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Advisory Announcement

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Bering Sea Snow Crab Season Opens October 15 **Total Allowable Catch Announced**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) have completed stock assessment analysis for Bering Sea snow crab. The 2020/21 Bering Sea snow crab fishery will open in Bering Sea District waters west of 165° W longitude at 12:00 noon October 15, 2020 and remain open through 11:59 pm, May 15, 2021 in the Eastern Subdistrict (east of 173° W longitude) and through 11:59 pm, May 31, 2021 in the Western Subdistrict (west of 173° W longitude).

The 2020/21 Bering Sea District snow crab fishery total allowable catch (TAC) is 45.0 million pounds and is apportioned as follows:

Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ)	40,500,000 pounds
Community Development Quota (CDQ)	4,500,000 pounds
Total	45,000,000 pounds

During the directed western Bering Sea Tanner crab fishery west of 166° W long, snow crab IFQ or CDQ may be retained up to thirty-five percent (35%) of the weight of Tanner crab onboard a vessel. Due to the closure of 2019/20 Eastern Bering Sea Tanner crab fishery east of 166° W long, retention of Tanner crab (*C. bairdi*) during the Bering Sea snow crab (*C. opilio*) fishery between 166° W long and 165° W long is prohibited. Fishermen may not concurrently register for multiple Bering Sea crab fisheries.

To protect the Pribilof blue king crab stock, the WBT fishery will not open in waters enclosed by connecting the following coordinates: 58° N, 171° W; 58° N, 168° W; 57° N, 168° W; 56° 30' N, 169° W; 56° 30' N, 170° W; 57° N, 171° W; 58° N, 171° W. The associated closed ADF&G statistical areas are: 685730, 695730, 705730, 705701, 705703, 695701, 695700, 685700, 695631, 695632, the northeast half of 705630, and the northwest half of 685630. A map of the closed area will be provided at the time of registration.

A valid United States Coast Guard (USCG) Commercial Fisheries Vessel Safety Decal is required before a vessel registration may be issued. Vessels must also have an activated vessel monitoring system approved by NMFS. The operator of a vessel participating in IFQ or CDQ crab fisheries must notify the USCG at least 24 hours prior to departing port when carrying crab pot gear. USCG can be contacted at: (907) 581-3466 or (907) 359-1575 (after hours).

At the time of vessel registration, all pots onboard the vessel and in wet storage must comply current Bering Sea snow crab fishing regulations. There is no crab pot limit or buoy tag requirement for the Bering Sea snow crab

fishery. Fishermen may register up to 20 groundfish pots. Fishermen are reminded to report all Pacific cod retained for bait on fish tickets at time of landing.

A fisherman may transport crab pot gear to the fishing grounds for another fisherman. The registered fisherman of the crab pot gear has seven days to be active in the registration area where the gear is deployed. Fishermen may register for gear operation cooperatives, and a fisherman may make a one-time transfer of all pot gear to one other fisherman at the completion of fishing operations.

Bering Sea–Aleutian Islands crab fishery registrations will be completed by email through the Dutch Harbor ADF&G office beginning Monday, October 5th. Vessel inspections (tank checks) will not be conducted for 2020/21 crab fisheries. Please call 907-581-1239 or email ethan.nichols@alaska.gov to register and/or check out of a crab fishery.

An individual must possess a current Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) Bering Sea Tanner crab interim use permit card (T91Q or T09Q) prior to registration. Fishermen may participate concurrently in IFQ and CDQ fisheries, but a separate registration and CFEC permit card are required for each fishery and CDQ group.

Fishermen must notify ADF&G within 72 hours of completing fishing operations in the registration area or when departing the registration area with gear in long-term storage or transferred to another vessel. Unbaited gear with doors open may be stored for up to 14 days outside of designated storage areas after fishing is completed. Pots must be removed from the water or placed in long-term storage if left unattended in a registration area for more than 14 days. A fisherman's registration will be invalidated after 14 days of inactivity in a registration area.

For questions regarding issuance of quota share and IFQ/IPQ, contact NOAA Fisheries RAM Division at 1-800-304-4846 (option #2). For questions regarding federal Crab Rationalization Program regulations, contact NOAA Fisheries Sustainable Fisheries Division at (907) 586-7228 or the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement in Kodiak at (907) 486-3298 or Dutch Harbor at (907) 581-2061.

For further information contact ADF&G Dutch Harbor at (907) 581-1239, or ADF&G Kodiak at (907) 486-1840.

COVID-19

Under Alaska's Health Mandates 10, 17, and 18, commercial fishing is an Essential Business and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>.

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