

PERSONAL USE FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-DC-7-06-98

Issued at Homer: May 28, 1998

Effective date: 12:01 a.m., May 29, 1998.

Expiration Date: Until further notice
Unless superseded by subsequent emergency
order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order closes the personal use fishery for Dungeness crab in lower Cook Inlet east from a line extending from Anchor Point to Point Bede. Effective May 29 at 12:01 a.m. until further notice.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 77.512 (4) (A) and (B) are superseded by this emergency order. Effective 12:01 a.m., May 29, lower Cook Inlet east from a line extending from Anchor Point to Point Bede will be closed to the taking of Dungeness crab until further notice.

JUSTIFICATION:

Department pot survey catches of sub-legal and legal male crabs from waters inside the Homer Spit declined dramatically from 9.4 and 8.8 crabs per pot, respectively, in 1992, to 0.7 sub-legal and 1.4 legal crabs per pot in 1994. Pot catches have remained below these levels since 1994. The 1997 pot survey catches of pre-recruit and legal male crabs were 0.6 and 0.1, respectively. The substantial number of pre-recruit crab caught in department trawl surveys have failed to grow into legal-sized crab, and the 1997 trawl survey catch was the lowest since the inception of these surveys in 1990. The commercial Dungeness crab fishery was closed by emergency order in 1989 after a decline in catches and has remained closed due to low numbers of crabs present in Department surveys. The Alaska Board of Fisheries adopted regulations in 1997 closing the Cook Inlet Area commercial Dungeness fishery and establishing a management plan. The continuing poor catches of Dungeness crabs in Department surveys indicate that sport and personal use harvests of Dungeness crab in the Kachemak Bay area may be effecting the maintenance and recovery of these stocks.