

**PROPOSAL 261 - 5 AAC 35.506. Area J registration.** Allow *C. opilio* Tanner crab bycatch retention up to five percent in the Bering Sea District *C. bairdi* Tanner crab fishery, east of 166° W. long., as follows:

5 AAC 35.506(j) is amended to read:

(j) In the Bering Sea District,

**(1) a vessel operator that is registered to fish for *C. bairdi* Tanner crab east of 166° W. long. may also retain *C. opilio* Tanner crab in an amount not to exceed five percent of the weight of *C. bairdi* Tanner crab on board the vessel and reported on an ADF&G fish ticket; and**

**(2)** a vessel operator that is registered to fish for *C. bairdi* Tanner crab west of 166° W. long. may also retain *C. opilio* Tanner crab in an amount not to exceed five percent of the weight of *C. bairdi* Tanner crab on board the vessel and reported on an ADF&G fish ticket.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Fishermen have been encountering *C. opilio* Tanner crab east of 166° W. long., but with no means to harvest those crab towards their individual fishing quota. Allowing some retention of this bycatch will reduce discard mortality.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F16-166)

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**PROPOSAL 262 - 5 AAC 35.505. Description of Registration Area J Districts; 5 AAC 35.506. Area J registration; 5 AAC 35.50X. Western Aleutian District Tanner crab harvest strategy; 5 AAC 35.510. Fishing seasons for Registration Area J; 5 AAC 35.525. Lawful gear for Registration Area J; 5 AAC 35.558. Reporting requirements for Registration Area J; and 5 AAC 35.590. Vessel length restrictions.** Develop a management plan for the Western Aleutian District commercial Tanner crab fishery, as follows:

**5 AAC 35.505. Description of Registration Area J districts**

(d) Western Aleutian District: all waters west of 172° W. Long, and south of 54ø 36' N. Lat.

**(1) The Adak Section is comprised of the state waters of the Aleutian Islands Subdistrict between 175° W. long. and 178° W. long.**

5 AAC 35.506. Area J registration

(5) for the Western Aleutian District *C. bairdi* Tanner crab fishery, the registration deadline is 5:00 p.m. October 10; **except that in the Adak Section a vessel must register at least 5 days prior to beginning fishing.**

**5 AAC 35.50X. Western Aleutian District Tanner crab harvest strategy**

**(a) In the Western Aleutian District, a commercial Tanner crab fishery may be open based on the best scientific information available, if the department determines that there is a harvestable surplus of**

**(1) tanner crab available in the Adak Section, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, a commercial tanner crab fishery only in the Adak Section under 5 AAC 34.510(e);**

**(2) at least 1,000,000 pounds of tanner crab in the remainder of the Western Aleutian District, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, a commercial tanner crab fishery in the remainder of the Western Aleutian District**

**5 AAC 35.510. Fishing seasons for Registration Area J**

(e) In the Western Aleutian District, pots may be operated to take Tanner crab only during a season opened by emergency order from 12:00 noon to November 1 through 12:00 noon March 31, **except that in the Adak Section a season may be opened by emergency order from 12:00 noon August 1.**

**5 AAC 35.525. Lawful gear for Registration Area J**

**(c) The following pot limits are in effect in Registration Area J:**

**(6) in the Adak Section of the Western Aleutian District no more than 50 pots per vessel is allowed.**

**5 AAC 35.558. Reporting requirements for Registration Area J**

In the Eastern Aleutian District **and in the Western Aleutian District,** a validly registered Tanner crab vessel must report each day to the department

(1) the number of pot lifts;

(2) the number of crab retained for the 24-hour fishing period preceding the report; and

(3) any other information that the commissioner determines is necessary for the management and conservation of the fishery, as specified in the vessel registration certificate issued under 5 AAC 35.020.

**5 AAC 35.590. Vessel length restrictions**

**(d) in the Adak Section of the Western Aleutian District, Tanner crab may not be taken by vessels over 60 feet overall length. In the remainder of the Western Aleutian District, Tanner crab may not be taken by vessels over 60 feet in overall length when the guideline harvest level for Tanner crab in the Western Aleutian District is 1,500,000 pounds or less.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** We are asking that the Board develop a management plan framework for Western Aleutian District tanner crab. Aleutian Island tanner crab were formerly managed under a Federal Fisheries Management Plan, but with the

adoption of Amendment 24 Aleutian Island tanners were removed from the FMP and full responsibility was returned to ADF&G.

The Board did create a management plan for Eastern Aleutian District tanners, but the management plan for the Western Aleutian District tanners is much less complete. We propose that the management plan framework for WAI district tanners be fleshed out in a manner that generally follows the management framework the Board adopted for Adak Red King Crab, addressing: 1) Adak section boundaries, 2) registration requirements, 3) harvest strategy, 4) season dates, 5) pot limits 6) reporting requirements, 7) vessel size limits

**PROPOSED BY:** Adak Community Development Corporation (HQ-F16-044)

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**PROPOSAL 263 - 5 AAC 39.645. Shellfish onboard observer program.** Reduce onboard observer coverage rates and change observer deployment periods for the Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery, as follows:

The best solution would be for the onboard observer requirement to be determined annually by the department in consultation with the fleet such that the total coverage is 30 to 50% of the total weight of golden king crab harvested. The following regulatory language is suggested:

5 AAC 39.645 (d)(4)(A)(ii) **the department in consultation annually with the fleet will determine the most effective means to observe the harvest of 30-50% of the total golden king crab weight harvested by each catcher vessel while operating fishing gear east of 174 degrees W. Long., during each of the three trimesters dated August 1 through October 31, November 1 through January 31, and February 1 through April 30, during each registration year.**  
[DURING THE HARVEST OF 50 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL GOLDEN KING CRAB WEIGHT HARVESTED BY EACH CATCHER VESSEL WHILE OPERATING FISHING GEAR EAST OF 174 DEGREES W. LONG., DURING EACH OF THE THREE TRIMESTERS DATED AUGUST 15 THROUGH NOVEMBER 15, NOVEMBER 16 THROUGH FEBRUARY 15, AND FEBRUARY 16 THROUGH MAY 15, DURING EACH REGULATORY YEAR; AND]

5 AAC 39.645 (d)(4)(A)(iii) **the department in consultation annually with the fleet will determine the most effective means to observe the harvest of 30-50% of the total golden king crab weight harvested by each catcher vessel while operating fishing gear west of 174 degrees W. Long., during each of the three trimesters dated August 1 through October 31, November 1 through January 31, and February 1 through April 30, during each registration year.**  
[DURING THE HARVEST OF 50 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL GOLDEN KING CRAB WEIGHT HARVESTED BY EACH CATCHER VESSEL WHILE OPERATING FISHING GEAR EAST OF 174 DEGREES W. LONG., DURING EACH OF THE THREE TRIMESTERS DATED AUGUST 15 THROUGH NOVEMBER 15, NOVEMBER 16 THROUGH FEBRUARY 15, AND FEBRUARY 16 THROUGH MAY 15, DURING EACH REGULATORY YEAR;]

This approach would allow the department to adjust the observer coverage requirement as needed based on periodic review of the observer program as well as changes to the fishery over time.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Current requirements governing onboard observers in the Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery are specified in regulation and are therefore not readily subject to change as changing conditions may require. For example, current regulations call for observer coverage during the harvest of 50% of the total golden king crab weight harvested by catcher vessels during each trimester. Because of the way the regulations are written and the fishery is conducted, the actual observer coverage for each vessel has been nearer to 70 percent, rather than 50 percent.

This extra coverage costs money that could be better used to fund additional research. This is especially true since this fishery has very low bycatch of female or sublegal crabs or other species. These regulations were adopted after crab rationalization when observer data was the primary source of data for the fishery and stock. The department and the fleet are currently conducting a golden king crab survey (carried out by the fleet with ADF&G scientists onboard) that should decrease the need for data collected by observers. Additionally, the trimesters dictated in the regulation no longer match the season opening and closing dates of the fishery.

Ideally, new regulations would give the department the flexibility to work with the fleet on an annual basis to establish observer requirements that provide the needed information without the unnecessary cost of observing a larger proportion of the harvest.

**PROPOSED BY:** Aleutian King Crab Research Foundation (EF-F16-102)

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**PROPOSAL 264 - 5 AAC 34.625. Lawful gear for Registration Area O.** Repeal provisions allowing concurrent harvest of red and golden king crab in Registration Area O, as follows:

5 AAC 34.625(f) is repealed:

(f) **Repealed** / /2017 [A VESSEL MAY BE REGISTERED TO FISH IN THE COMMERCIAL RED KING CRAB AND GOLDEN KING CRAB FISHERIES AT THE SAME TIME. HOWEVER, ONLY SINGLE LINE POTS MAY BE OPERATED IN AREAS OPEN TO RED KING CRAB FISHING AND ONLY LONGLINE POTS MAY BE OPERATED IN AREAS OPEN TO GOLDEN KING CRAB FISHING].

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Aleutian Islands golden king crab are managed for individual fishing quota (IFQ) and community development quota (CDQ) allocations in two separate fisheries, east and west of 174° W. long. Aleutian Islands red king crab are managed for individual fishing quota (IFQ) and community development quota (CDQ) allocations only in the Petrel District (west of 179° W. long.). Red king crab in the Dutch Harbor District (east of 171° W. long.) and Adak District (171° W. long. to 179° W. long.) are managed for open access participants.

Aleutian Islands red king crab district boundaries do not align with the Aleutian Islands golden king crab management boundaries. Prior to crab rationalization vessels were allowed under 5 AAC 34.625(f) to fish red king crab and golden king crab at the same time if both species were open. Regulation 5 AAC 39.670(c)(6), adopted with implementation of crab rationalization, does not allow a vessel to harvest IFQ and non-IFQ crab simultaneously; therefore this proposal would repeal the

regulation allowing simultaneous harvest of red and golden king crab in the Aleutian Islands. Concurrent Aleutian Islands red and golden king crab harvest would be problematic because two of the three red king crab districts fall within the western Aleutian Islands golden king crab area. Allowing red king crab retention during golden king crab fishing would create concern with regard to red king crab harvest location.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F16-164)

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