

FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR THE COMMERCIAL TANNER CRAB FISHERY
IN THE KODIAK DISTRICT OF REGISTRATION AREA J, 2004



By

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
LIST OF TABLES	i
LIST OF FIGURES	i
LIST OF APPENDICES	i
ABSTRACT	1
INTRODUCTION.....	2
Overview.....	2
Recent Fisheries.....	3
2001 Fishery.....	3
2002 Fishery.....	3
2003 Fishery.....	3
REGULATIONS.....	4
Overview.....	4
CFEC Limitation.....	5
2004 Guideline Harvest Levels	5
Fishing Periods	6
Pot Limits and Buoy Tags.....	6
Gear.....	7
Operation of Other Pot Gear, Pot Storage, and Landing Requirements	7
Registration, CFEC Vessel Size Restrictions, Tenders, and Tank Inspections	9
Size Limit	10
VOLUNTEER CATCH REPORTING.....	10
FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN	11
FISHERY OPENING DELAY DUE TO SEVERE WEATHER.....	12
LITERATURE CITED.....	13
TABLES.....	14
FIGURES	16
APPENDICES.....	18

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Tanner crab commercial catch, effort, and value for the Kodiak District, 1967-2003.....	14
2. Catch, effort, and value by section from the 2001 Kodiak District Tanner crab fishery.	15
3. Catch, effort, and value by section from the 2002 Kodiak District Tanner crab fishery.	15
4. Catch, effort, and value by section from the 2003 Kodiak District Tanner crab fishery.	15

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Kodiak Tanner crab District and Sections, 2003	16
2. Eastside Section inshore Tanner crab closures for the 2004 Kodiak District fishery.	17

LIST OF APPENDICES

<u>Appendix</u>	<u>Page</u>
A. Listing of contact persons, by agency and location.....	19
B. Population estimates of legal male Tanner crabs in the Kodiak District from the 2000 trawl survey.....	20
C. Population estimates of legal male Tanner crabs in the Kodiak District from the 2001 trawl survey.....	21
D. Population estimates of legal male Tanner crabs in the Kodiak District from the 2002 trawl survey.....	22
E. Estimated population of male Tanner crab by carapace width in the Kodiak District, 1987-2003.	23
F. National Weather Service Forecast areas and Kodiak District Tanner crab management sections, 2003.	24
G. Example National Weather Service forecast text and hypothetical weather delay actions.....	25

ABSTRACT

This report provides a brief overview of recent and historic fisheries for commercial Tanner crab in the Kodiak District. The current Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) regulatory harvest strategy for Tanner crab is summarized. A detailed explanation of regulations establishing pot limits, daily fishing periods, fishery delays for severe weather, section registration requirements, and superexclusive registration are provided.

Three sections of the Kodiak District are scheduled to open for a commercial Tanner crab *Chionoecetes bairdi* fishery on January 15, 2004. The opening date may be delayed for severe weather under criteria established by the BOF. Participation in the Kodiak District Tanner crab fishery is restricted by a Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) moratorium. Only persons who qualify under CFEC criteria may participate in the 2004 fishery. The individual section guideline harvest levels (GHLs) are 245,000 pounds for the Northeast Section, 450,000 pounds for the Eastside Section, and 100,000 pounds for the Southeast Section. The Eastside Section will only be open to fishing outside the major capes of Ugak and Kiliuda Bays.

Information on tank inspections, gear requirements, inseason reporting, pot storage, landing requirements, recent survey results, and contact personnel within the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) is also provided. Details on how ADF&G intends to manage the 2004 fishery are also outlined. Harvesters are encouraged to use this document as a supplement to the 2003-2005 State of Alaska Commercial Shellfish Fishing Regulations to better understand the rules governing this fishery.

INTRODUCTION

The Kodiak Tanner crab District are the waters of Registration Area J south of the latitude of Cape Douglas (58° 51.10' N lat.), west of the longitude of Cape Fairfield (148° 50.25' W long.) and east of the longitude of Cape Kumlik (157° 27' W long.). The district is subdivided into eight sections: Northeast, Eastside, Southeast, Southwest, Semidi Island, Westside, North Mainland, and South Mainland (Figure 1). Sections are described in 5 AAC 35.505 DESCRIPTION OF REGISTRATION AREA J DISTRICTS on pages 184-185 of the 2003-2005 Commercial Shellfish Fishing Regulations.

Overview

The Kodiak District Tanner crab commercial fishery began in 1967. Commercial harvest peaked in the 1977/78 season when over 33 million pounds were harvested from the district (Table 1).

In the late 1980s, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) began to use a trawl survey, developed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), to obtain relative abundance estimates and predict future recruitment trends of Tanner crabs around Kodiak. Prior to this time, pot surveys were used for stock assessment.

Progressive declines through the 1980s in the harvestable surplus of Tanner crabs in the Kodiak District led to decreased quotas and closures of some sections to commercial fishing. By 1994, commercial fisheries were closed in all Kodiak sections due to reduced stock size. Closures continued through the 1990s, even though some increases in stock size were noted late in the decade.

The Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) adopted a comprehensive harvest strategy in 1999 for management of Tanner crabs in the Kodiak District. Under this strategy, a commercial Tanner crab fishery may occur when 1) preseason trawl survey abundance estimates meet or exceed established thresholds; 2) two or more sections, excluding the South Mainland and Semidi Island sections, are opened; 3) the guideline harvest level (GHL) in an open section is at least 100,000 pounds; and 4) abundance is sufficient to provide a total district harvest of at least 400,000 pounds (Urban et al. 1999). Minor revisions to the management measures of the Tanner crab fishery occurred at the 2001 BOF meetings. (*see Regulations on page 4*). The harvest strategy criteria have been met by data from the 2000-2002 surveys and minor commercial fisheries have occurred (*see Recent Fisheries on page 3*).

In October 2002, the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) adopted a petition to limit entry into the Kodiak District Tanner crab fishery. A qualifying moratorium was established with an effective date of January 1, 2003. Fisheries subsequent to the moratorium date will not be counted as qualifying years in the limitation process. Participation by the permit holder in at least one of the qualifying years of 1993, 1994, 2001, or 2002 is required to participate in the 2004 fishery. CFEC is developing a point system to reduce the number of eligible fishing permits to 180. For more information regarding the limited entry process, contact CFEC (Appendix A).

Recent Fisheries

2001 Fishery

The Kodiak District opened with a total GHL of 500,000 pounds with 225,000 pounds available in the Northeast Section and 275,000 pounds in the Eastside Section. The final harvest was 510,407 pounds with a Northeast Section harvest of 130,644 pounds and an Eastside Section harvest of 379,763 pounds (Table 2). One hundred forty-four vessels participated with 155 individual permit holders making landings. The exvessel fishery value was \$1.2 million based on \$2.30 per pound.

The 2001 fishery was prosecuted very quickly with the Eastside Section open for only 1.6 twelve-hour fishing periods (20 hours) and the Northeast Section open for 4.6 twelve-hour fishing periods (56 hours). The Eastside Section fishery was closed with no advance notice while baited gear was still on the grounds. Fishers were required to deliver their crabs and then return to the grounds to 'rail dump' the contents of their pots. Twelve hours advance notice was given for the Northeast Section closure and baited gear was prohibited at the time of the closure.

2002 Fishery

The Northeast and Eastside Sections met the required criteria for a commercial opening in 2002. The total GHL was 500,000 pounds with 300,000 pounds available in the Northeast Section and 200,000 pounds in the Eastside Section. The harvest totaled 361,166 pounds from 279 landings by 210 permit holders onboard a total of 180 unique vessels (Table 3). The exvessel fishery value was estimated at \$800,000.

Like the fishery in 2001, the 2002 fishery was prosecuted very quickly in most of the fishing area. The Eastside Section was open for 14 total hours of fishing. Fishers were given enough notice of the closure to remove baited gear prior to the closure. Inshore portions of the Northeast Section closed after 4.5 twelve-hour fishing periods (60 hours) with the remainder of the section open for an additional 25 twelve-hour fishing periods (300 hours).

2003 Fishery

The Northeast and Eastside Sections met the required criteria for a commercial opening in 2003. This was the first fishery that occurred under the CFEC qualification moratorium. Only permit holders that landed Tanner crab in either 1993, 1994, 2000, or 2001 fisheries were allowed to participate.

The total district GHL was 510,000 pounds with 170,000 pounds available in the Northeast Section and 340,000 pounds available in the Eastside Section. The total harvest was 511,324 pounds from 313 landings by 79 permit holders on 72 unique vessels. The exvessel fishery value was estimated at \$1.1 million (Table 4).

The fishery was prosecuted slower than the 2001 or 2002 fisheries. This was largely the result of fewer vessels participating. Ugak Bay was closed after the fourth full 10-hour fishing period (46

hours) with the remainder of the Eastside Section open for 14 ten-hour fishing periods (146 hours).

In the Northeast Section, Kazakof Bay was closed during the eighth 10-hour fishing period (90 hours). The waters inside the three nautical mile territorial sea boundary from Cape Chiniak to Spruce Island closed after 12 ten-hour fishing periods (116 hours). The remainder of the Northeast Section was open for 36 ten-hour fishing periods (356 hours).

REGULATIONS

Overview

Regulations pertaining to Tanner crab fishing in the State of Alaska can be found in chapter 35 of the Alaska Administrative Code (AAC). Chapter 35 begins on page 165 of the 2003-05 shellfish regulation booklet. Specific regulations that pertain to the Tanner crab fisheries in Registration Area J (Westward Region) begin on page 183. The harvest strategy regulation, 5 AAC 35.507 KODIAK, CHIGNIK, AND SOUTH PENINSULA DISTRICTS, *C. bairdi* TANNER CRAB HARVEST STRATEGIES, can be found on pages 186-187 of the 2003-2005 Commercial Shellfish Fishing Regulations, which will be referred to as 'shellfish regulations' for the remainder of this report. Some of the regulations regarding Tanner crab fishing are summarized below, particularly those that have changed as a result of BOF action in 1999 and 2002. For additional information on regulations, contact the ADF&G office in Kodiak and refer to the shellfish regulations (available at ADF&G offices or at our website: <http://www.state.ak.us/adfg/>). The following is an overview of regulations pertaining to Tanner crab fishing in the Kodiak District:

- **The Kodiak District is a superexclusive registration district for Tanner crabs, 5 AAC 35.506 AREA J REGISTRATION (a).** A vessel or permit holder that registers for the 2004 Tanner crab fishery may not take Tanner crabs or any crab of the genus *Chionoecetes* in another district within the same registration year. A vessel is considered registered for the fishery when the permit holder signs the registration form; a valid registration does not require actual fishery participation or landing.
- **Vessels must be registered for a specific section in the Kodiak District 5 AAC 35.506 AREA J REGISTRATION (h).** A vessel operator may only be registered to fish one section at a time. Participants will be required to specify on their registration the section they will begin fishing in the 2004 fishery. Fishers may change this section registration at any time by contacting ADF&G by phone, FAX, or in person.
- When the district GHL is less than 2.0 million pounds, **the pot limit is 20 pots per vessel.** Pot limit regulatory language is under 5 AAC 35.525 LAWFUL GEAR FOR REGISTRATION AREA J (c)(1)(A)-(D).
- **Fishing gear may be operated for 10 hours each day from 8:00 AM to 5:59 PM.** Baited gear may be left in the water, for 14 hours from 6:00 PM to 7:59 AM each night. The

regulation for the daily fishing and soak periods can be found under 5 AAC 35.510 FISHING SEASONS FOR REGISTRATION AREA J (a).

- **The start of the season may be delayed if severe weather is forecast.** The regulation for a fishery delay can be found under 5 AAC 35.510 FISHING SEASONS FOR REGISTRATION AREA J (a). The details of how this regulatory criteria will be used to assess weather and delay the fishery opening, if needed, can be found in the *Fishery Opening Delay Due To Severe Weather* section on page 12.

CFEC Limitation

The Kodiak District Tanner crab fishery is undergoing the process of limited entry. The fishery is currently under a moratorium and only the 331 permit holders eligible for interim-use permits from CFEC may participate in the Tanner crab fishery in the Kodiak District. In addition, **participation in the 2004 fishery will not count as participation** in the limited entry process. By the time the 2004 fishery opens, it is expected that CFEC will have a point system for permit qualification for limited entry. The application period for limited entry permits is expected to begin in March 2004. For more information on the status of Kodiak District Tanner crab limitation, contact CFEC (Appendix A).

2004 Guideline Harvest Levels

The following GHGs will be in place for the Northeast, Eastside, and Southeast Sections of the Kodiak District for the 2004 commercial Tanner crab season:

<i>Section</i>	<i>2004 Guideline Harvest Level</i>
Northeast	245,000 pounds
Eastside	450,000 pounds (offshore only)
Southeast	100,000 pounds
Total Kodiak District	795,000 pounds

The estimated number of legal crabs from the 2003 trawl survey in these three sections is slightly over 1.6 million animals. Appendices B-D contain maps illustrating the estimated number of legal males from the 2000-02 trawl surveys.

The Eastside Section will only open outside the major capes of Ugak and Kiliuda Bays (Figure 2). The abundance of legal-sized animals in bays of the Eastside Section has declined greatly. The estimated number of legal-sized animals dropped 81% in Ugak Bay from the 2002 to the 2003 survey. Similarly, the waters of Kiliuda and the surrounding bays contribute less than 4% of the legal-sized animals in the 2003 Eastside Section survey estimate.

The fishery will close when ADF&G determines that the GHL is achieved or when conditions indicating a threat to the long term health of the stock, such as low catch per pot or excessive bycatch of female or sublegal male Tanner crabs, are observed. (See *Fishery Management Plan, Page 11*) The regulatory season closure date is March 31.

Appendix E depicts the estimated population of male Tanner crabs by carapace width from the 1987 through 2003 surveys. Alaska Statute 16.05.815 CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF CERTAIN REPORTS AND RECORDS (8)(c) requires the 2003 survey location data to remain confidential until the fishing season is completed.

Fishing Periods

Pot gear may only be operated from 8:00 AM to 5:59 PM. Operation of gear, which includes setting or retrieving pots, is prohibited from 6:00 PM to 7:59 AM. Further information on fishing seasons and gear operation hours can be found under 5 AAC 35.510 FISHING SEASONS FOR REGISTRATION AREA J on page 188 of the shellfish regulations.

Pot Limits and Buoy Tags

The following table lists the pot limits at various GHLS:

<u>Guideline Harvest Level Range</u>	<u>Pot limit</u>
Less than 2,000,000 pounds	20 pots per vessel
2,000,000 to less than 4,000,000 pounds	30 pots per vessel
4,000,000 to less than 5,000,000 pounds	40 pots per vessel
5,000,000 pounds or greater	50 pots per vessel

The pot limit for the 2004 Kodiak District fishery will be 20 pots per vessel. To ensure compliance with pot limit regulations, the main or trailer buoy on each pot must display one fishery-specific identification tag for the current year. The regulation 5 AAC 35.526 TANNER CRAB POT MARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTRATION AREA J on page 193-194 of the shellfish regulations contains guidelines for replacing lost tags. The vessel owner, operator, or agent must complete an affidavit form describing how the tags were lost and supply the unique number(s) of each lost tag.

Tags will be available for purchase beginning in mid-December at a cost of \$1.50 per tag. A valid 2004 Tanner crab interim-use CFEC permit card is required to purchase tags. Participants from areas outside the city of Kodiak can purchase tags via U.S. Mail until December 31. No tags will be mailed after this date; call the ADF&G office in Kodiak for details (907) 486-1840. Appendix A contains additional contact information.

Gear

Gear for the commercial Tanner crab fishery is limited to pots no more than 10 feet long by 10 feet wide by 42 inches high with rigid tunnel eye openings that are not more than five inches in height. Tunnel eye opening perimeters must be individually more than 36 inches. Ring nets **are not** legal gear in the Kodiak District for the commercial take of Tanner crabs. The specific language regarding legal pot dimensions can be found under 5 AAC 35.050 LAWFUL GEAR FOR TANNER CRAB on page 169 of the shellfish regulations.

Escape mesh or ring requirements are included in the regulations for legal Tanner gear. Each pot used to take Tanner crabs must have at least one third of one vertical surface of the pot composed of not less than 7-1/4 inch stretched mesh webbing or have no less than four circular escape rings which have an inside diameter of at least five inches. If using rings, they must be installed on the vertical plane of the pot to allow for escapement of undersized crabs. The rings are not required to be placed within a certain distance from the bottom as they are in some Bering Sea fisheries. However, ADF&G recommends placing rings within one mesh of the bottom of the pot to optimize escapement of undersized crabs. The specific language on escape device requirements can be found under 5 AAC 35.525 LAWFUL GEAR FOR REGISTRATION AREA J on page 192 of the shellfish regulations.

All pots must be equipped with a biodegradable escape mechanism as described in 5 AAC 39.145 ESCAPE MECHANISM FOR SHELLFISH AND BOTTOMFISH POTS on page 54 of the shellfish regulations. An opening 18 inches or greater in length that is placed within six inches of the bottom of the pot must be laced, sewn, or secured together by a single length of untreated, 100 percent cotton twine no larger than 30 thread.

Buoys attached to pots must comply with 5 AAC 35.051 TANNER CRAB GEAR MARKING REQUIREMENTS listed on page 169 and 5 AAC 35.526 TANNER CRAB GEAR MARKING REQUIREMENTS AREA J on page 193-194 of the shellfish regulations. The buoy that contains the ADF&G number marking may not be marked with additional numbers; however, symbols and letters are acceptable on the buoy with the ADF&G number. Trailer or other buoys used to mark ownership or string sequence may be marked with any desired numbers, symbols, or letters.

The use of converted pots as ‘storage boxes’ to store crabs in the water for vessels registered as dry tanked vessels is not permitted in regulation.

Operation of Other Pot Gear, Pot Storage, and Landing Requirements

There is a 14-day stand down period for the operation of pot gear before the commercial Tanner crab fishery opening in the Kodiak District. No person or vessel that will participate in the commercial Tanner crab fishery may operate commercial, subsistence, sport, or personal use pots for any species within the district during that 14-day period.

Legally outfitted pots with buoy tags attached *may be* placed into shallow water storage during the 14-day stand down period. However, vessels may not retrieve gear already in legal storage to

put tags on gear during the 14-day stand down period. In addition, vessels **will not** be allowed to retrieve gear from storage during the 24-hour period after tank inspection but before the fishery opening, due to enforcement concerns. There would be no way to distinguish a vessel retrieving gear from storage and a vessel fishing before the opening. At the time of registration, all gear onboard and in the water must have buoy tags affixed to be in compliance.

After the closure of the Tanner crab season, vessels wishing to participate in the Pacific cod fishery must either place pots into shallow-water storage or on land and register with ADF&G for the cod fishery. Additional stipulations on the operation of other pot gear within the Kodiak District can be found under 5 AAC 35.053 OPERATION OF OTHER POT GEAR on page 195 of shellfish regulations.

Up to 20 pots may be stored for 30 days before the season in waters of 25 fathoms or less with all bait and bait containers removed and with the doors secured fully open (or not secured closed for cone or pyramid pots). No vessel may have more than the specified pot limit onboard or in wet storage in the registration district (all waters from Cape Douglas to Kilokak Rocks) while the vessel is validly registered. The regulatory language concerning pot storage can be found at 5 AAC 35.527 TANNER CRAB POT STORAGE REQUIREMENTS FOR AREA J on page 194-195 of the shellfish regulations.

Delivery requirements, post-closure pot storage requirements, and re-registration requirements vary depending on the type of area closure and the amount of notice given. The following is a summary of closure scenarios, subsequent pot storage options, delivery requirements, and re-registration requirements contained in 5 AAC 35.030, 5 AAC 35.031, 5 AAC 35.052, 5 AAC 35.527, and 5 AAC 35.556:

- *Closure of an entire section with 6 or more hours notice of the closure given.* Vessel operators are required to deliver all catch from the section within 24 hours of the closure. Unbaited gear with doors secured open may be stored in waters deeper than 25 fathoms for 72 hours following the closure. After 72 hours, all gear remaining in the closed section must be removed or stored in waters shallower than 25 fathoms. Gear may remain in shallow water storage for up to 30 days after the closure of the entire Kodiak District. While in transit from the closed area, vessel operators may contact ADF&G and re-register for an open section. This will permit vessels to legally place baited gear, once validly registered, in the waters of the open section provided the 24 hour delivery deadline is met.
- *Closure of an entire section with less than 6 hours advance notice of the closure given.* Vessel operators are required to proceed directly to port at the time of the closure and deliver within 24 hours. Vessel operators may not place gear in storage, retrieve pots from storage, or place gear in an open section until they have completed their delivery of crabs from the closed section. Vessel operators are required to immediately return to the fishing grounds after their delivery to ‘rail dump’ all crab from baited gear left on the grounds. Vessel operators with baited gear may only store baited pots in waters deeper than 25 fathoms for 72 hours following the closure. Vessel operators may re-register for an open section after completing their delivery and removing any baited gear from the grounds. A tank inspection will be required before vessels may register for the remaining open section.

- *Partial closure of a fishing section with 6 or more hours notice of the closure given.* Vessel operators are required to deliver all crabs from the section within 24 hours of the closure. Vessel operators may store pots in waters deeper than 25 fathoms for 72 hours in the closed waters of the section. Vessel operators may place, or simultaneously have, baited gear in the open waters of the same section before delivery provided the 24 hour delivery deadline is met. Any changes to the delivery requirement would be provided in a news release at the time of the closure announcement.
- *Partial closure of a fishing section with less than 6 hours notice of the closure given.* This scenario is highly unlikely. Should this type of closure occur the landing, pot storage, and re-registration requirements would be provided in a news release.
- *Closure of the entire Kodiak District with 6 or more hours notice of the closure given.* Vessel operators are required to deliver all crabs within 24 hours of the closure. Vessel operators may store pots with bait and bait containers removed and doors secured open in waters deeper than 25 fathoms for up to 7 days following the closure. Gear may be stored with bait and bait containers removed and doors secured open in waters shallower than 25 fathoms for 30 days after the closure.
- *Closure of the entire Kodiak District with less than 6 hours notice of the closure given.* Vessel operators are required to deliver within 24 hours. After the closure, vessel operators may not place gear in or remove gear from storage until they have completed their delivery of crabs. Baited gear may be stored in waters deeper than 25 fathoms for 72 hours following the closure. Vessel operators are required to immediately return to the fishing grounds after their delivery to ‘rail dump’ any baited gear left on the grounds. Pots may then be stored in waters shallower than 25 fathoms for up to 30 days.

Vessel operators wishing to deliver to ports outside the district are required to contact the ADF&G office in Kodiak before leaving the district. Vessels delivering outside the district must provide the estimated number of crabs onboard the vessel at the time of the closure, location of port and processing facility, and estimated time of arrival. Additional requirements exist for catcher-processors and vessels mechanically disabled. Vessels legitimately delayed due to circumstances of weather will be addressed on a case by case basis. The specific regulation is 5 AAC 35.031 TANNER CRAB LANDING REQUIREMENTS and is on page 167-168 of the shellfish regulations.

Registration, CFEC Vessel Size Restrictions, Tenders, and Tank Inspections

Vessel operators must have a 2004 interim-use permit card for Area J Tanner crab and a current 2004 commercial vessel license. Vessels that do not qualify for a CFEC interim-use permit may not participate in the Kodiak District Tanner crab fishery; the fishery is no longer “open access”. Interim-use permits and vessel licenses can be obtained from the CFEC in Juneau. Vessel operators must register for a single section in the Kodiak District. Vessel operators may change their section registration by contacting the department in person or by other means.

CFEC adopted two vessel size categories for the issuance of permits in the Kodiak District Tanner crab fishery. Persons eligible to receive a permit will receive either a permit for vessels

with an overall length of less than 60 feet or a permit for vessels of 60 to 120 feet in overall length. The type of card issued is dependent on what size vessel was used during the qualifying years of 1993, 1994, 2000, and 2001. Persons receiving a permit for 'large vessels' of 60 to 120 feet can use their permit on vessels smaller than 60 feet. A 'large vessel' permit card cannot be used on a vessel greater than 120 feet in overall length. Persons receiving a permit for 'small vessels' under 60 feet in overall length cannot make landings on a vessel 60 feet or longer in overall length.

Tender vessels must register with ADF&G before beginning tendering operations. Tender vessels may not have a pot-hauling block onboard nor may they be used to harvest Tanner crab.

Tank inspections are required for vessels with a circulating sea water system to confirm that no crabs are onboard the vessel prior to the opening. Circulating sea water systems include on-deck containers with water circulated by pumps, hoses, or other means. Gear will also be inspected at the time of tank inspection to ensure it is in compliance with all gear regulations. Tanks will be inspected beginning at noon on January 14 unless the fishery is delayed for severe weather (*see Fishery Opening Delay Due to Severe Weather*). Arrangements will be made to accommodate vessel inspections in Old Harbor. Upon successful completion of the tank inspection and gear inspection process, a valid 2004 shellfish registration will be issued to the vessel. A copy of this registration must remain onboard the vessel while fishing. This registration becomes invalid 24 hours after the closure of the fishery. Therefore, vessels do not have to unregister from the Tanner crab fishery and re-register for other fisheries unless wishing to begin operations within 24 hours of the Tanner crab fishery closure. Vessels must invalidate their registration before participating in other fisheries if the Tanner fishery remains open.

Size Limit

The legal minimum size of Tanner crabs that can be harvested in the Kodiak District is 5.5" (140 millimeters) carapace width (CW). Only legal-size male crabs can be retained; all other crabs incidentally captured must be immediately returned to the water unharmed. This includes king crab, as they cannot be legally taken in a commercial Tanner crab fishery for subsistence purposes.

VOLUNTEER CATCH REPORTING

ADF&G will manage the Kodiak District commercial Tanner crab fishery from inseason catch reports provided by fishers. Inseason management will allow for real-time fishery decisions and the ability to consider changes in effort, fleet behavior, and weather. ADF&G will make every effort to allow sufficient time for fishers to configure gear for storage or to place gear onboard before a closure, however the potential exists for a short advance notice closure.

Any validly registered vessel may participate in the reporting process and each registering vessel will be issued a 2004 reporting code and worksheet. Reports will be taken over marine VHF

channel 10, single sideband (SSB) 4125 kHz, telephone, satellite dispatch system and e-mail. The ADF&G office uses Matrix¹ dispatch services; the office number is 7410, the R/V Resolution number is 7411. Vessel operators will be issued a reporting worksheet during tag sales and/or tank inspection to participate in inseason reporting.

Contents of the daily report will contain confidential codes for the section in the which vessel operator is fishing, statistical area, number of pot lifts, and number of crabs retained for each 10-hour fishing period. Reports will initially be taken at 6:30 PM (1830 hours) daily and may be transmitted via SSB, marine telex, e-mail, satellite dispatch, and satellite or cell phone. After most of the inside sections have closed, the department will change the reporting schedule. Reports for the previous day's fishing activity will be taken the following morning at 9:00 AM. Operators will be asked during the registration process which method they will use to submit daily reports.

ADF&G will update the fleet on SSB 4125 kHz with the fishery status each morning at 8:30 AM (0830 hours). Any closure announcement or change in the reporting schedule will be made on this frequency. Current fishery status will also be available on the ADF&G recorded information phone at 486-4559. Messages on the recorded information phone will be updated daily after the 8:30 AM updates. Updates, changes to the reporting schedule and closure announcements will be distributed via e-mail, FAX, and passed along to all participating processing facilities.

FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

ADF&G may manage bays and offshore areas separately, closing one portion of a section while allowing continued harvest in other locations within the same section. This type of management has been utilized in the two most recent fisheries. The department will manage in a manner that keeps the commercial fishery from significantly exceeding the number of animals available for harvest as estimated by the survey within given bays or areas.

Given the distribution of legal animals estimated by the survey in the inside portion of the Southeast Section and the Northeast Section, partial closures are likely to occur after very little fishing time (possibly within the first full day of fishing). These types of closures have been used to curtail excessive removals of legal sized animals or to keep the fishery from working on very low numbers of animals within bays or other areas. Partial section closures will depend on effort, fishery removals, and performance indicators.

As in previous fisheries, much of the estimated legal biomass is offshore. Fishery performance as measured by catch per unit effort (CPUE) of legal crabs, undersized, and female crabs will be closely monitored. As the stocks within these management sections are still rebuilding, closures may occur before the total GHF is achieved if CPUE indicates the number of legal sized animals has been substantially depleted or if excessive handling of sublegal and female crabs is occurring.

¹Use of trade names does not constitute an endorsement from ADF&G.

Details of the tank inspection process, updates on inseason reporting, and other fishery related information will be forthcoming in ADF&G news releases.

FISHERY OPENING DELAY DUE TO SEVERE WEATHER

In 2002, the BOF adopted criteria that would delay the opening of the entire Tanner crab fishery for 24 hours if gale force winds (35 knots or higher from any direction) are forecast to occur in any section scheduled to open. The regulatory language can be found on page 188-189 of the shellfish regulation book under 5 AAC 35.510 FISHING SEASONS FOR REGISTRATION AREA J (a). These criteria were used in the 2003 fishery resulting in the opening being delayed until noon, January 19.

Under this regulation, if the National Weather Service (NWS) forecast issued at 4 am on January 14 contains gale force winds (35 knots or higher from any direction) for the 48-hour forecast in areas that correspond to those scheduled to open, the fishery opening will be delayed in **all** sections for 24 hours. The corresponding NWS areas for the Kodiak District are illustrated in Appendix F and listed as follows:

<u>Section</u>	<u>NWS Area</u>
Northeast	3B
Eastside	3B
Southeast	3B
Westside	3C
North Mainland	3C

If the following morning's 4 am forecast contains gale warnings, the tank inspections and fishery opening would be delayed another 24 hours. The season opening may be delayed on a 24-hour rolling basis until January 24. If the fishery has not opened by the 24th, tank inspections would occur at noon that day and the fishery would open on January 25 at noon, regardless of any gale force warnings in the NWS forecast. Appendix G contains a hypothetical NWS forecast with the opening criteria illustrated.

LITERATURE CITED

Urban, D., D. Pengilly, D. Jackson, and I. Vining. 1999. A Tanner crab harvest strategy for Kodiak, Chignik, and the South Peninsula Districts. A Report to the Board of Fisheries. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries, Westward Region, Regional Information Report 4K99-21, Kodiak.

Table 2. Catch, effort, and value by fishing section from the 2001 Kodiak District Tanner crab fishery.

Section	No. of Vessels	No. of Permits	GHL (pounds)	Pounds Harvested	Pots Lifted	CPUE	Average Weight (lbs.)	Price per Pound (\$)	Exvessel value (\$)	No. of fishing periods open
Northeast	62	65	225,000	130,644	3,266	17	2.4	2.30	300,481	5
Eastside	84	92	275,000	379,763	4,007	34	2.8	2.30	873,455	2
Total	144 ^a	155 ^a	500,000	510,407	7,233	27	2.6	2.30	1,173,936	

Table 3. Catch, effort, and value by fishing section from the 2002 Kodiak District Tanner crab fishery.

Section	No. of Vessels	No. of Permits	GHL (pounds)	Pounds Harvested	Pots Lifted	CPUE	Average Weight (lbs.)	Price per Pound (\$)	Exvessel value (\$)	No. of fishing periods open ^b
Northeast	104	118	300,000	127,818	6,005	10	2.2	2.21	282,478	4.5/30
Eastside	88	103	200,000	233,348	4,441	20	2.6	2.21	515,699	1.5
Total	180 ^a	211 ^a	500,000	361,166	10,446	14	2.4	2.21	798,177	

Table 4. Catch, effort, and value by fishing section from the 2003 Kodiak District Tanner crab fishery.

Section	No. of Vessels	No. of Permits	GHL (pounds)	Pounds Harvested	Pots Lifted	CPUE	Average Weight (lbs.)	Price per Pound (\$)	Exvessel value (\$)	No. of fishing periods open ^b
Northeast	43	42	170,000	177,371	5,316	15	2.1	2.20	390,216	4.5/14
Eastside	38	46	340,000	333,953	5,792	14	2.5	2.20	734,697	8/12/1936
Total	72 ^a	79 ^a	510,000	511,324	11,108	14	2.4	2.20	1,124,913	

^a Some vessels and permit holders participated in both sections during the fishery.

^b Number of fishing periods includes partial closures.

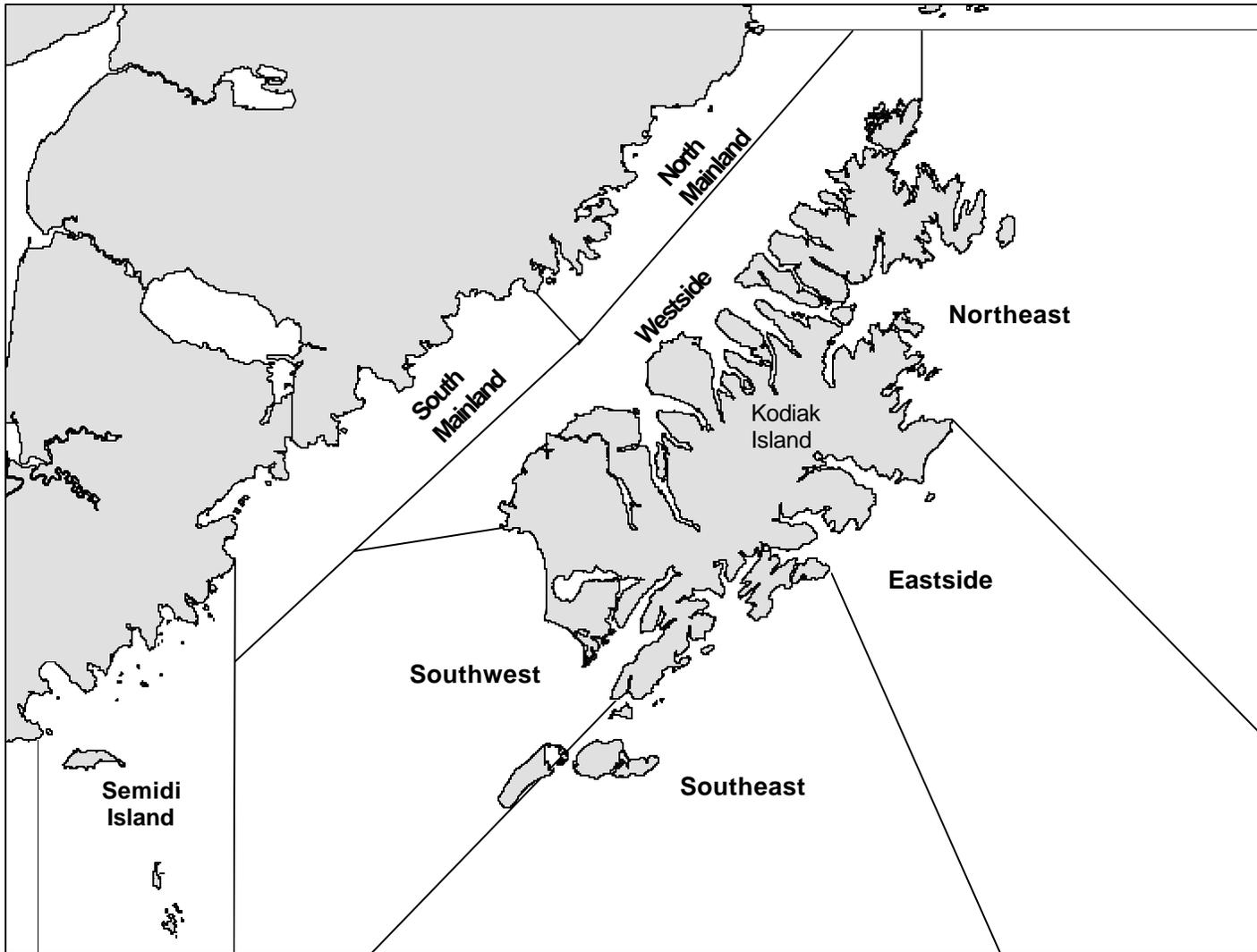


Figure 1. Kodiak Tanner crab District and Sections, 2003.

Note-the Eastside Section boundary is in Sitkalidak Narrows, east of $153^{\circ} 16' W$ long.

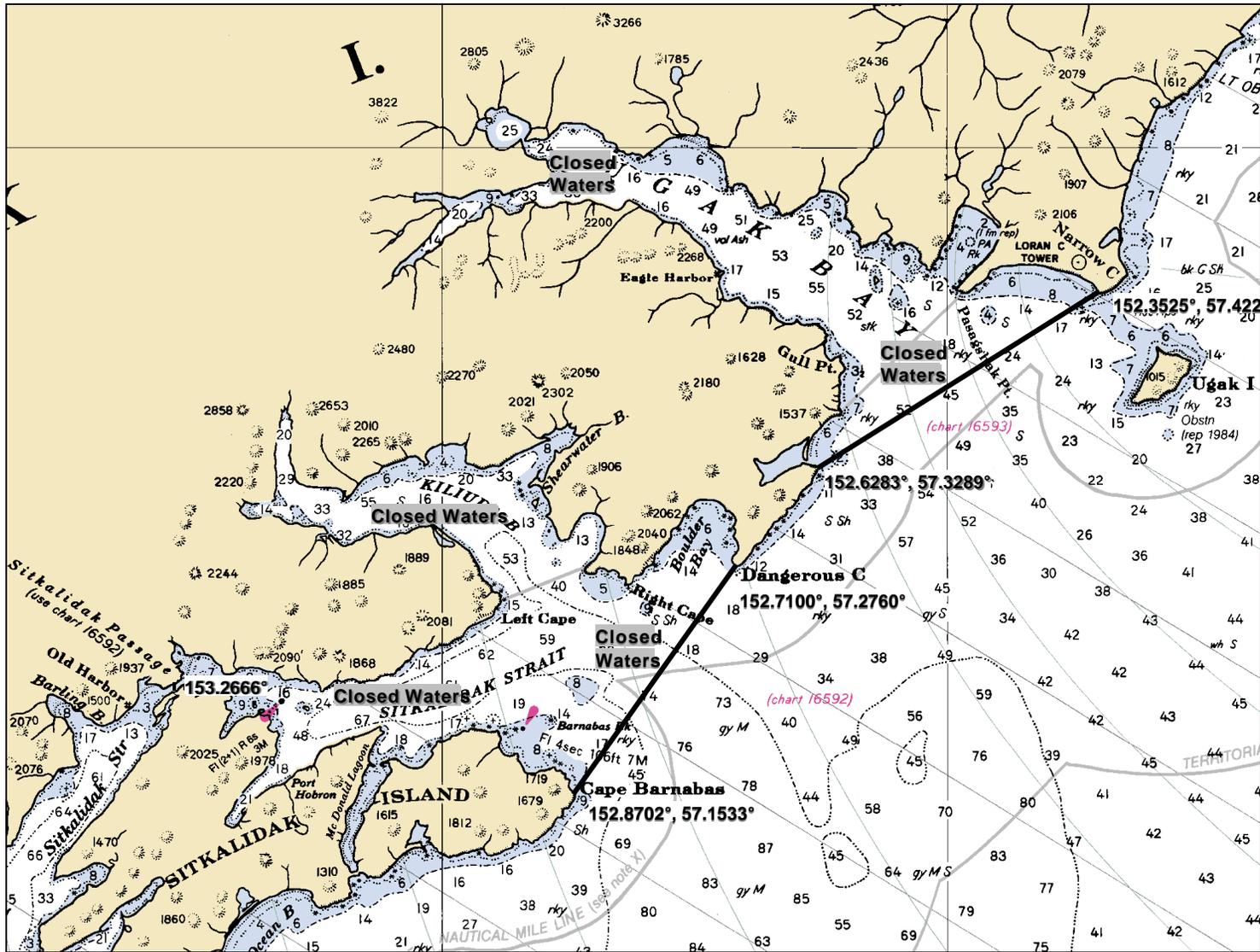


Figure 2. Eastside Section inshore Tanner crab closures for the 2004 Kodiak District fishery.

APPENDIX

Appendix A. Listing of contact persons, by agency and location.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

web site: <http://www.cf.adfg.state.ak.us/region4/>

Kodiak office

<i>Mail address:</i>	211 Mission Road Kodiak, Alaska 99615	<i>physical address:</i>	211 Mission Road 2 nd floor, Kodiak	Phone: (907) 486-1840 FAX : (907) 486-1824
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Wayne Donaldson	Westward Region Shellfish/ Groundfish Biologist	wayne_donaldson@fishgame.state.ak.us
Mike Ruccio	Kodiak, Chignik, Alaska Peninsula Area Shellfish/ Groundfish Biologist	mike_ruccio@fishgame.state.ak.us
Mike Cavin	Kodiak, Chignik, Alaska Peninsula Asst. Area Shellfish/ Groundfish Biologist	mike_cavin@fishgame.state.ak.us
Kally Spalinger	Kodiak, Chignik, Shellfish Biologist	kally_spalinger@fishgame.state.ak.us

Dutch Harbor office

<i>Mail address:</i>	P. O. Box 920587 Dutch Harbor, Alaska 99692	<i>physical address:</i>	F.T.S. building, 2 nd floor Airport Beach Road, Dutch Harbor.	Phone: (907) 581-1239 FAX: (907) 581-1572
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Forrest Bowers	Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Area Biologist	forrest_bowers@fishgame.state.ak.us
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Division of Fish and Wildlife Protection

web site: <http://www.dps.state.ak.us/fwp/>

Kodiak office

<i>Mail address:</i>	2921 A Mill Bay Road Kodiak, Alaska 99615	<i>physical address:</i>	2921 A Mill Bay Road	Phone: (907) 486-4761 FAX: (907) 486-5480
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Sargent Lonnie Gonzales	Post Sargent	lonnie_gonzales@dps.state.ak.us
Sven Skille	Trooper	sven_skille@dps.state.ak.us

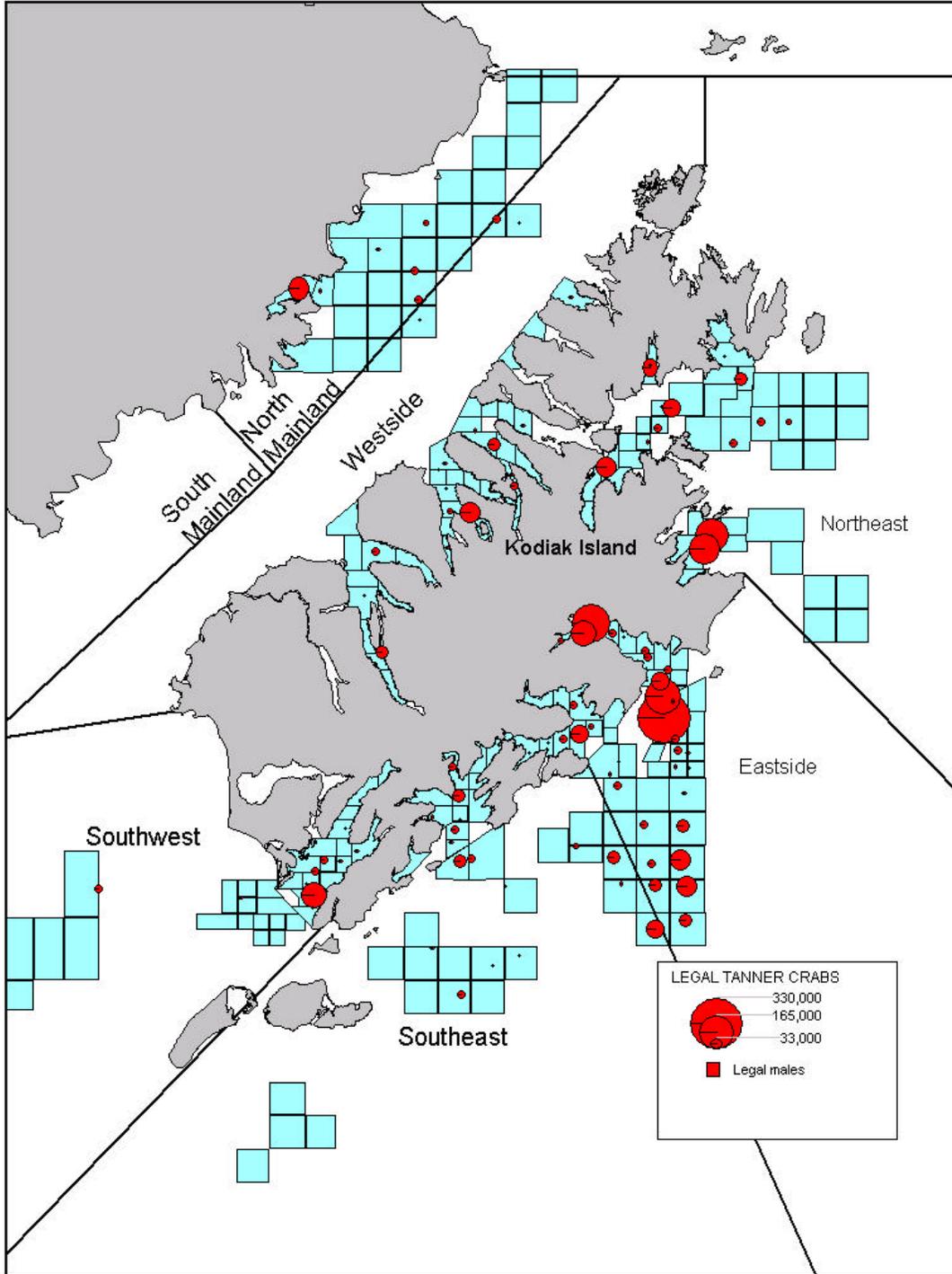
Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission

web site: <http://www.cfec.state.ak.us/>

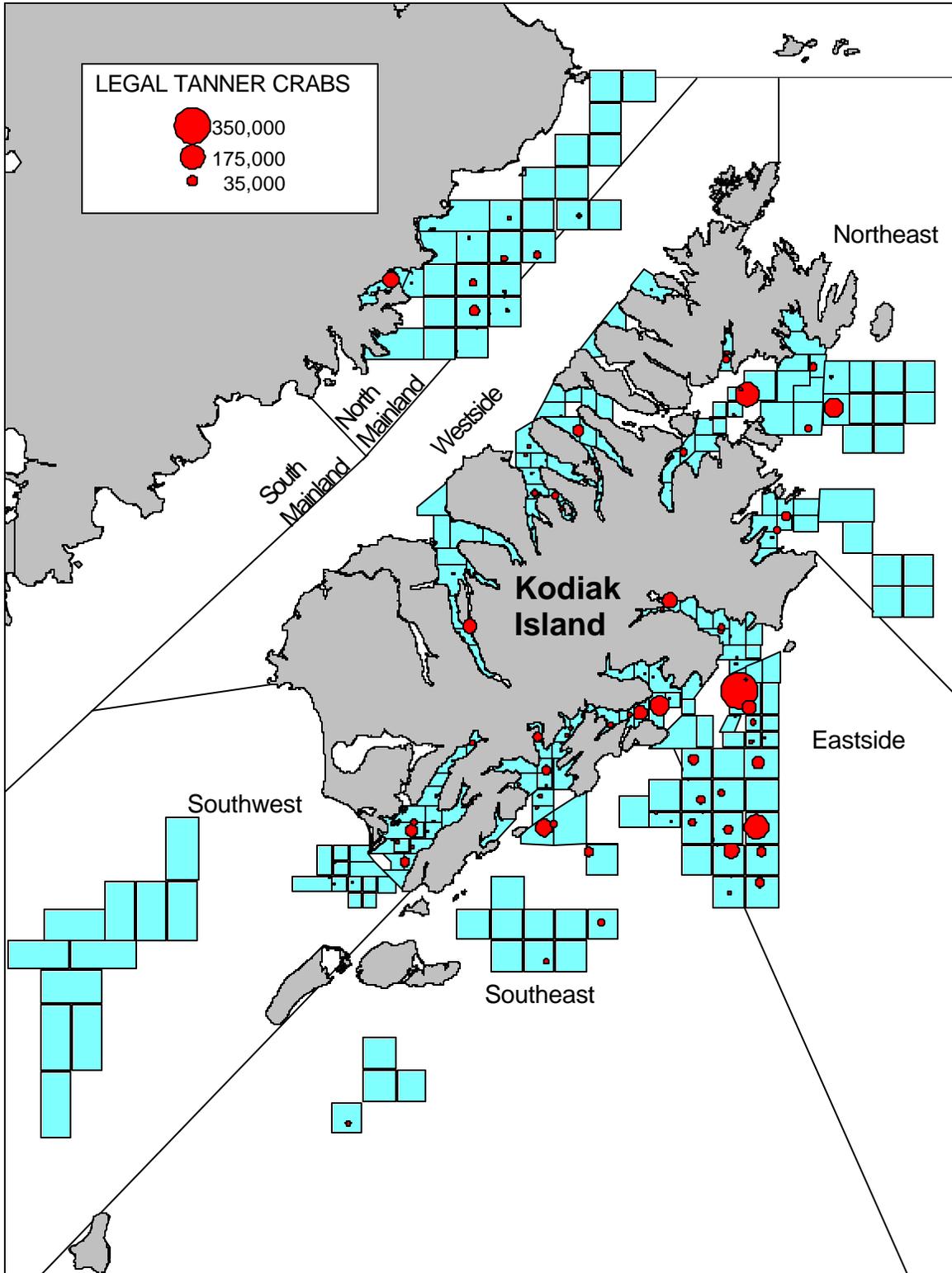
Juneau office

<i>Mail address:</i>	8800 Glacier Highway Juneau, Alaska 99615	<i>physical address:</i>	8800 Glacier Highway Juneau, Alaska	Phone: (907) 789-6160 FAX : (907) 789-6160
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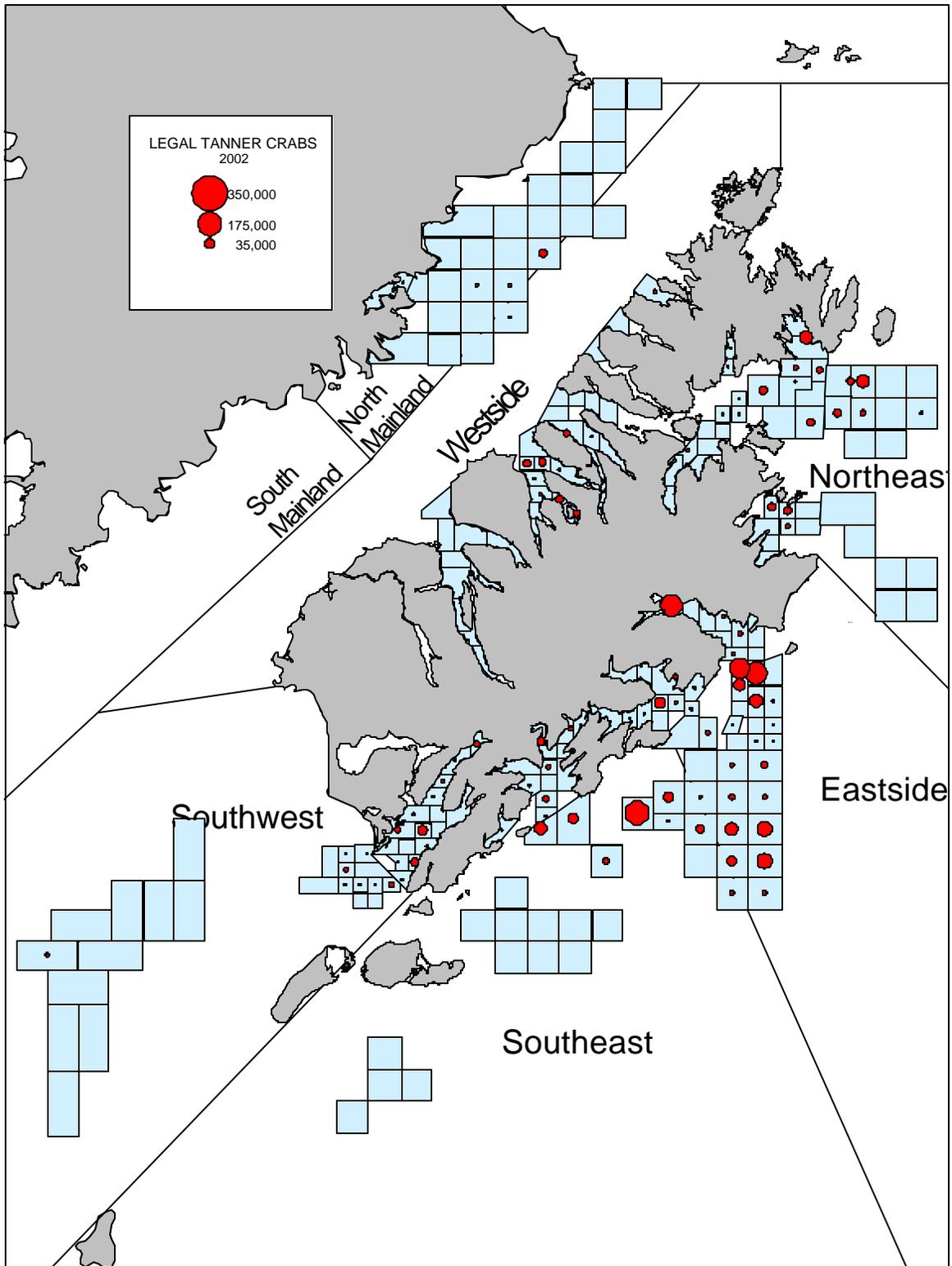
Susan Haymes	CFEC staff	susan_haymes@cfec.state.ak.us
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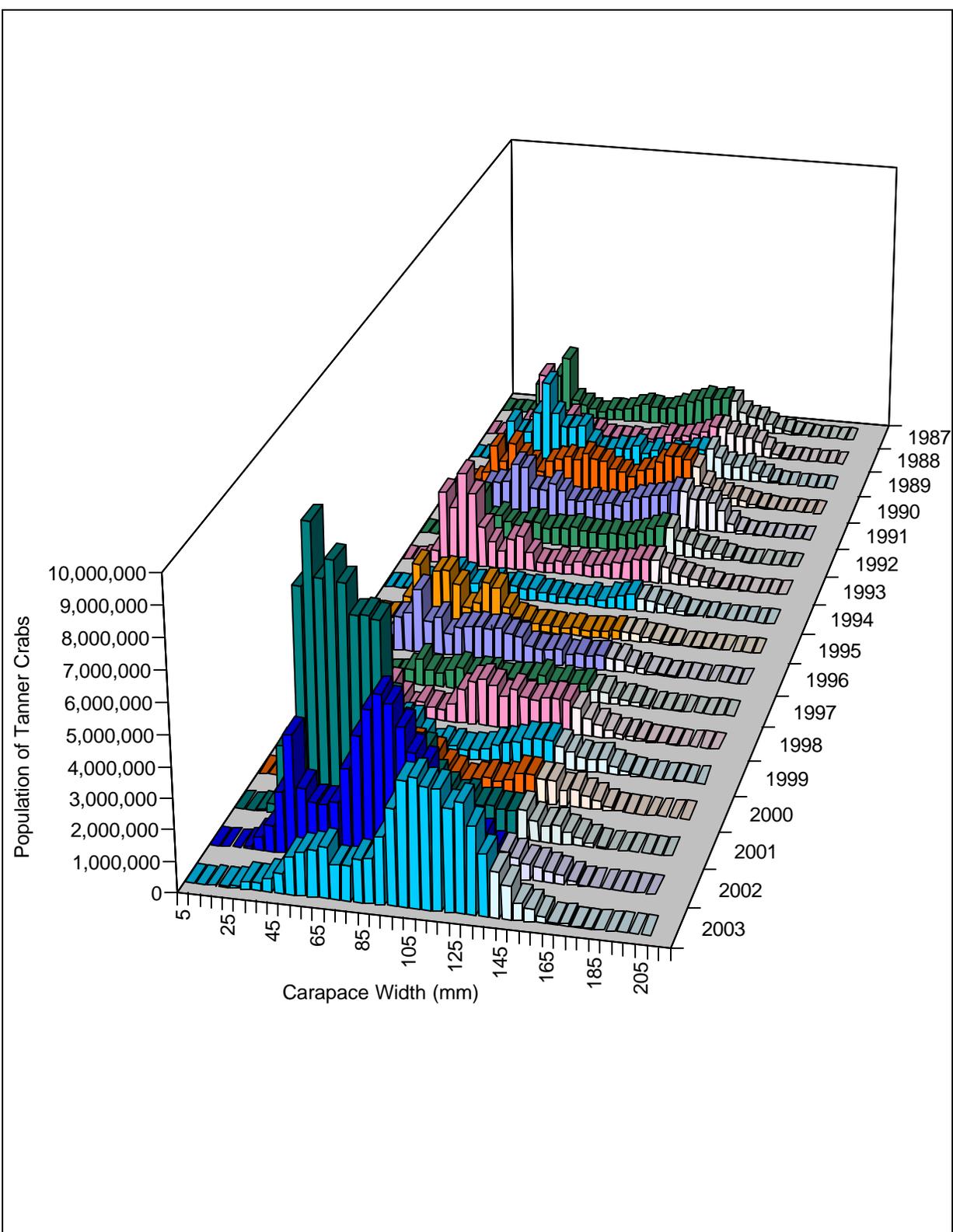
Appendix B. Population estimates of legal male Tanner crabs in the Kodiak District from the 2000 trawl survey.



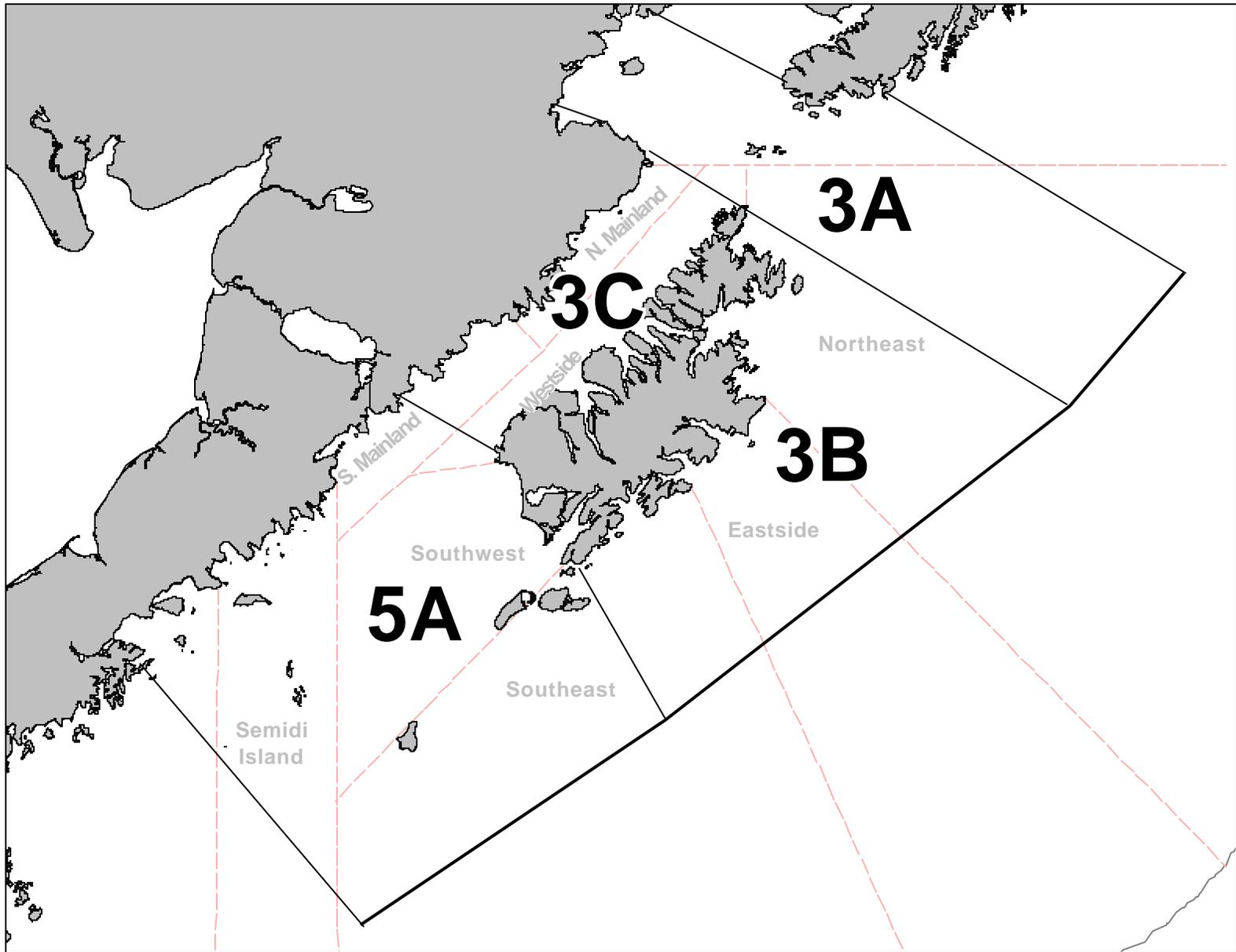
Appendix C. Population estimates of legal male Tanner crabs in the Kodiak District from the 2001 trawl survey.



Appendix D. Population estimates of legal male Tanner crabs in the Kodiak District from the 2002 trawl survey.



Appendix E. Estimated population of male Tanner crab by carapace width in the Kodiak District, 1987-2003. *Legal-sized crabs lightly shaded.*



Appendix F. National Weather Service forecast areas and Kodiak District Tanner crab management sections.

Appendix G. Example National Weather Service Forecast text and hypothetical weather delay actions.

Forecast header

FZAK63PANC

Kodiak Island & Cook Inlet (Areas 3A-C, 4, 4A)

Forecast issuance date and duration; issued 4 AM, Monday, January 14. 24-hour forecast valid from 0600 Monday until 0600 Tuesday; outlook valid from 0600 Tuesday, Jan. 15 until 0600 Wednesday, Jan. 16.

FZAK63 PANC 251151
 CWF063
 MARINE FORCAST FOR KODIAK ISLAND WATERS AND COOK
 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE ANCHORAGE AK
 4 AM AST MON JAN 14 2003
 VALID TO 6 AM TUE AND OUTLOOK TO 6 AM WED

Synopsis

PKZ301-260000-
 SYNOPSIS. A 998 MB LOW 150 NM SOUTH OF CORDOVA WILL WEAKEN TO 1008 MB AS IT MOVES TO 100 NM SOUTHWEST OF CAPE YAGATAGA BY MON NIGHT AND THEN DISSIPATES. A 1002 MB LOW 425 NM SOUTHWEST OF GAMBELL WILL MOVE TO NEAR KODIAK BY TUE NIGHT AS A 1006 MB LOW.

Forecast Area designation and location

AREA 3B. SHUYAK ISLAND TO SITKINAK.
 HEAVY FREEZING SPRAY WARNING
 GALE WARNING

48 hour forecast: from 0600 on Monday, January 14 through 0600 Wednesday, January 16

24 hours } NORTHWEST WINDS 35 KTS WITH GUSTS TO 50 KTS DIMINISHING TO 25
 KTS BY MON NIGHT. SEAS 18 FT SUBSIDING TO 12 FT MON NIGHT. HEAVY
 48 hours } FREEZING SPRAY ENDING MON EVENING. OUTLOOK WINDS INCREASING TO
 SOUTHEAST 25 KTS. SEAS 10 FT.

In this example, because a gale warning is in the 24 hour forecast, any fishery scheduled for the Northeast, Eastside, or Southeast Sections would not open as scheduled.

AREA 3B. SHUYAK ISLAND TO SITKINAK.
 SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY
 NORTHWEST WINDS 25 KTS WITH GUSTS TO 30 KTS DIMINISHING TO 20
 KTS BY MON NIGHT. SEAS 22 SUBSIDING TO 10 FT MON EVENING. SNOW
 MON NIGHT. OUTLOOK WINDS INCREASING TO SOUTHWEST 35 KTS. SEAS
 BUILDING TO 20 FEET

In this example, because a gale warning is in the 48 hour outlook, any fishery scheduled for the Northeast, Eastside, or Southeast Sections would not open as scheduled.

AREA 3C. SHELIKOF STRAIT
 SMALL CRAFT ADVISORY
 NORTHWEST WINDS 25 KTS WITH GUSTS TO 30 KTS DIMINISHING TO 20
 KTS BY MON NIGHT. SEAS 20 SUBSITING TO 12 MON EVENING. SNOW MON
 NIGHT. OUTLOOK SOUTHWEST WINDS 25 KTS. SEAS 12 FEET.

In this example, because a no gale warnings are posted in the 48 hour forecast, any fishery scheduled for the Westside or North Mainland Section would open as scheduled.

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If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, or if you desire further information please write to ADF&G, P.O. Box 25526, Juneau, AK 99802-5526; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4040 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 300 Webb, Arlington, VA 22203 or O.E.O., U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington DC 20240.

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