

On-Time Public Comment List
Southeast and Yakutat Crab, Shrimp and Miscellaneous
Shellfish
January 21–26, 2015

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Submitted By
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12/16/2014 12:55:33 PM
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Proposal 69-5 AAC 32.150

The currently protected areas, mainly Kadashan Bay and the coastline west to the mouth of Crab Bay, are heavily used by Tenakee residents for sport and subsistence dungeness crab fishing. Anyone observing the number of commercial pots being fished in all the open areas of Tenakee Inlet could only conclude that opening the currently closed areas would essentially preclude any sport or subsistence opportunity. Furthermore, Kadashan Bay may serve as a biologic reserve providing free swimming larvae to other area of Tenakee Inlet. Please do NOT approve this proposal.



Submitted By
Betty Johnson
Submitted On
12/19/2014 3:41:17 PM
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I wholeheartedly support the closure to commercial crabbing in the area of Horse and Colt Island and Admiralty Island.

We have placed personal use crab pots in that area and returned to find that the pots have been picked and dropped back down with no bait or a small flounder skewered in the pot.

The mixed use between commercial and personal use crabbing has created a significant drop in the numbers of legal size crab and is really unfair to the personal use crabbers.



Submitted By
Brad Ketcheson
Submitted On
9/25/2014 11:42:07 AM
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I would like to express my support for Proposal #76 that would close commercial dungeness crabbing around Horse and Colt Islands. As a cabin owner on Horse Island for the past 20 years I have experienced the annual frustration of not being able to harvest dungeness crabs for personal use when the commercial pots are set. The commercial pots literal line the shore line off Admiralty Island inside Horse and Colt islands and basically shut off sports crabbing in that area.

Sincerely,

Brad Ketcheson



Submitted By
Craig & Millie Duncan
Submitted On
12/19/2014 9:34:01 AM
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This comment is in support of Proposal #76 by Ron and Nan Schonenback. My wife and I retired 2 years ago and moved to our home on the southeast end of Horse Island 2012. We have owned the home for approximately 9 years and I have been a Juneau resident for 40 years. We spent a great amount of effort preparing our Horse Island home in preparation for our retirement. We greatly anticipated moving to the island and taking up a more rural life style. In the summer of 2012 (our first year of retirement) we noticed a dramatic increase in the commercial crabbing in the very small channel between Horse and Colt Islands and Admiralty Island. This is the area where most of the Horse Island boats are moored. For us, this had several negative impacts. First there have been crab pot floats within 50 feet of where we moor our boat along with dozens of other floats making transiting the area more restrictive. My grandkids use our 16 foot skiff in that area to fish and explore, making it a bit more congested and dangerous. My hopes for personal use crabbing in the area is shot after the commercial season starts as they take every legal crab in the area. I just pull my couple of pots. In addition, the larger crab boats come through the area rather quickly and with a number of whale watching boats making the area more congested and rough (one needs to stay out of their way) and in a few cases making boating more risky. We are highly supportive of this proposal to set aside this small sheltered area for non commercial use.



Submitted By
Daniel Martin
Submitted On
12/15/2014 6:24:52 PM
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The proposal before the board to open the current personal use dungeness crab area in Tenake inlet to commercial crabbing is counter productive. This small area currently closed to commercial crabbing is a big reason there is a viable commercial fishery in Tenakee inlet now. You open this area to commercial crabbing, you will pretty much wipe out the dungeness crab in the inlet. As it stands now, there area can barely support the two crabbers who live here. To say I am opposed to opening this area to commercial crabbing is an understatement. Even the crabbers who live here are against opening this area to commercial crabbing. I am 60 years old, and would like to live my life out, here in Tenakee being able to go 5 minutes from the harbor to catch a few crabs to eat.



Submitted By
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Submitted On
10/1/2014 2:08:45 PM
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We are in support of Proposal #76.

We have owned a cabin on Colt Island since 1994. Over the past 20 years crabbing has been very good until of late. The last few years two to three commercial crabbers come in and set pots between Horse & Colt Islands and Admiralty Island. They just hammer the crab. With 50 to 75 commercial pots in a small area it is difficult to even find a spot to place a dungeness pot for personal use let alone catch a crab. After the commercial crabbers leave the area it becomes even more difficult to catch a crab as the commercial crabbers have pretty much wiped them out.



Submitted By
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Submitted On
11/30/2014 12:20:24 PM
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Regarding Proposal #77-5 AAC32.150. We live on the beach between Lena and Pt. Louisa and have been watching commercial crab fishing boats drop their commercial pots just off the beach in this area for several years. They leave these pots for a very long time to soak out there and of course deplete the Dungeness Crab fishery to the point that it is difficult now to harvest crabs for our personal use. I am in full support of a closure of Commercial Crab fishing in this area as this apparently is the only 2.5 mile stretch where it is allowed in this area. Seems rather silly to see such sea worthy crab fishing boats using this area instead of going out into more serious water leaving this zone to the locals that have open skiffs to do their crabbing in. So we request that this proposal be passed and this zone be closed down to such commercial crab fishing. Thank you, David L. Rogers & Linda J. Macaulay



Submitted By
Doug Larsen
Submitted On
9/30/2014 8:04:44 AM
Affiliation
Self

Proposal 77: I SUPPORT THIS PROPOSAL

As a lifelong Alaskan, and a 44 year resident of Juneau, I have enjoyed the hunting and fishing opportunities Alaska has to offer. Those opportunities contribute hugely to my enjoyment of Alaska and living here and are why I desire and plan to remain in Alaska after retirement.

While I strongly support commercial uses of our fish and wildlife resources, I believe provisions should be built into those commercial uses and allowances to ensure that local residents are afforded ample opportunity to harvest fish and wildlife for personal consumption. Proposal 77 would help ensure local opportunities to harvest dungeness crabs near our homes in Juneau.

My family and I live between Pt. Louisa and Pt. Lena and have occasionally set dungeness crab pots offshore in front of our home. Over the 10 years we've lived in this location we have been able to catch 2-3 legal crabs each time we set a couple pots. However, after the allowance of commercial crabbing in this area, our crab captures have dropped off to the point where it's been virtually impossible to catch a legal crab.

With large areas open and available for commercial crabbing throughout SE, it seems to me that closing the area described in proposal 77 would very minimally impact the commercial interests while accommodating the uses of local residents who live in the area and welcome the opportunity to catch a few crabs near their homes.



Submitted By
Frank & Bessie Highley
Submitted On
10/1/2014 5:47:50 PM
Affiliation
sport fishing

We have enjoyed crabbing off of Horse Island since 1989. The commercial fishing has been going on since then. When the commercial season opens, we are lucky to get any legal crab for the rest of the season. They have even taken crab from our pots in some years. We would really like to see this area closed to commercial crabbing.



Submitted By
jacqueline fowler
Submitted On
9/25/2014 8:10:16 PM
Affiliation

~~PROPOSAL 77 - 5 AAC 32.150. Closed waters in Registration Area A.

I'm in favor of this proposal.

There are few crabbing areas available to local Juneau families. Commercial crabbers have boats that can take them to other areas to harvest crabs. Many Juneau families do not have access to a large boat to harvest crab in more remote areas. Closing the waters in registration A to commercial crabbers will protect the species and enable local residents a limited harvest of Dungeness Crab. Thank you.



Submitted By
James Swingle
Submitted On
9/29/2014 11:15:57 AM
Affiliation

I strongly support Proposal #76 to close the area between Admiralty and Horse and Colt Islands to commercial fishing for Dungeness crab. Many residents of Juneau own lots and have cabins on Horse and Colt Islands and have sport fished for dungies in this area for years. This allowed the dungie resource to be shared by many people who each took just a few for their personal use and enjoyment. For many, catching a couple of fresh dungies to cook up on the beach is one of the highlights of spending some time out on the islands. I know that is true for our family. Since 2012, however, at least one commercial crabber has been fishing the area hard all season, setting his boat load of pots in this area and pretty much taking all the crab for himself. Please adopt Proposal #76 so that in at least this very limited area in the near shore waters on the back side of Horse and Colt, the crab can be shared by many as it has been traditionally, rather than exploited for the benefit of a few.



Submitted By
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Submitted On
12/16/2014 7:22:14 AM
Affiliation

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Hello,

My comments are in regards to Proposal 76 - 5 AAC 32.150. Closed waters in Registration Area A. Close commercial Dungeness fishing in areas around Colt and Horse Islands near Juneau.

We have owned our cabin on Horse Island for 19 years, and throughout the years have enjoyed personal use crabbing of Dungeness crab from the south end of Horse Island extending to the north end of Colt Island and the area west to Admiralty Island. We have seen a severe reduction in crab in the past couple of years. This summer, our pots often came up empty or with just a couple crab at a time. We only set 2 pots at a time as we want crab for personal enjoyment, not to clean them out. The commercial crabbing has done so in this area. Please consider closing this area so local Alaskans can enjoy the Dungeness Crab as well. I have a close family member that is a commercial fisherman, so I understand they need to make a living, however, there should be consideration for areas where locals reside. Thank you for accepting comments regarding this proposal.



Submitted By
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9/29/2014 8:01:18 AM
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PROPOSAL 76 - 5 AAC 32.150. Closed waters in Registration Area A. Close commercial Dungeness fishing in areas around Colt and Horse Islands near Juneau,

To The Alaska Board of Fisheries:

My name is Jay Beedle, I have lived in or near Juneau for over 45 years and have always appreciated how blessed we are with the opportunity to harvest some of the world's best seafood, both commercially and sport from our local waters. I have commercial fished my own boats in past years and have sport fished for as long as I can remember.

I have always tried to look at commercial vs sport allotments with an open mind and appreciate the excellent job the Alaska Board of Fisheries has done.

Even though I do not own land near the Horse and Colt Islands, nor have I ever fished for dungeness crab there, I operate my sport boat through the area many times a year. A few years ago I noticed a commercial dungie fishing boat setting pots in the small area on the inside of Horse and Colt Islands. I took a picture and thought to myself, this is just wrong. The captain of the boat doesn't care about the many sport fisherman who use this small area.

I truly believe the small area behind Horse and Colt Island should be closed to the commercial taking of dungeness crab.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jay Beedle



Submitted By
John Moran
Submitted On
10/6/2014 8:54:57 AM
Affiliation

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I support PROPOSAL 77 - 5 AAC 32.150.

It has been my experience, in 15 years of personal use crabbing in Southeast Alaska, that it is very difficult to find a legal Dungeness crab following a commercial opener. The waters along the Juneau road system provide safe a easy access to the crab fishery for thousands of residence. I would suspect increasing pressure on crab stocks from sea otters will force more permit holders in to the Juneau area further increasing competition between user groups. I would like to have this area set aside for personel use and sport dungeness crabbing.



Submitted By
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9/26/2014 11:22:20 AM
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I support PROPOSAL 77 - 5 AAC 32.150. Closed waters in Registration Area A. Close commercial Dungeness fishing around Portland Island and Point Lena near Juneau. Nearshore waters need to be available for recreational crabbing. Commercial vessels have more equipment and resources to fish throughout SEAK. Recreational crabbers are often limited to small craft, including rowing boats to conduct crabbing. It could be a safety issue if recreational crabbers venture further than their equipment and resources safely support in search of crabs.



Submitted By
Lavair Swingle
Submitted On
10/9/2014 8:39:56 PM
Affiliation

I strongly support proposal #76 to close the area between Admiralty and Horse and Colt Islands to commercial fishing for Dungeness crab. My husband and I live in Juneau, and enjoy getting out to our cabin on Horse Island in the summers. Our enjoyment is highlighted by being able to fish and crab in the areas around Horse and Colt Islands. It has been that way for many years. As for the crabbing, that changed several years ago. The area traditionally used by those of us personal use crabbers was overrun by at least one commercial crabber. Since then, it has become very difficult to catch any crab, as this commercial crabber has placed many, many pots in the area, harvesting most of this resource for himself. This is supposed to be a shared resource. Personally, I don't believe any commercial crabbing or commercial fishing should be done within 10 miles of any populated area, but I can at least hope that proposal #76 will be adopted. I believe the crab should be a shared resource, to benefit the many, not just the few.



Submitted By
Louis and Nancy Barr
Submitted On
10/5/2014 2:41:13 PM
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For more than 40 years, we, Lou and Nancy Barr, have lived on the Juneau shoreline about halfway between Point Louisa and Lena Point. During that time, the area in front of our house has been open to commercial Dungeness crab fishing while adjacent nearshore areas to the southeast and northwest have been closed to that fishery. In spite of the fact that the 2.5 mile sector adjacent to our residence has been open to the fishery, no commercial pots had been set here until the last two years. During the long years of our residency here, we, neighbors, friends and others have taken occasional Dungeness crab from adjacent waters for personal use. However, there is a conflict between commercial and personal use for the resource. We are writing in support of PROPOSAL 77-5 AAC 32-150, a proposal to place the 2.5 mile stretch in question under the same status as adjacent waters, thereby closing it to commercial Dungeness fishing.

As a long-time diver who previously used diving as a tool in his work as a biologist with National Marine Fisheries Service, Lou has traversed much of the underwater area of the 2.5 mile sector in question. In that area, he found little suitable underwater habitat for Dungeness crab; instead he observed occasional isolated areas occupied by a limited number of crabs. His underwater observations were consistent with the fact that in the last two years we have seen commercial vessels set pots in strings along much of the shoreline, pull the pots, then reset fewer pots in more limited areas. This year we observed that even commercial pots set in limited areas were sometimes left to soak for as much as two weeks, something that would probably not be the case if sets had been reasonably productive. Long sets in limited areas would seem to support the underwater observations that Dungeness crabs are not abundant in the area. If that is the case, then the potential value of the resource to a commercial fishery is probably minimal. With the ability of the resource in the area to sustain a continuing commercial harvest questionable, best use of the resource would, it seems to us, be achieved by closing the 2.5 mile stretch to commercial crabbing, thereby placing it in the same status as adjacent areas, while continuing to permit personal use like that which has been sustained in the area for the last 40 years or more.



Submitted By
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Submitted On
12/19/2014 3:18:24 PM
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none

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Juneau, Alaska 99801

I support banning commercial crab fishing between Horse, Colt, and Admiralty Islands near Stephens Passage in Southeast Alaska. Over the past two decades, I have observed unfair competition between commercial crabbers and personal use crab fishers in these waters.

Thank you.



Submitted By
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Submitted On
10/7/2014 2:26:51 PM
Affiliation

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Proposal 77- 5 AAC 32.150. We support the proposal to close the area in front of the homes located on Lena Loop Rd to commercial fishing of dungeness crab. We have lived in our home since 2000. For the first time in 2012, commercial pots for dungeness crab were dropped along the shore line. This clearly diminishes any chance the homeowners have of catching crab in front of their homes for personal use.



Submitted By
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12/23/2014 2:45:28 PM
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This is in response to proposal 5AAC 32.150 to open closed areas in lower Tenakee inlet for Commercial Dugeness harvest.

This proposal minimizes the population which is two to three times the stated number during the Summer months. Our community needs to be able to sport/ subsistence fish for crab close to home from skiffs SAFELY. These two areas provide that opportunity without commercial competition and with a minimum of commercial operators raiding sport pots.

If 3 miles of shoreline is really costing the state jobs or even remotely effecting a single crabber's livelihood, I suggest that those effected are in the wrong line of work.



Submitted By
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11/5/2014 12:05:21 PM
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useak gillnetters

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I oppose measure 71 which seeks to establish a commercial Dungeness crab closure in Whale Pass in favor of sport and subsistence fisheries. This is like many other proposals in the booklet seeking to favor sport crabbing over commercial. They should all be rejected by the board because there is no conservation concern for Dungeness Crab in SE. In fact catches are at very high levels. The Whale Pass proposal is the worst of the bunch because it presents absolutely no data on the status of crabs in Whale Pass, or catch per effort statistics for either sport or commercial pots. It states nothing about who might be negatively affected by such a closure, Or for that matter who might be positively affected, if anyone. It is at best simply the opinion of one or several sport/subsistence fishers that they will catch more crabs by closing commercials out. How many crabs do they need or want? What are they taking now? Proposals like these seem to imply that the commercials can simply go someplace else to catch their crabs (if the proponents even care about the livelihood of the commercials). But if every community in SE AK gets a special sport/subsistence area of its own, the the commercials in SE really take a hit. Crabs are not everywhere, which means that there will be some competition among the groups for the hot spots. Since commercial crabbing in Whale Pass is at most about a two month effort in June and July, the sport/subsistence users still have some ten months a year of unimpeded access (not withstanding their competion with one another which is probably the more real competition than that with the commercials). Is it fair that they get 100% access, to the detriment of an industry that provides jobs on the boats and in the processing plants, and a fine seafood product to others who don't fish with sport/subsistence pots?



Submitted By
Robert Morgenthaler
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12/21/2014 10:50:25 AM
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This comment is to voice my **100% Support for Proposal #76**, the closure of commercial dungeness crab fishing in the Horse and Colt Island areas.

My wife and I have been lucky enough to be property owners on Horse Island, Block C Lot 3, since the year 2000. The State of Alaska when they chose to sub divide and sell lots on Horse did so with the intent of people using this area as a recreational getaway. Part of that recreational experience is the sport harvest of fish and wildlife which is a common interest and valued part of enjoying the Alaskan outdoors. For many years my wife and I particularly enjoyed the occasional setting of a few dungeness crab pots to sport harvest crab on the west side of Horse Island with good success. There were always a few pots in the area but everybody seemed to be satisfied with there sport harvest and the crabbing was consistent year to year.

The use of the Horse and Colt Island area for commercial crabbing in 2012 dramatically changed my sport harvest of crab. Apon seeing 30 or more pots in a very small space it was no shock the the sport crabbing was severely diminished. By summer 2014 it was not even worth setting pots as the population seemed so diminished and success for the effort was non existant. The commercial crabbers that were for years setting in the bear creek area north the Horse and Colt were now setting directly in front of and across from recreational cabins.

I do support commercial fishing but I feel the resource needs to be shared equally with all. The support of Proposal #76, the closure of commercial crabbing in the Horse and Colt Island area will allow all of us to benefit and enjoy the resources in Alaska.

Thank you,

Robert Morgenthaler and Nell Mcconahey



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9/27/2014 11:49:11 AM
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#76 Close waters near Horse/Colt/Admiralty Islands to commercial dungie

#77 Close waters on Portland/South Lena to commercial dungie

We are the submitters of these two proposed closures. After several decades of setting a pot or two in these areas without commercial use, 2012 was the first year we saw commercial use. That year, the same commercial user set pots in both areas. 2014 saw commercial use again. It is likely other commercial users also crabbed the areas and we just didn't see their pots.

All of the south Lena shoreline, 2.5 miles, is residential housing. Having this area open to commercial when the waters to the North (closed 2000) and to the South (1980) are closed defies logic. Homeowners should be able to row a dingy out, set a pot or two, and expect to harvest a few dungies. Once the commercial boats string the waters with pots that option is severely limited.

The same issue is prevalent at Horse and Colt. Numerous cabin owners on both islands enjoy setting a pot or two. Once the commercial boats crabbed this area starting in 2012 the ability to catch crabs plummeted.

While these public waters are open to commercial use it is bewildering why commercial crabbers would even set pots in these areas knowing full well that their harvest will effectively end the small harvest enjoyed by the local upland users.

While commercial crabbers need sufficient area to crab and with larger boats are better able to crab areas away from these two proposed closures, the closure of these two areas is unlikely to impact their total catch to any significant degree. Closing these two areas provides for a much higher degree of success for upland land owners.



Submitted By
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12/28/2014 5:38:22 PM
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I would like to voice my support for proposal #76 that recommends closing commercial dungeness crabbing in the Colt/Horse Island area.

We have primarily been personal use king crab fishers in the 11-A area for the past 25 years and since those stocks have been decimated to point where it is closed or might as well be due to overfishing, we have started dungie fishing more often near our cabin at Horse Island.

I concur with the Schonenbach's proposal to allow personal use crabbers to actually have a chance at the resource. Please don't allow the commercial boats to clean out this popular and accessible area for the personal use fisherman.

Thank you

Scott Spickler



Submitted By
sharron lobaugh
Submitted On
12/18/2014 5:18:21 PM
Affiliation
owner adjavent land

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I urge the board of Fisheries to close the channel between Horse and Colt Island and the mainland of Admiralty island to commercial fisheries. We have owned property on Admiralty Island for 40 years and it has always been a productive dungeness crab shelf for us and our family. The past few years many times our pots have been emptied by Commercial vessels even in broad daylight. All three of our pots are appropriately marked and it is so insulting that they are being harvested for commercial purposes. It is happening frequently and we can tell because our pots are not where they are supposed to be, are found later drifting far from our shores and bait is replaced and crab is removed. There are many cabin owners and some full time residents now on Horse or Colt island. Please close this area so we can be assured our crab will not be taken.

Sharron Lobaugh