

PROPOSAL 234 – 5 AAC 77.664. Personal use king crab fishery. Require a personal use fishing permit for the taking of king crab in all areas of Southeast Alaska and reduce the daily bag and possession limit, as follows:

5 AAC 77.664 is amended to read:

(a) **king crab may only be taken under the authority of a permit issued under 5 AAC 77.015; the department will issue only one king crab personal use fishing permit per household per year;** [EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN (B) AND (C) OF THIS SECTION, OR IF THE COMMISSIONER CLOSES THE APPLICABLE PORTION OF THE SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA AREA BECAUSE OF CONSERVATION CONCERNS FOR KING CRAB, IN THE PERSONAL USE TAKING OF KING CRAB,]

(b) [(1)] the daily bag and possession limit is **three** [SIX] male crab per person; if the regionwide harvestable biomass of mature red and blue king crab is below 200,000 pounds, the commissioner may, by emergency order, reduce the bag and possession limit of red and blue king crab;

(c) [(2)] the king crab seasons are as follows:

(1) [(A)] red and blue king crab may be taken only from July 1 through March 31;

(2) [(B)] golden king crab may be taken only from July 1 through June 15;

(d) [(3)] only male king crab seven inches or greater in width of shell may be taken or possessed. [(B) IN THE WATERS DESCRIBED IN 5 AAC 33.200 AS SECTIONS 12-B, 15-B, AND 15-C, IN THE PERSONAL USE TAKING OF KING CRAB, THE DAILY BAG AND POSSESSION LIMITS ARE THREE MALE CRAB PER PERSON, EXCEPT THAT THE COMMISSIONER MAY CLOSE AND IMMEDIATELY REOPEN, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, A PERSONAL USE RED AND BLUE KING CRAB SEASON DURING WHICH THERE IS A REDUCED BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT FOR RED AND BLUE KING CRAB.]

(e) [(c)] In the waters described in 5 AAC 33.200 as Section 11-A, in the personal use taking of king crab, [(1) RED AND BLUE KING CRAB MAY ONLY BE TAKEN UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF A PERMIT ISSUED UNDER 5 AAC 77.015;]

(1) [(2)] the daily bag and possession limit is three male king crab per person;

(2) [(3)] the commissioner may close and immediately reopen, by emergency order, a personal use red and blue king crab season during which one or more of the following conditions applies:

(A) a reduced bag and possession limit;

(B) a seasonal limit for king crab;

(C) a reduced pot and ring net limit.

(f) [(d)] Male king crab less than the minimum legal size and female king crab that have been taken must be immediately returned to the water unharmed.

(g) [(e)] A person may not utilize a live holding facility to accumulate or pool multiple bag limits.

(h) [(f)] Notwithstanding 5 AAC 77.010(i), no more than four pots or 10 ring nets per vessel may be used to take king crab. A pot used to take king crab under this section must have at least two escape rings on opposing vertical or sloping sides of the pot that are not less than six and one-quarter inches inside diameter.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently, there is no harvest reporting requirement for personal use harvest of king crab in Southeast Alaska outside of Section 11-A. Some personal use king crab harvest is reported on the Statewide Harvest Survey, but the survey is not designed to collect this information or be used to generate personal use harvest estimates. Providing reliable estimates of personal use harvest regionwide will improve the department's ability to sustainably manage these stocks.

In Southeast Alaska, the red king crab stock has been rebuilding from a recent period of low-abundance; the abundance of golden king crab has been declining over the past few seasons and is at a historic low. Reducing the overall bag limit will promote additional stock rebuilding.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Board of Fisheries
