

Regional Information Report No. 4K22-13

**Fishery Management Plan for the South Peninsula
District Commercial Tanner Crab Fishery, 2023**

by

Cassandra Whiteside

November 2022

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Divisions of Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries



Symbols and Abbreviations

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Weights and measures (metric)		General		Mathematics, statistics	
centimeter	cm	Alaska Administrative Code	AAC	<i>all standard mathematical signs, symbols and abbreviations</i>	
deciliter	dL	all commonly accepted abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.	alternate hypothesis	H_A
gram	g			base of natural logarithm	e
hectare	ha			catch per unit effort	CPUE
kilogram	kg	all commonly accepted professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.	coefficient of variation	CV
kilometer	km			common test statistics	(F, t, χ^2 , etc.)
liter	L	at	@	confidence interval	CI
meter	m	compass directions:		correlation coefficient	
milliliter	mL	east	E	(multiple)	R
millimeter	mm	north	N	correlation coefficient	
		south	S	(simple)	r
Weights and measures (English)		west	W	covariance	cov
cubic feet per second	ft ³ /s	copyright	©	degree (angular)	°
foot	ft	corporate suffixes:		degrees of freedom	df
gallon	gal	Company	Co.	expected value	E
inch	in	Corporation	Corp.	greater than	>
mile	mi	Incorporated	Inc.	greater than or equal to	≥
nautical mile	nmi	Limited	Ltd.	harvest per unit effort	HPUE
ounce	oz	District of Columbia	D.C.	less than	<
pound	lb	et alii (and others)	et al.	less than or equal to	≤
quart	qt	et cetera (and so forth)	etc.	logarithm (natural)	ln
yard	yd	exempli gratia		logarithm (base 10)	log
		(for example)	e.g.	logarithm (specify base)	log ₂ , etc.
Time and temperature		Federal Information Code	FIC	minute (angular)	'
day	d	id est (that is)	i.e.	not significant	NS
degrees Celsius	°C	latitude or longitude	lat or long	null hypothesis	H_0
degrees Fahrenheit	°F	monetary symbols		percent	%
degrees kelvin	K	(U.S.)	\$, ¢	probability	P
hour	h	months (tables and figures): first three letters	Jan, ..., Dec	probability of a type I error (rejection of the null hypothesis when true)	α
minute	min	registered trademark	®	probability of a type II error (acceptance of the null hypothesis when false)	β
second	s	trademark	™	second (angular)	"
		United States (adjective)	U.S.	standard deviation	SD
Physics and chemistry		United States of America (noun)	USA	standard error	SE
all atomic symbols		U.S.C.	United States Code	variance	
alternating current	AC	U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations (e.g., AK, WA)	population sample	Var var
ampere	A				
calorie	cal				
direct current	DC				
hertz	Hz				
horsepower	hp				
hydrogen ion activity (negative log of)	pH				
parts per million	ppm				
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰				
volts	V				
watts	W				

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**FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SOUTH PENINSULA
DISTRICT COMMERCIAL TANNER CRAB FISHERY, 2023**

by

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November 2022

The Regional Information Report Series was established in 1987 and was redefined in 2007 to meet the Division of Commercial Fisheries regional need for publishing and archiving information such as area management plans, budgetary information, staff comments and opinions to Alaska Board of Fisheries proposals, interim or preliminary data and grant agency reports, special meeting or minor workshop results and other regional information not generally reported elsewhere. Reports in this series may contain raw data and preliminary results. Reports in this series receive varying degrees of regional, biometric and editorial review; information in this series may be subsequently finalized and published in a different department reporting series or in the formal literature. Please contact the author or the Division of Commercial Fisheries if in doubt of the level of review or preliminary nature of the data reported. Regional Information Reports are available through the Alaska State Library and on the Internet at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/publications/>.

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ABSTRACT

This document provides an overview of regulations governing the South Peninsula District commercial Tanner crab *Chionoecetes bairdi* fishery including vessel registrations, gear specifications, operation of pot gear, pot storage, landing requirements, fishing hours, and inseason reporting. The Eastern and Western Sections will open to commercial Tanner crab fishing at 12:00 noon January 15, 2023, unless delayed by weather. The total South Peninsula District guideline harvest level (GHL) is 1,100,000 pounds with 525,000 pounds available in the Eastern Section and 575,000 pounds available in the Western Section. The gear limit is 20 pots per vessel. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) will manage the South Peninsula District commercial Tanner crab fishery using inseason catch reports. Section and subsection closures may occur before GHLs are fully harvested based on fishery performance, harvest distribution, or bycatch of nontarget crab. Participants should note that delivery requirements and postclosure pot storage requirements vary depending on the type of closure and the amount of advance notice given.

Key words: Tanner crab, *Chionoecetes bairdi*, South Peninsula District, Area J, regulations, commercial fishery

INTRODUCTION

AREA DESCRIPTION

The South Peninsula District for Tanner crab *Chionoecetes bairdi* includes waters of Registration Area J south of the Alaska Peninsula, west of a line from Kupreanof Point to the easternmost point of Castle Rock, then extending to a point offshore (lat 54°6.07'N, long 157°27.00'W), and east of the longitude of Scotch Cap Light (5 AAC 35.505(b)). The South Peninsula District is divided into two sections, the Eastern Section (all waters east of long 162°W) and the Western Section (all waters west of long 162°W; Figure 1).

HARVEST STRATEGY

Two sets of regulatory abundance and management thresholds must be met for a fishery to open. Mature male abundance thresholds, computed at either 50% or 100% of the long-term average abundance (1988–2021), are established for the Eastern and Western Sections of the South Peninsula District which must be met or exceeded (5 AAC 35.507(c)(1) and (2)). Additionally, abundance must be sufficient to provide for a guideline harvest level (GHL) of at least 200,000 pounds before a section may open (5 AAC 35.507(a)(1)).

In March of 2022, the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) adopted updated Tanner crab harvest strategies for the Kodiak, Chignik, and South Peninsula Districts. The updated harvest strategies incorporate both mature male and mature female abundance when determining maximum legal male exploitation rates. A complete summary of harvest strategy revisions can be found in *Updated Tanner Crab Harvest Strategies for Kodiak, Chignik, and South Peninsula Districts: A Report to the Alaska Board of Fisheries* (Spalinger et al. 2021).

2023 GUIDELINE HARVEST LEVELS

Based on results from the 2022 ADF&G trawl survey, the Eastern and Western Sections met regulatory requirements for a 2023 commercial Tanner crab fishery. The total 2023 South Peninsula District Tanner crab GHL is 1,100,000 pounds; the Eastern Section GHL is 525,000 pounds and the Western Section GHL is 575,000 pounds (Figure 1).

REGULATIONS

OVERVIEW

Commercial Tanner crab regulations begin on page 58 of the current *2022–2023 Statewide King and Tanner Crab Commercial Fishing Regulations* booklet.¹ Specific regulations pertaining to Tanner crab fisheries in Registration Area J begin on page 91. Following is a summary of 2023 Tanner crab fishing regulations in the South Peninsula District.

SEASON OPENING AND FISHING PERIODS

The 2023 commercial Tanner crab season opens by regulation at 12:00 noon January 15, 2023, unless delayed by weather (5 AAC 35.510(c)(2)). The season will be delayed for 24 hours if the National Weather Service (NWS) marine forecast for Castle Cape to Cape Sarichef (PKZ155) issued at 4:00 a.m. January 14 contains a gale warning. If after the initial weather delay, the 4:00 a.m. January 15 NWS marine forecast again contains a gale warning, the season opening will be delayed an additional 24 hours. Season opening delays may continue on a rolling 24-hour basis until 12:00 noon January 25, when the season will open regardless of the marine forecast.

Fishing gear may only be operated for 10 hours each day, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:59 p.m. Baited gear may be left in the water from 6:00 p.m. to 7:59 a.m. (5 AAC 35.510(c)(1)).

Based on ADF&G's assessment of effort, harvest rate, and remaining GHLL, daily fishing periods may be increased if it appears the GHLL will not be fully harvested by the end of the regulatory season (March 31).

PERMITS AND REGISTRATION

Vessel operators must have a 2023 permit card for South Peninsula District Tanner crab (T09M) and a current 2023 commercial vessel license prior to registering with ADF&G. Tanner crab may not be taken in the South Peninsula District by vessels greater than 58 feet in overall length (5 AAC 35.590(b)). Permit cards and vessel licenses can be obtained from the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) in Juneau (Appendix A1).

All vessels must be validly registered with ADF&G prior fishing. The South Peninsula District is a nonexclusive registration district. A registration is validated upon being signed by an ADF&G representative, regardless of fishery participation or landings. The Tanner crab registration year is August 1 to July 31 (5 AAC 35.020(c)).

Registrations will be validated starting 24 hours before the fishery opens (5 AAC 35.506(k)(1)). Vessel tank and gear inspections are not required. The ADF&G office in Kodiak will be open on Friday January 14 from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Registrations may be validated in person or via fax or e-mail beginning at 12:00 noon (Appendix A1). Trident Seafoods and Peter Pan Seafoods are available to facilitate fishery registration by scanning or faxing registrations to ADF&G Kodiak and printing finalized copies for registered vessels. If the fishery is delayed due to weather, the registration validation period will also be delayed. A copy of the vessel registration must remain onboard the vessel while fishing. Registrations are automatically invalidated 24 hours after closure of the fishery.

¹ https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/fishregulations/pdfs/commercial/2022_2023_cf_king_tanner_crab.pdf (accessed 11/21/2022).

Vessel operators must register to fish in either the Eastern or Western Section. A vessel may not be registered for, or fish in, more than one section at a time. Vessel operators may change section registration; however, they must notify ADF&G of their intent to change sections and deliver all crab onboard the vessel. Any gear in the original section must be open and unbaited prior to delivery. Vessel operators may place baited gear in the new section prior to delivery but may not retrieve that gear until all crab from the original section has been delivered.

All tender vessels must be registered with ADF&G prior to tendering. Tender vessels may not have a pot-hauling block or other Tanner crab gear onboard and may not be used to harvest Tanner crab (5 AAC 35.033). Catcher vessels participating in the Tanner crab fishery cannot transport crab for other registered catcher vessels.

GEAR LIMITS AND CONFIGURATION

Gear limits in the South Peninsula District are determined by the size of the GHJ. The 2023 GHJ is less than 2,000,000 pounds; therefore, the regulatory gear limit in the South Peninsula District is 20 pots per vessel (5 AAC 35.525(c)(3)).

Commercial Tanner crab pots may not be more than 10 feet long by 10 feet wide by 42 inches high. Rigid tunnel eye openings must be less than five inches high and have a perimeter greater than 36 inches (5 AAC 35.050(2) and (3)). Ring nets are not legal gear in the South Peninsula District for commercial harvest of Tanner crab (5 AAC 35.525(a)).

Escape mesh or rings are required on all Tanner crab pots. Each pot must contain at least one third of one vertical surface of the pot composed of not less than 6 ¾ inch stretched mesh webbing or have at least four circular escape rings which have an inside diameter of at least five inches (5 AAC 35.525(b)(1)(A)). Escape rings must be installed on the vertical plane of the pot to allow for escapement of undersized crab. Escape rings are not required to be placed within a certain distance from the bottom of the pot; however, ADF&G recommends placing rings within one mesh from the bottom of the pot to optimize escapement of sublegal and female crab.

All pots must also contain a biodegradable escape mechanism consisting of an opening 18 inches or greater in length placed parallel to and within six inches of the bottom of the pot, and laced, sewn, or secured together by a single length of untreated, 100 percent cotton twine no larger than 30 thread and knotted at each end only (5 AAC 39.145).

BUOY TAGS AND MARKING REQUIREMENTS

The main or trailer buoy on each pot must display one fishery-specific identification tag (buoy tag) issued by ADF&G for the current year (5 AAC 35.526(a)). Buoy tags can be purchased at a cost of \$1.50 per tag. Tags will be available at Trident Seafoods and Peter Pan Seafoods. Credit card payments can be completed by phone or fax with ADF&G staff, or checks can be mailed to the Kodiak ADF&G office (Appendix A1). Upon request, buoy tags may be mailed to individuals through the U.S. Postal Service. A valid 2023 Tanner crab CFEC permit card (T09M) is required to receive tags.

Should buoy tags be lost during the fishery, replacement tags may be obtained by contacting ADF&G in Kodiak (Appendix A1). The vessel owner, operator, or agent must provide the unique number(s) of each lost tag and complete an affidavit form describing how the tags were lost (5 AAC 35.526(b)). Pots with lost tags may be left on the fishing grounds but must be

secured fully open with all bait and bait containers removed until replacement tags are affixed to the buoy.

At least one buoy must be marked with the ADF&G vessel number and may not be marked with additional numbers (5 AAC 35.051); however, symbols and letters are acceptable on this buoy. Trailer or other buoys may be marked with any desired numbers, symbols, or letters to mark ownership or string sequence.

OPERATION OF OTHER POT GEAR AND POT STORAGE

A person or vessel that operates pot gear (e.g., commercial Pacific cod or subsistence pots) within the South Peninsula District at any time during the 14 days immediately prior to the start of the 2023 commercial Tanner crab fishery may not participate in the 2023 commercial Tanner crab fishery (5 AAC 35.053(a)(1)). While the Tanner crab fishery is open, registered vessels may not operate groundfish pots, including pots to catch Pacific cod for bait (5 AAC 35.053(b)). Pacific cod caught in Tanner crab pots cannot be sold but may be retained for bait; Pacific cod retained for bait must be recorded on Tanner crab fish tickets.

Prior to the season opening, up to 20 pots may be stored in waters 25 fathoms or less in the South Peninsula District with all bait and bait containers removed; rectangular pots must have doors secured fully open, and cone and pyramid pots must have doors not secured closed (5 AAC 35.052(a)). Legal Tanner crab pots with buoy tags attached may be placed into shallow water storage during the 14 days prior to the fishery start. However, once placed into storage, vessel operators may not retrieve those pots prior to the start of the fishery, including the 24-hour period between registration validation and the fishery opening (5 AAC 35.053(a)(1)). Pots may be stored at depth for 72 hours after the Tanner crab season closure in any section of the South Peninsula District (5 AAC 35.052(a)(2)(A)).

Vessels may not have more than 20 pots onboard or in wet storage in the South Peninsula District while the vessel is validly registered for Tanner crab.

TANNER CRAB SIZE LIMIT

The legal minimum retainable size of Tanner crab in South Peninsula District is 5.5 inches carapace width (5 AAC 35.060). Only legal male Tanner crab may be retained; all other crabs incidentally captured must be immediately returned to the water unharmed (5 AAC 35.065). King crab may not be retained for subsistence or personal use during the commercial Tanner crab fishery (5 AAC 02.420; 5 AAC 35.053(b)).

LANDING REQUIREMENTS

Vessel operators are required to deliver all catch within 24 hours of the closure (5 AAC 35.031(c)). Vessels delayed due to weather or mechanical issues will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Vessel operators delivering Tanner crab to ports outside the South Peninsula District are required to contact the ADF&G office in Kodiak prior to leaving the district (5 AAC 35.031(b)). At the time of the closure, vessels delivering outside the district must provide the estimated number of crab onboard the vessel, delivery port, processing facility, and estimated time of arrival. All catcher-seller vessels must have a valid catcher-seller permit for the current year to sell live

Tanner crab and must submit a fish ticket to the ADF&G Kodiak office within seven days of landing (5 AAC 39.130(c)).

After the closure of the Tanner crab season, vessels intending to participate in the Pacific cod pot gear fishery must deliver all crab and either remove all Tanner crab pots from the water or place pots into shallow-water storage before targeting Pacific cod.

INSEASON CATCH REPORTING AND MANAGEMENT

ADF&G will manage the fishery using inseason catch reports provided by vessel operators. Catch reports will be taken using satellite dispatch (7894), phone (907-486-1840), text/InReach/WhatsApp (907-512-5841), or email (nathaniel.nichols@alaska.gov). Vessel operators will be issued a reporting worksheet during registration (Appendix B1). ADF&G will initially call vessels for reports starting at 6:00 p.m. daily, but the reporting schedule may change if effort declines.

Completion of reporting worksheets is strongly encouraged (Appendix B1). Report vessel name, area fished, number of pots lifted, and number of crab retained, and fill in each day's catch individually. For each date fished, draw the location of the pot string(s) on the map provided. To ensure confidentiality, completed reports can be returned to ADF&G dockside staff or the ADF&G Kodiak office upon each delivery; reports may also be emailed (nathaniel.nichols@alaska.gov) or texted (907-512-5841). Vessel operators who do not turn in a reporting worksheet for each delivery may be contacted by dockside staff to complete a confidential interview.

The fishery will be closely monitored, and district or section closures may occur before GHLLs are fully harvested based on fishery performance (measured by catch of legal crab per pot), harvest distribution, or bycatch of nontarget crab. ADF&G will make every effort to communicate potential closures with as much notice as possible to allow sufficient time for vessels to configure gear for storage before a closure; however, the potential exists for short advance notice closures.

Closure announcements will be communicated to the fleet by dispatch, distributed via the ADF&G advisory announcement e-mail subscription service (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>), and relayed through participating processors.

SUMMARY OF CLOSURE SCENARIOS

Delivery requirements and pot storage requirements vary depending on the type of closure (entire or partial section) and the amount of advance notice given for the closure. Following is a summary of closure scenarios, pot storage options, delivery requirements, and re-registration requirements contained in 5 AAC 35.030, 5 AAC 35.031, 5 AAC 35.052, 5 AAC 35.527, and 5 AAC 35.556.

Closure of the entire section with six or more hours advance notice

- All pots must be open and unbaited at the time of the closure.
- Vessel operators are required to deliver all catch within 24 hours of the closure.

- Open and unbaited pots may be stored at any depth up to seven days after the section closure. After 72 hours, all gear remaining in the closed section must be removed from the water or placed in shallow water storage (25 fathoms or less).
- After a section closure, vessel operators may contact ADF&G from the fishing grounds and register for a different open section. Once registered, vessel operators may place baited gear in the open section prior to delivery, but that gear may not be retrieved until all crab from the initial section has been delivered. Vessel operators may only operate gear during the daily fishing period (8:00 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.) even when retrieving unbaited gear after the closure or placing baited pots in the other open section prior to delivery.

Closure of the entire section with less than six hours advance notice

- Vessel operators are required to proceed directly to port at the time of the closure and deliver catch within 24 hours.
- After the closure, vessel operators may not place gear in storage or retrieve pots from storage until all catch has been delivered.
- Vessel operators are required to return to the fishing grounds within 72 hours after delivery to rail dump all crab from any baited gear left on the grounds.
- If baited gear remains in the closed section after the initial delivery, a tank inspection will be required before vessels can register and resume fishing in a different open section.
- Vessel operators may register for a different open section only after completing delivery and legally storing gear in the closure area.

Partial closure of the section with six or more hours advance notice

This situation occurs when bays or other specific areas close prior to closure of the entire section.

- All pot gear in the closure area must be open and unbaited at the time of the closure.
- Vessel operators may store open and unbaited pots in waters deeper than 25 fathoms for seven days in the closure area.
- Vessel operators may place baited gear in other areas of the section that remain open to fishing.
- Within the partial closure area, vessel operators may only operate gear during the daily fishing period (8:00 a.m. to 5:59 p.m.), even when retrieving unbaited gear after the closure.

Partial closure of the section with less than six hours advance notice

This scenario is unlikely. Should this type of closure occur, landing, pot storage, and registration requirements will be defined and communicated to the fleet by dispatch and distributed by advisory announcement at the time of the closure announcement.

REFERENCES CITED

Spalinger, K., N. Nichols, and M. Knutson. 2021. Updated Tanner crab harvest strategies for Kodiak, Chignik, and South Peninsula Districts: A report to the Alaska Board of Fisheries. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries, Regional Information Report 4K21-13, Kodiak.

FIGURES

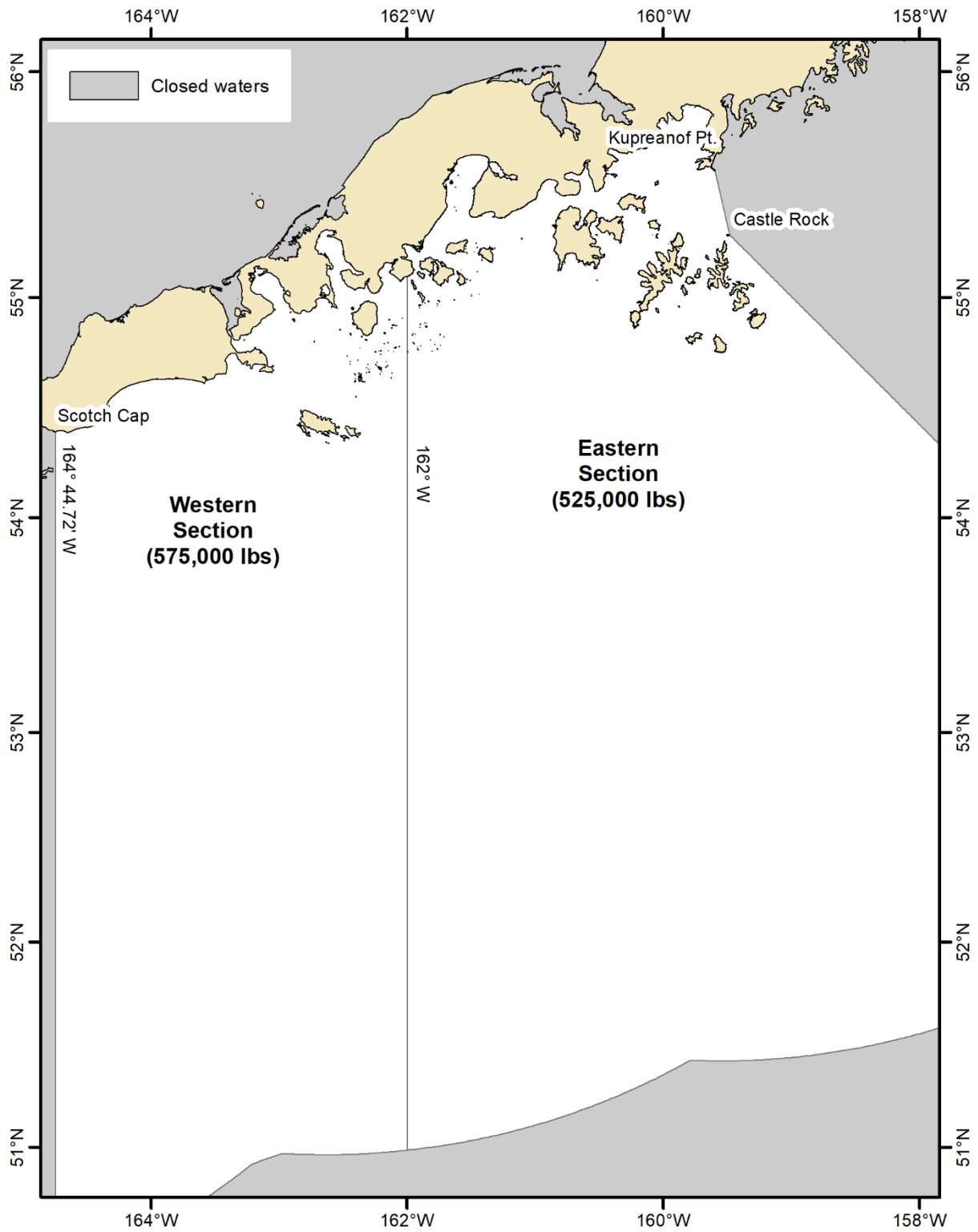


Figure 1.—District and section boundaries and guideline harvest levels (GHLs) for the South Peninsula District commercial Tanner crab fishery, 2023.

**APPENDIX A: CONTACT PERSONS, AGENCIES,
AND PHONE NUMBERS**

Appendix A1.–List of contacts by agency and location.

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

website: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingCommercialByArea.southwest>

Kodiak Office

Mailing address: 351 Research Court
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Physical address: 351 Research Court
2nd floor, Kodiak, Alaska

Phone: (907) 486-1840
Satellite Dispatch: 0715 or 7894
Text/InReach/WhatsApp: (907) 512-5841
Dockside cell: (907) 539-5954
Fax: (907) 486-1824

Nat Nichols Kodiak, Chignik, Alaska Peninsula Area Shellfish/Groundfish Manager

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Cassie Whiteside Kodiak, Chignik, Alaska Peninsula Assistant Area Shellfish/Groundfish Manager

cassandra.whiteside@alaska.gov

Kally Spalinger Kodiak, Chignik, Alaska Peninsula Shellfish/Groundfish Biologist

kally.spalinger@alaska.gov

Mark Stichert Westward Region Shellfish/Groundfish Management Coordinator

mark.stichert@alaska.gov

DIVISION OF ALASKA WILDLIFE TROOPERS

website: <http://www.dps.state.ak.us/AWT/>

Kodiak Office

Mailing address: 2921 A Mill Bay Road
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

Physical address: 2921 A Mill Bay Road
Kodiak, Alaska

Phone: (907) 486-4762
Fax: (907) 486-5480

Joshua Boyle Sergeant

joshua.boyle@alaska.gov

COMMERCIAL FISHERIES ENTRY COMMISSION

website: <http://www.cfec.state.ak.us/>

Juneau Office

Mailing address: P.O. Box 110302
Juneau, Alaska 99811-0302

Physical address: 8800 Glacier Highway #109
Juneau, Alaska

Phone: (907) 789-6150
Fax: (907) 789-6170

APPENDIX B: REPORTING WORKSHEET



2023 South Peninsula District Tanner Crab Fishery
Inseason Reporting Worksheet



Vessel Name	Item 1 Area fished (mark map on back)	Item 2 Number of pots lifted	Item 3 Number of crab retained
Date			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			

Instructions:

Report **DAILY** between 6:00 and 8:00 PM to ADF&G Kodiak by any of the following methods:

- Matrix dispatch **7894**
- Phone to ADF&G office (907) 486-1840
- Text/InReach/WhatsApp to (907) 512-5841
- E-mail to nathaniel.nichols@alaska.gov

Report **area fished, number of pots lifted, and number of crab retained** separately for each day and area fished (see map on back).

Do not combine daily reports. If one or more reporting calls are missed, communicate each day's catch individually during the next reporting call.

**Return this worksheet and map with fishing locations to ADF&G dockside sampler or shellfish management office.*

(Do not leave form at processor office or drop box.)

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