

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



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Date Issued: 07/12/2017

#### **COOK INLET AREA SUBSISTENCE TANNER CRAB FISHERY UPDATE EO # 2-SF-H-02-17**

The Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) adopted the following regulations at the March 2017 meeting that change the Cook Inlet Area Tanner Crab fisheries:

- The personal use fishery was repealed to reduce redundancy and complexity. As a result, the noncommercial Tanner crab fishery is now defined as sport or subsistence fisheries.
- The legal size of male Tanner crab was reduced from 5.5 inches to 4.5 inches based on new analyses of male size at maturity.
- A limited noncommercial fishery was established from October 1 through the end of February for the entire Cook Inlet Area (latitude of Cape Douglas to longitude of Cape Fairfield). During this fishery, gear is limited to 1 pot per person with a maximum of 1 pot per vessel, bag and possession is limited to 3 legal size male Tanner crab, and a permit is required for each person who participates in the fishery. The noncommercial (sport and subsistence) fishery permits are expected to be available online by September 1.

To open Tanner crab noncommercial fisheries earlier than October 1, 5 AAC 35.408 *Registration Area H Tanner Crab Harvest Strategy*, requires the department to conduct trawl surveys to determine if abundance of legal size male Tanner crab achieved regulatory thresholds. Trawl surveys were last conducted in 2013 for Kachemak Bay and 2012 for Kamishak Bay. Survey results of legal male Tanner crab were below the thresholds needed to prosecute a noncommercial fishery July 15/September 1 through March 15 as described in regulation, therefore the fisheries have remained closed consistent with the harvest strategy.

At the March 2017 statewide king and Tanner crab meeting, BOF adopted a provision to the harvest strategy to allow a limited sport and subsistence fishery in the absence of a trawl survey. This fishery will be open October 1 through February 28 with the more conservative pot and bag limits described above.

For additional information contact Jan Rumble or Carol Kerkvliet in Homer.

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