



Advisory Announcement
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**2022/2023 SOUTHEAST ALASKA COMMERCIAL RED AND BLUE KING CRAB
FISHERY CLOSURE**

The Southeast Alaska (Registration Area A) commercial red king crab (RKC) and blue king crab fishery will be closed for the 2022/2023 season. The 2022 stock assessment survey estimated 95,687 pounds of legal male RKC available for harvest, less than the minimum threshold of 200,000 pounds required to open the commercial fishery [5 AAC 34.113]. The *Southeast Alaska Red King Crab Management Plan* [5 AAC 34.113] directs the department to manage the RKC fishery in accordance with the Alaska Board of Fisheries' "Policy on King and Tanner Crab Resource Management".

The Southeast RKC stock assessment regional biomass estimates for the 2022/2023 season are 1.3 million lb of legal crab and 1.8 million lb of mature crab with only four of the seven survey areas (Lynn Sisters, Juneau, Gambier Bay, and Peril Strait) having increases in either legal or mature biomass. The legal biomass decreased 4.6% and mature biomass increased 4.7% from the previous year. Regional biomass is estimated from the seven surveyed areas and extrapolated to the entire region.

Survey and Analysis

Areas surveyed include Pybus Bay, Gambier Bay, Seymour Canal, Peril Strait, the Juneau area, Lynn Sisters, and Excursion Inlet. The estimate of biomass was determined through a catch-survey analysis (CSA) for all surveyed areas. The CSA incorporates data from the department's annual stock assessment pot survey (1979–2022), commercial harvest (1979–2017), and biological data collected during port sampling of commercial landings. Harvest data from 1974–1984 indicate that an average of 52.8% has been taken from surveyed areas and 47.2% from non-surveyed areas. This surveyed/non-surveyed area ratio was used to calculate legal and mature biomass estimates for the non-surveyed areas.

Equilibrium harvest rates were calculated for each surveyed area based on the relationship between historical harvest rates and their associated change in mature male biomass. The stock health status and biomass level, when compared to baseline biomass values for each area, were used to modify proposed harvest rates or determine area closures. Appropriate harvest rates were then applied to area-specific stock biomass estimates to calculate the amount available for harvest. Stock health ratings are based on catch per unit effort (CPUE) of all size/sex classes compared to long-term (15-year) and short-term (4-year) averages.

Four of the seven survey areas had stock health ratings of poor or below average. The CPUE of juvenile and female sizes classes has improved in four of the seven survey areas (Pybus Bay, Gambier Bay, Juneau, and Lynn Sisters) to be above the average levels, suggesting some improvement in these components. Overall, recruitment, in the form of prerecruit CPUE, is significantly below average levels for five of the seven surveys areas. Only Lynn Sisters and Juneau are at or significantly above the long-term average for prerecruit CPUE, suggesting that regionwide improvements to mature and legal male biomass are still underway. Information regarding survey operations and stock assessment methodologies used to assess red king crab stock health in Southeast is available online at:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/ROP.CF.1J.2019.02.pdf>.

Additional information may be found in regulation 5 AAC 34.113. *Southeast Alaska Red King Crab Management Plan* on page 17 of the 2020–2021 Statewide King and Tanner Crab Commercial Fishing Regulations booklet available in area offices, or online at:

https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/fishregulations/pdfs/commercial/2020_2021_cf_king_tanner_crab.pdf

The Emergency Order corresponding with this announcement is EO 1C2122.

Advisory announcement web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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