

PROPOSAL 265 – 5 AAC 35.408. Registration Area H Tanner crab harvest strategy. Amend the noncommercial harvest strategy for Tanner crab in the Cook Inlet Area to allow limited opportunity in the absence of abundance estimates, as follows:

5 AAC 35.408 is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

(e) If data to estimate abundance of legal male Tanner crab are not available, or trawl surveys have not been conducted for three consecutive years, the noncommercial fisheries for Tanner crab in the Cook Inlet Area (including the Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area as described in 5 AAC 58.005) will be managed as follows:

(1) Tanner crab may be taken in subsistence and sport fisheries from October 1 through the last day of February;

(2) bag and possession limit is set at three male Tanner crab;

(3) only male Tanner crab with a minimum size of five and one-half inches across the widest part of the shell, including spines, may be taken or possessed;

(4) no more than one pot per person with a maximum of one pot per vessel may be used to take Tanner crab;

(5) a shellfish harvest recording form is required as specified in 5 AAC 02.015 and 5 AAC 58.026;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Tanner crab noncommercial fisheries east of the Point Pogibshi to Anchor Point line have been closed since 2011 because estimated abundance of legal size male Tanner crab was below the 50,000 threshold in 2011, 2012 and 2013. The Tanner crab noncommercial fisheries in the Kamishak District have been closed since 2012 because no legal size male Tanner crab (five and one-half inches) were detected in the last trawl survey. Due to a lack of funding, no trawl surveys have been conducted in the Southern District since 2013 or in Kamishak District since 2012. If the harvest strategy is not amended, the noncommercial fisheries will remain closed until funding is restored to conduct trawl surveys. These provisions allow the potential for limited opportunity for subsistence, personal use, and sport users when the department cannot conduct surveys for three or more years.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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