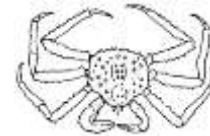

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA PERSONAL USE RED AND BLUE KING CRAB FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

Petersburg...The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) announced the following information regarding the opening of the 2015/2016 Southeast Alaska personal use red and blue king crab fishery outside of Section 11-A:

- **Seymour Canal, Port Frederick, Gambier Bay, Pybus Bay, Holkham Bay, Peril Strait, Excursion Inlet, and Lynn Sisters will remain closed to personal use fishing.**
- **Beginning at 12:01 a.m., July 1, 2015, all areas open to personal use red and blue king crab fishing, outside of Sections 12-B, 15-B, and 15-C, will have a daily bag and possession limit of one red or blue king crab per day as prescribed in regulation when the regionwide harvestable biomass of mature red and blue king crab is below 200,000 pounds [5 AAC 77.664(a)(1)].**
- **Beginning at 12:01 a.m., July 1, 2015, all areas open to personal use red and blue king crab fishing in Sections 12-B, 15-B, and 15-C will have a daily bag and possession limit of one red or blue king crab per day as prescribed in regulation when the regionwide harvestable biomass of mature red and blue king crab is below 200,000 pounds [5 AAC 77.664(b)].**

Survey and Fishery Information

Because the 2015 Southeast Alaska red king crab stock assessment survey is not complete, the department used 2014 stock assessment survey results to set bag and possession limits and determine open areas for the red and blue king crab personal use fishery outside of Section 11-A. Survey results from 2014 indicate the following:

- Regionwide harvestable biomass of mature red and blue king crab is well below 200,000 lbs.
- Regionally, the biomass estimate did increase from last season, but is still at historically low levels.
- The amount of legal crab is virtually the same as 2013, but there has been a 52% increase regionwide in mature male biomass.
- Stock health in Gambier Bay, Lynn Sisters, Port Frederick, and Holkham Bay remains poor in 2014 and these four areas will be kept closed.
- Stock health in Pybus Bay has declined to poor and will be kept closed.

- Stock health in Seymour Canal, Peril Strait, and Excursion Inlet has improved from the previous season, but the biomass increases in each have been largely fueled by increases in non-legal sized, pre-recruit male crabs so these areas will be kept closed.
- Non-surveyed areas can likely continue to withstand a low level of harvest in the near term, so will be kept open with a minimal bag and possession limit.

Closed Area Descriptions

- Seymour Canal: Section 11-D, Seymour Canal (waters of Seymour Canal north of 57°37.00' N. latitude).
- 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).
- Port Frederick: Port Frederick (all waters of Port Frederick south and west of a line between the light at Cannery Point to the northernmost tip of Halibut Island and from there to a point at 58°09.60' N. latitude, 135°30.00' W. longitude).
- 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.
- Excursion Inlet: Waters east of a line from a point at 58°22.57' N. latitude, 135°30.08' W. longitude, south to a point at 58°19.28' N. latitude, 135°30.06' W. longitude, and north of a line from a point at 58°19.28' N. latitude, 135°30.06' W. longitude to a point at 58°16.13' N. latitude, 135°20.61' W. longitude including Excursion Inlet.
- 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;
- 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;
- Holkham Bay: Holkham Bay waters, including Endicott Arm and Tracy Arm, east of a line between Point Coke and Point Astley.

Closed area descriptions above for Lynn Sisters and Excursion Inlet were augmented in September 2013 to more accurately encompass the areas surveyed. 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

Status of the red and blue king crab personal use fishery within Section 11-A is addressed in a separate news release. For more information on the red and blue king crab personal use fishery within Section 11-A please contact Dave Harris at (907) 465-4250.

Recent Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) action on the Southeast Alaska personal use red and blue king crab fishery:

The BOF met in January 2015 to discuss proposals for Southeast and Yakutat shellfish fisheries. The BOF adopted a department proposal to increase the legal size limit for blue king crab in subsistence, personal use, and commercial fisheries in Registration Areas A and D. Though this increase in the legal size limit will not appear in regulation booklets and online until June or July, it has already become effective.

Fishermen are reminded that male red **and blue** king crab must be seven inches or greater in width of shell to be retained. Male king crab less than the minimum legal size and female king crab must be immediately returned to the water unharmed.

Other information

No more than 4 pots or 10 ring nets per vessel may be used in the personal use king crab fishery [5 AAC 77.664(f)]. 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(f)].

Please refer to 5 AAC 77.664 in the 2014-2015 Subsistence and Personal Use Statewide Fisheries Regulations booklet for additional regulations regarding personal use red and blue king crab fishing, or view the regulations online at:

http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static-f/regulations/fishregulations/pdfs/commercial/2014-2015subsistence_PU.pdf

The Emergency Order corresponding with this announcement is EO 1C1315.

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

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<i>AWT</i>	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000		945-3620	

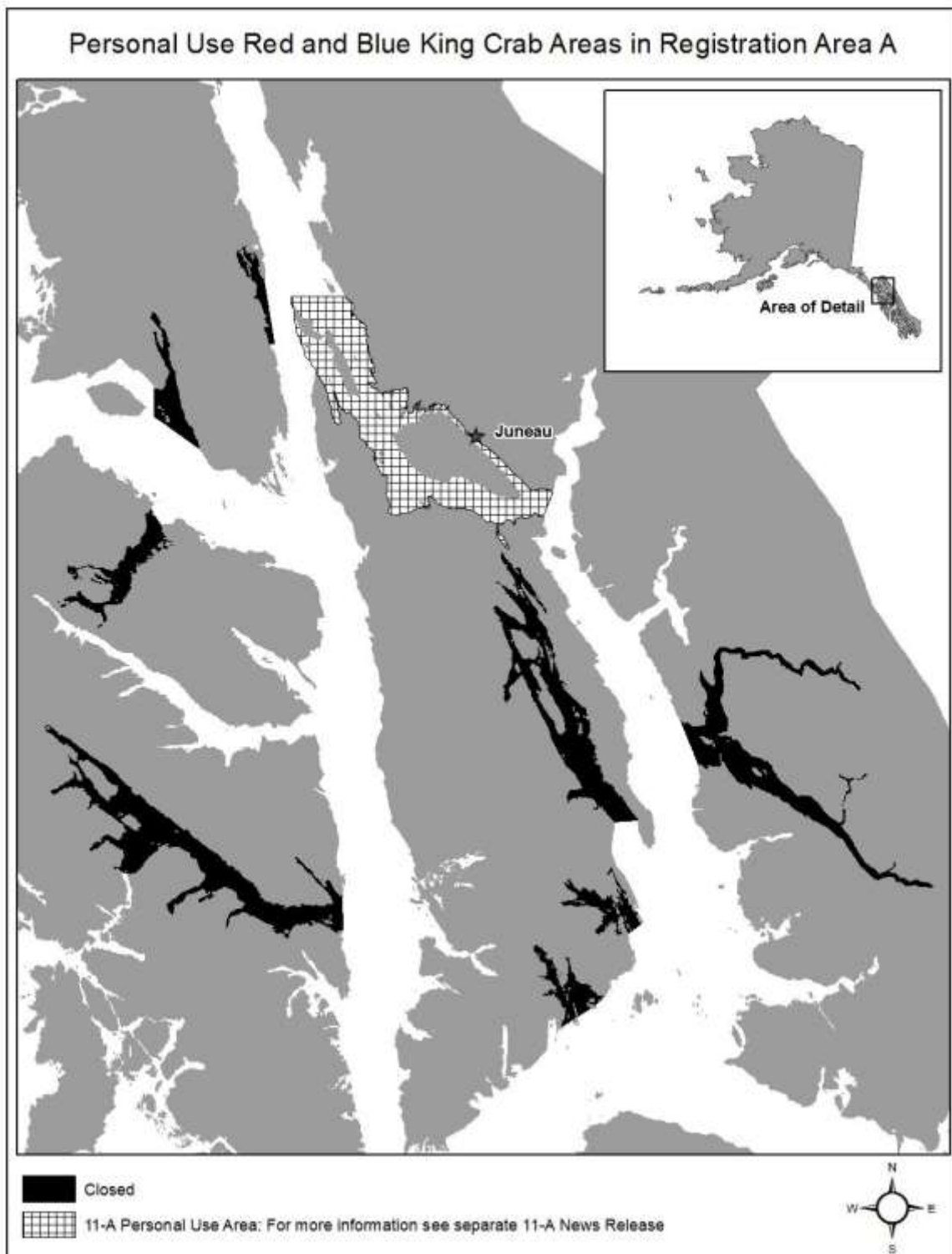


Figure 1. This map only reflects changes to the 2015/2016 red and blue king crab personal use fishery which go into effect July 1, 2015, and is for reference purposes only. Please refer to text in this news release for legal descriptions of management area boundaries and other details.