

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



*Sam Cotten, Commissioner
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NEARLY TWO THIRDS OF WINTER GHIL HARVESTED

Approximately 15,200 pounds remain of the winter red king crab open access commercial guideline harvest. Based on current catch rates, the open access GHIL should be entirely caught by the end of the third week of March. The red king crab guideline harvest level (GHIL) for the Norton Sound winter through the ice commercial fishery is 41,376 pounds.

Following the conclusion of the open access winter commercial fishery, the department will open a commercial fishery by emergency order to harvest the CDQ allocation of the 2016 guideline harvest level of 517,000 pounds of red king crab. By regulation, the CDQ is allocated 7.5% of the allowable commercial harvest. In 2016, this equates to 38,190 additional pounds that could be harvested this winter. The winter CDQ season will close when the CDQ allocation is harvested. However, it could also close earlier at the discretion of CDQ management, by emergency order by ADF&G, or as required by regulation on April 30. Any CDQ quota not taken during the winter will be taken during the summer red king crab commercial fishery.

Commercial fishing for CDQ crab is open to all residents 18 years or older of NSEDC's fifteen member communities who qualify to obtain a CDQ gear permit card and who sign the 2016 NSEDC Norton Sound Red King Crab Fisherman's Agreement and NSEDC Residency Verification forms. Interested fishermen should contact NSEDC at 443-2477 if they have questions about the process of becoming eligible to fish for CDQ red king crab.

To date, 28 commercial permit holders have registered with the department for the open access fishery. Permit holders are reminded that they need to register at the Fish & Game office in Nome before crabbing. Additionally, crabbers interested in participating in the CDQ fishery will need to register their CDQ cards with the department. Village residents can call the Fish & Game office to register.

Permit holders must be present any time commercial pot gear is being operated, and can only be assisted by licensed crew members. Crewmembers cannot deploy or operate gear on their own. For further information please contact the Nome office at 907-443-5167 or 1-800-560-2271. Good Luck, Good Crabbing and Be Safe Out There!