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# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



*Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner*  
*Sam Rabung, Director*



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Phone: (907) 772-5238	(907) 465-4853	Date: September 12, 2019
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#### **2019/2020 SOUTHEAST ALASKA RED AND BLUE KING CRAB PERSONAL USE FISHERY SEASON ANNOUNCEMENT**

Petersburg... The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) announced the following information regarding the 2019/2020 Southeast Alaska personal use red (RKC) and blue king crab (BKC) fishery outside of Section 11-A:

- Excursion Inlet will remain open to RKC and BKC personal use fishing.
- Peril Strait, Gambier Bay, and Lynn Sisters will remain closed to RKC and BKC personal use fishing.
- **Seymour Canal and Pybus Bay will close to RKC and BKC personal use fishing on September 22, 2019, at 11:59 p.m.**
- **Beginning at 12:01 a.m., September 23, 2019, all areas open to personal use king crab fishing will have a daily bag and possession limit of one RKC or BKC. The 2019 stock assessment survey results estimated 109,000 pounds of legal male RKC available for harvest which is below the minimum threshold of 200,000 pounds [5 AAC 77.664(b)] warranting reductions in daily bag and possession limits to promote stock health recovery while maintaining harvest opportunity.**

#### **2019 Survey Information and Fishery Recommendations**

All red and blue king crab fisheries are closed in all areas of Southeast Alaska by regulation from April 1 through June 30 [5 AAC 77.664(c)(1)] each year to protect crab during the molting and mating season. From July 1 through March 31, open fishing periods for the personal use RKC and BKC fisheries may be adjusted by emergency order. The department conducts an annual RKC and BKC stock assessment survey in seven areas throughout Southeast Alaska including: 1) the Juneau Area (Section 11-A), 2) Lynn Sisters, 3) Excursion Inlet, 4) Pybus Bay, 5) Gambier Bay, 6) Seymour Canal, and 7) Peril Strait. Surveys begin in late June/early July and conclude in August. Data from surveys is used to manage commercial and personal use RKC and BKC fisheries. The remaining waters of Southeast Alaska outside the areas surveyed are referred to as "non-surveyed" areas. Information and trends from the surveyed areas are used to infer management decisions for non-surveyed areas.

Due to the 2019 RKC and BKC stock assessment survey not being completed on July 1, 2019, decisions regarding the personal use RKC and BKC fisheries were based on 2018 stock assessment survey results. Now that the 2019 survey is complete and the department has finalized the analysis of 2019 stock

assessment survey results, new information is available to manage the fisheries. Summary points of the survey include:

- Stock health in Peril Strait and Gambier Bay has declined and both are categorized as poor.
- Stock health in Lynn Sisters has improved but remains categorized at moderate with male recruitment and legal biomass concerns.
- Stock health in Seymour Canal declined to poor.
- Stock health in Pybus Bay declined and remains categorized as below average, with mature male biomass levels a concern.
- Excursion Inlet and non-surveyed areas appear to have stocks that can withstand some level of harvest.

Peril Strait, Gambier Bay, Lynn Sisters, Seymour Canal, and Pybus Bay cannot withstand the level of personal use harvest prescribed in regulation [5 AAC 77.664(b)] and will be closed until further information becomes available to the department to assess available harvest opportunities.

#### Closed Area Descriptions

- Peril Strait: Section 13-C, Peril Strait (all waters of Peril Strait including Hoonah Sound, Ushk Bay, Rodman Bay, Saook Bay, Hanus Bay, Sitkoh Bay, and contiguous waters west of a line from Point Hayes to Point Thatcher, and north of a line from Pogibshi Point due west to the Chichagof shoreline).
- Lynn Sisters: Waters north of a line from a point at 58°27.00' N. latitude, 135°06.50' W. longitude, due east to a point at 58°27.00' N. latitude, 135°03.00' W. longitude, and west of a line from a point at 58°27.00' N. latitude, 135°03.00' W. longitude to Point Whidbey including St. James Bay.
- Seymour Canal: Section 11-D, Seymour Canal (waters of Seymour Canal north of 57°37.00' N. latitude).
- Gambier Bay: Gambier Bay waters north and west of a line between Point Gambier and 57°24.90' N. latitude, 133°53.00' W. longitude (effective September 17, 2018).
- Pybus Bay: Pybus Bay waters north and west of a line from Point Pybus to the easternmost tip of San Juan Island and from there to a point at 57°14.60' N. latitude, 134°07.30' W. longitude.

Refer to Figure 1 for a map showing open and closed waters for personal use red and blue king crab fishing.

#### Juneau Area: Section 11-A

Details of the summer red and blue king crab personal use fishery within Section 11-A were previously released in a separate news release dated July 25, 2019. A winter personal use fishery will occur in Section 11-A per the red and blue king crab management and allocation plan outlined in 5 AAC 34.111. Details of the winter personal use king crab fishery in the Juneau Area will be announced in a separate news release that will be issued later in the year. For more information on the red and blue king crab personal use fishery within Section 11-A please contact April Rebert or Adam Messmer at (907) 465-4250.

#### Other information

**A personal use fishing permit issued by the department is required to take king crab for each household; households may not be issued multiple permits of the same type per year. A permit holder or a household member listed on the permit must have the permit in possession when fishing. Southeast king crab personal use permits can be obtained online at <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/Store/>. The fishing report section of your permit must be submitted online or returned to your ADF&G Regional Office before June 16, 2020—even if you did not fish. Report online at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/PU/>.**

Fishermen are reminded that male red and blue king crab must be seven inches or greater in width of shell to be retained [5 AAC 77.664(d)]. Male king crab less than the minimum legal size and female king crab must be immediately returned to the water unharmed.

For the areas open to personal use crab fishing outside of Section 11-A, 5 pots are allowed per person with a maximum of 10 pots per vessel, **except that no more than 4 pots per vessel may be used for king and Tanner crab**. A pot used to take king crab must have at least two escape rings on opposing vertical or sloping sides of the pot that are not less than six and one-quarter inches inside diameter. Each fisherman shall plainly and legibly inscribe the fisherman's first initial, last name, and home address on a keg or buoy attached to a pot. A keg or buoy attached to the pot must also be inscribed with the vessel name or the division of motor vehicles registration number (AK number) of the vessel used to operate the pot [5 ACC 77.010 and 5 AAC 77.664(h)].

Please refer to 5 AAC 77.664 in the 2019-2020 Statewide Subsistence and Personal Use Fishing Regulations booklet for additional regulations regarding personal use red and blue king crab fishing, or view the regulations online at:

[http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/folioproxy.asp?url=http://www.jnu01.legis.state.ak.us/cgi-bin/folioisa.dll/aac/query=\[JUMP:%275+aac+77!2E664%27\]/doc/{@1}?firsthit](http://www.legis.state.ak.us/basis/folioproxy.asp?url=http://www.jnu01.legis.state.ak.us/cgi-bin/folioisa.dll/aac/query=[JUMP:%275+aac+77!2E664%27]/doc/{@1}?firsthit)

The Emergency Order corresponding with this announcement is EO 1C2219.

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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## Personal Use Red and Blue King Crab Areas in Registration Area A

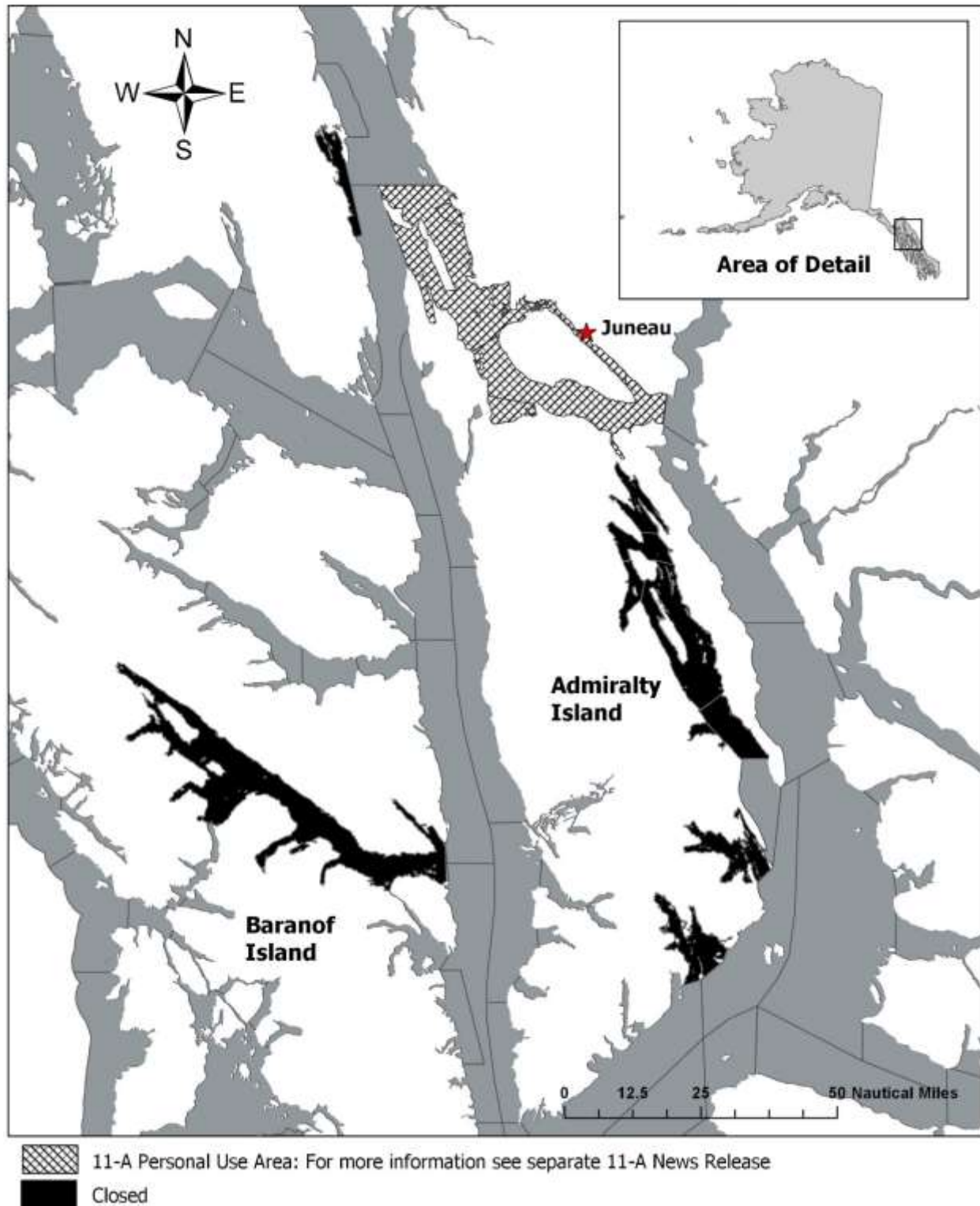


Figure 1. This map only reflects changes to the 2019/2020 red and blue king crab personal use fishery **which go into effect September 23, 2019** and is for reference purposes only. Please refer to text in this news release for legal descriptions of management area boundaries and other details.