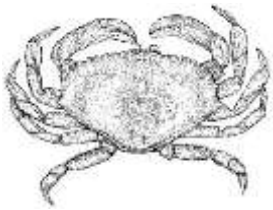
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE

Cora Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director



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CHARTER BID PACKET AVAILABLE FOR YAKUTAT DUNGENESS CRAB SURVEY ANNOUNCEMENT

Petersburg. . . The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) announced today that Yakutat Dungeness crab survey charter bid packets are available in Yakutat, Douglas, Wrangell, Petersburg, Sitka, and Ketchikan offices. The pot survey will assess stocks of Dungeness crab in Statistical Areas 181-10, 181-40, 181-50, and 181-60 of Registration Area D (Yakutat). Details of the survey, including a work summary and minimum qualifications, follow. **Charter bid packets are due in the Petersburg office by 4:30 p.m., Wednesday, April 16, 2014.** The contract will be awarded by April 30, 2014 to the best qualified bidder.

Background

Landings in the Yakutat Dungeness crab fishery declined from a peak of 5.2 million pounds in the 1982/1983 season to approximately 65,000 pounds in the 1999/2000 season. The fishery was designated as collapsed at the 2000 meeting of the Alaska Board of Fisheries and has been closed since then.

Objectives

The primary objective of the 2014 survey is to gather information on the current health of the stock. Specifically, we will collect information on the legal catch rate, male size composition, and distribution of Dungeness crabs in the Yakutat area.

Work Summary

The survey will be conducted over 10 days from June 2 – June 12, by two biologists on a chartered commercial fishing vessel. The department has some flexibility with the survey dates. The vessel skipper will be required to have experience in the Yakutat Dungeness crab commercial fishery. The June 2 survey start is timed two weeks later than the May 15 Yakutat Dungeness commercial season start to ensure that crabs have completed molting and have hard shells. The survey will be conducted in four Yakutat statistical areas: Cape Fairweather to Alsek River (181-10), Alsek River to Ocean Cape (181-60), Yakutat Bay to Icy Bay (181-50), and Icy Bay (181-40). A minimum of 150 pots in each of the four statistical areas for a minimum total of 600 pots will be hauled. Soak times longer than 24-hours may be required. All crabs captured during the survey will be returned to the water unharmed.

Minimum Qualifications

- The vessel must meet both of the following qualifications: 1) at least 55 feet in overall length, and 2) at least 44 net tons.
- Skipper must have at least one year of experience as captain participating in the Yakutat Dungeness crab commercial fishery.
- Deck must have a sheltered area for crab sampling.
- Operational DGPS, 24-mile radar, color video sounder, and VHF are required.
- The winning bidder will be required to make the vessel and pots available for inspection between April 16 and April 30, 2014.
- The contractor will provide a minimum of 3 crew (skipper and two deckhands)
- The contractor must have a letter certifying United States Coats Guard (USCG) inspection within the prior 12 months and all USCG required safety equipment.
- The contractor will provide all bait, fuel, lubricants, filters, and food.
- The contractor will provide at least 100 offshore (minimum 100 lb pot weight) Dungeness crab pots with buoys and buoy line.
- The contractor will be responsible for setting and retrieving pots.
- Vessel must have bunk space for at least 2 ADF&G biologists and the vessel's own minimum required crew of 3, and a sheltered marine head.

Data Application

Data collected during this survey will be used to evaluate status of the Yakutat Area Dungeness crab stock and the potential for future fisheries and surveys.

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

Office	*Ketchikan*	*Petersburg*	*Wrangell*	*Sitka*	*Juneau*	*Haines*	*Yakutat*
ADF&G	*225-5195*	*772-3801*	*874-3822*	*747-6688*	*465-4250*	*766-2830*	*784-3255*
AWT	*225-5111*	*772-3983*	*874-3215*	*747-3254*	*465-4000*	*766-2533*	*784-3255*