
  - e) ADF&G suggested program receipt requests.
  - f) Other issues that may arise.
- Review and provide recommendations to all appropriate entities regarding the amount and collection of cost recovery fisheries for the observer program in the BS/AI.

**ANNUAL REPORTING AND RECOMMENDATION FORMAT**

Prior to each March Board of Fisheries meeting, the task force shall receive a complete report from the Department of Fish and Game for the preceding year to include:

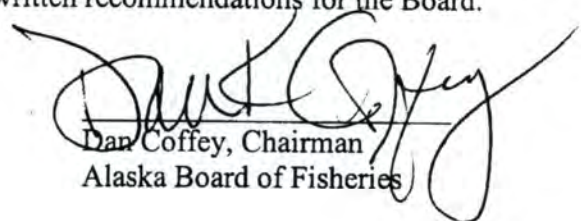
- Amount of funds collected in BS/AI crab cost recovery fisheries, along with an itemizing listing of fisheries from which funds were collected. Information shall include the names of vessels involved, pounds harvested, ex-vessel price, and other relevant information.
- A complete and detailed accounting on the use of funds collected in BS/AI recovery fisheries, including amounts utilized for observers, overhead and management, transportation, research, and all other associated costs.
- Complete observer data report for all fisheries with summaries and conclusions included.

Prior to each March Board of Fisheries meeting, the task force shall receive proposals from the Department of Fish and Game for the coming year to include:

- Proposed amount of funds for collection in BS/AI crab cost recovery programs
- Proposed budget for use of funds collected in BS/AI crab cost recovery programs.
- Anticipated levels of observer coverage in each specific fishery, as well as data specific goals for each fishery to be observed in the upcoming season.

Prior to the March Board of Fisheries meeting, the task force will review reports and proposals from the Department of Fish and Game and prepare written recommendations for the Board.

ADOPTED: 10/27, 1999  
Fairbanks, Alaska

  
Dan Coffey, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Fisheries

VOTE: 7/0



**ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES**  
Continuation of the Crab Observer Oversight Task Force

**2011-265-FB**  
**March 26, 2011**

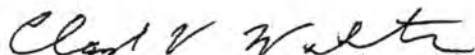
Pursuant to the Board's discussion and the requests of the stakeholders and their representatives, the board has determined that the continuation of the Crab Observer Oversight Task Force for the crab observer program and the program receipts system is useful.

At its March 2011 Statewide King and Tanner Crab meeting, the Board received nominations of intent to be kept as membership of this task force. The board notes that with the Bering Sea Aleutian Islands crab rationalization it is timely to review the membership of this task force. The board makes the following appointments:

- Lance Farr – R/V Kevleen K
- Doug Wells – C/P Baranof
- Arni Thomson – Alaska Crab Coalition
- Jerry Bongen – FV Pacific Venture
- Ann Vanderhouvern – Bristol Bay Economic Dev. Corp.
- Jeff Stephan – United Fishermens' Marketing Association
- Dick Powell – C/V Patricia Lee
- Linda Kozak – Crab Group of Independent Harvesters
- Edward Poulsen – Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers

The term of this Oversight Task Force is three years. The board will review the membership and the charge through the Board's next Statewide King and Tanner Crab meeting.

The charge to the Oversight Task Force is outlined in Board Finding 99-186-FB.



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Vince Webster, Chair  
Alaska Board of Fisheries

Vote: 7 in favor, 0 opposed