

PROPOSAL 66

5 AAC 34.110. Fishing seasons for Registration Area A.

Implement weather-related fishery closure delays for the Southeastern Alaska Area commercial golden king crab fishery, as follows:

(g) An area closure may be delayed if the National Weather Service forecast for the area contains gale force wind warnings of 35 knots and higher on the 4:00 a.m. forecast for the 2 days preceding and the day of an area closure in which case the area closure will be delayed 24 hours. If after the initial delay gale warnings continue the area closure may be delayed an additional 24 hours. An area closure delay may continue until weather improves. Managers shall take into account tidal conditions when selecting final closure day after a weather delay. For the purpose of this subsection, the corresponding National Weather Service Forecast shall be consulted for each area.

(1) Southern Lynn Canal;

(2) Northern Chatham Straits;

(3) Southern Chatham Straits;

(4) Stephens Passage;

(5) Frederick Sound;

(6) Clarence Strait;

(7) Southeast Outside Waters.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Unsafe weather conditions at time of closure of golden king crab areas in Registration Area A.

Currently in regulation there is language to delay the start of the golden king crab fishery for safety reasons due to weather. Yet there is nothing in regulation to delay the closure of areas based on the same criteria.

When asked for a delay of closure of an area because of unsafe conditions I was told that the department was unable to do that after a closure announcement had been made.

Other solution would have been for department to create an emergency order delaying season. While capable of doing this department refused to use this tool. I think putting criteria in regulation takes the burden off of managers shoulders.

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