



**Advisory Announcement**  
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**CONTACT: Joe Stratman**  
**Region I Lead Shellfish Biologist**  
**[joseph.stratman@alaska.gov](mailto:joseph.stratman@alaska.gov)**  
**(907) 772-5238**

**2021/2022 SOUTHEAST ALASKA COMMERCIAL RED KING CRAB FISHERY CLOSURE**

The Southeast Alaska (Registration Area A) commercial red king crab (RKC) and blue king crab fishery will be closed for the 2021/2022 season. The 2021 stock assessment survey estimated 90,973 pounds of legal male RKC available for harvest, less than the minimum threshold of 200,000 pounds required to open the commercial fishery [5 AAC 34.113]. The *Southeast Alaska Red King Crab Management Plan* [5 AAC 34.113] directs the department to manage the RKC fishery in accordance with the Alaska Board of Fisheries' "Policy on King and Tanner Crab Resource Management".

Regionally, the biomass estimates for mature and legal male RKC decreased from last season and have been declining since 2017. For 2021, only two of the seven survey areas (Lynn Sisters and Juneau) had an increase in both legal and mature biomass from 2020. The adjusted biomass estimates for legal and mature RKC for the Southeast Region (survey areas only) are 0.75 million pounds and 0.91 million pounds respectively for the 2021/2022 season: a 5.3% decrease in the legal male biomass and a 3.0% decrease in mature male biomass. Regional biomass is estimated from the seven surveyed areas and extrapolated to the entire region.

**Survey and Analysis**

Areas surveyed include Pybus Bay, Gambier Bay, Seymour Canal, Peril Strait, the Juneau area, Lynn Sisters, and Excursion Inlet. The estimate of biomass was determined through a catch-survey analysis (CSA) for all surveyed areas. The CSA incorporates data from the department's annual stock assessment pot survey (1979–2021), commercial harvest (1979–2017), and biological data collected during port sampling of commercial landings. Harvest data from 1974–1984 indicate that an average of 52.8% has been taken from surveyed areas and 47.2% from non-surveyed areas. This surveyed/non-surveyed area ratio was used to calculate legal and mature biomass estimates for the non-surveyed areas.

Equilibrium harvest rates were calculated for each surveyed area based on the relationship between historical harvest rates and their associated change in mature male biomass. The stock health status and biomass level, when compared to baseline biomass values for each area, were used to modify proposed harvest rates or determine area closures. Stock health ratings are based on catch per unit effort (CPUE) of all size/sex classes compared to long-term (15-year) and short-term (4-year) averages.

Five of the seven survey areas had stock health ratings of poor or below average. Compared to historical levels in most areas (with the exception of Juneau, Lynn Sisters, and Gambier), CPUE of juvenile and female size and sex classes are at below average levels. Overall, recruitment, in the form of pre-recruit CPUE, is significantly below average levels for five of the seven surveys areas, with only Lynn Sisters and Peril being at the long-term average for pre-recruit CPUE, suggesting that regionwide improvements to mature and legal male biomass are still underway. Information regarding survey operations and stock assessment methodologies used to assess red king crab stock health in Southeast is available online at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/ROP.CF.1J.2019.02.pdf>.

Additional information may be found in regulation 5 AAC 34.113. *Southeast Alaska Red King Crab Management Plan* on page 17 of the 2020–2021 Statewide King and Tanner Crab Commercial Fishing Regulations booklet available in area offices, or online at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishregulations.commercial>.

The Emergency Order corresponding with this announcement is EO 1C2021.

Under Alaska’s Health Advisories 1, 2, 3, and 4, commercial fishing is an Essential Business and is part of Alaska’s Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Advisories. COVID-19 Health Advisories may be found here: <https://covid19.alaska.gov/health-advisories/>.

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

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