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## **Advisory Announcement**

*For Immediate Release:*

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### **Eastern Aleutian District Tanner Crab 2022 Fishery Closed**

Alaska Department of Fish and Game has completed analysis of trawl survey results for the Eastern Aleutian District Tanner crab stock. The 2021 trawl survey estimates of mature male Tanner crab abundance were compared to established regulatory thresholds for the Unalaska/Kalekta Bay, Makushin/Skan Bay, and Akutan Sections. A commercial Tanner crab fishery may occur when estimated abundance of mature male Tanner crab meets or exceeds stock size thresholds established in regulation and provides for a guideline harvest level (GHL) of at least 35,000 pounds (5 AAC 35.509 *Eastern Aleutian District Tanner crab harvest strategy*).

**Akutan Section:** The 2021 survey-estimated mature male abundance was below the regulatory threshold; therefore, the Akutan Section will be closed for the 2022 season.

**Makushin/Skan Bay Section:** The 2021 survey-estimated mature male abundance was above the regulatory threshold and the maximum calculated GHL for 2022, as prescribed by the harvest strategy, was above the minimum 35,000 pound GHL. Although the harvest strategy thresholds for opening the Makushin/Skan Bay Section are met, in order to accommodate the minimum regulatory GHL, a 24% exploitation rate on survey-estimated legal male abundance (30% regulatory max) is required.

The Makushin/Skan Bay Section of the EAD has been closed since 2019 due to low abundance. Survey-estimated legal male abundance for 2019 was the lowest in the survey time series and the 2020 survey was canceled due to Covid-19. The 2021 survey indicates legal male and stock abundance overall is increasing. During periods of rebuilding, legal male exploitation rates of less than 15% have been historically applied to this stock, even when regulations allow for higher harvest rates. Therefore, due to concerns of disproportionately high exploitation rates on legal males, recent trends of low abundance and fishery closures, and potential for high bycatch of non-retainable crab, the Makushin/Skan Bay Section will be closed for the 2022 season.

**Unalaska/Kalekta Bay Section:** The 2021 survey-estimated mature male abundance was below the regulatory threshold; therefore, the Unalaska/Kalekta Bay Section will be closed for the 2022 season.

For further information, contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Dutch Harbor at (907) 581-1239.

#### **COVID-19**

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/>

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