

PERSONAL USE FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No 2-TC-7-20-02

Issued at Homer, Thursday, July 18,
2002

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m., Friday, July 19, 2002

Expiration Date: October 30, 2002
Unless superseded by subsequent
emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

The daily bag and possession limits for Tanner crab in Cook Inlet, including Kachemak Bay, are reduced from 20 per person to 5 per day per person. The number of pots that may be used to harvest Tanner crab are two per person with a maximum of two pots per vessel.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 77.516 and 5 AAC 77.509 are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective:

5 AAC 77.516 (2). PERSONAL USE TANNER CRAB FISHERY

The daily bag and possession limits for Tanner crab are five (5), and,

5 AAC 77.509 (a). LEGAL GEAR AND GEAR SPECIFICATIONS FOR SHELLFISH.

Notwithstanding 5 AAC 77.010(i), no more than two (2) pots per person, regardless of type, with a maximum of two (2) pots per vessel, regardless of type, may be used to take shellfish at any time.

Frank Rue,
Commissioner

By delegation to:



Nicole J. Szarzi,
Area Management Biologist

JUSTIFICATION:

Legal male Tanner crab abundance in the Kachemak Bay area has been less than the sustained yield stock size of 1.0 million crabs since 1988 and below 0.5 million crabs, the minimum stock size threshold or amount that will support a commercial fishery, since 1993. The commercial fishery in the Southern District was closed in 1989 and 1990 and after 1995 as a result of low Tanner crab abundance. The recreational fisheries were closed in 1989 and 1990 for stock conservation but reopened in 1991. Recreational harvests have increased annually to a high of approximately 18,000 Tanner crab in 2000.

The estimated Tanner crab abundance in the Kachemak Bay area for 2001 is 78,262 legal males. Tanner crab stocks in the Kamishak District are depressed. Tanner crab numbers north of Anchor Point and east of a line from Cape Douglas to Cape Elizabeth are not assessed, but are thought to be small.

In March of 2002, the Board of Fisheries passed the Tanner Crab Management Plan for Area H (5 AAC 38.408). The plan establishes a bag limit of five (5) legal-sized male Tanner crab at current crab population levels. In addition the plan allows a maximum of two (2) pots per person and two (2) pots per vessel to be fished. Legal review of the plan is not yet complete, therefore this emergency order is necessary to protect Tanner crab stocks from over-harvest until the provisions of the management plan go into effect.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 2 Office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518, (907) 267-2218.