



**Alaska Bycatch Review Task Force (ABRT)  
Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska  
crab committee  
Friday, June 17, 2022 at 9:00 AM (AST)**

**Committee members:** Linda Kozak (Chair), Erik Velsko, Stephanie Madsen, Kevin Delaney

*The crab committee intends to first focus on Gulf of Alaska Tanner crab bycatch and later move to Bristol Bay red king crab and Bering Sea Tanner and snow crab bycatch.*

1. Call to order: Alaska Bycatch Review Task Force (ABRT) Bering Sea and Gulf of Alaska crab committee meeting called to order at 9:05 AM by Chair Linda Kozak
2. Roll call: introduction of committee and ABRT members
  - a. Committee Members Present: Linda Kozak (Chair), Stephanie Madsen, Kevin Delaney
  - b. ABRT members: John Jensen, Tommy Sheridan
3. Approve agenda: modified agenda June 17, 2022, to postpone Industry Priorities and Recommendations presentations from the trawl and pot cod fisheries groups and allow more focus on directed crab fisheries presentation today. Motion to approve amended agenda by Stephanie Madsen and seconded by Kevin Delaney. Motion carried.
4. Approve minutes: May 31, 2022 Motion to approve by Stephanie Madsen and seconded by Kevin Delaney. Motion carried.
5. Old business:
  - a. Review Gulf of Alaska Tanner Crab reports and information
  - b. Discussion regarding decision points for policy recommendations
    - i. Research priorities
    - ii. Bycatch management measures
  - c. Feedback from committee: There was discussion about developing a succinct problem statement to guide the committee discussion and recommendations. Committee members and the public were reminded to review the Administrative Order.
6. New business: Bering Sea Crab Information (State of Alaska – Ben Daly & Mark Stichert)
  - i. Overview of directed Bering Sea crab fisheries and assessment process
  - ii. Information on assumed discard mortality rates for crab and groundfish fisheriesc.)
  - iii. Review State of Alaska onboard shellfish observer program
  - iv. Research priorities for BSAI crab bycatch management

Ben Daly and Mark Stichert (ADF&G) provided a broad overview of the natural history, distribution, stock status and forecasts, historical assessment data and stock trends, assessment techniques, observer program, and current state management of Bering Sea/Aleutian Island (BSAI) crab. Primary focus on three species: red king crab, tanner crab, and snow crab.

Following each presentation, the chair provided opportunity for Task Force members and the public to ask clarifying questions. Topics addressed were related to biological questions and the state shellfish observer program, as well as assumed discard mortality rates for the directed and groundfish fisheries.

7. Industry Priorities and Recommendations

- a. Directed crab fisheries (Presented by Cory Lescher – Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers)

Corey Lescher gave a presentation on the directed crab fisheries and provided recommendations for future research and management.

Summary of recommendations:

- a. Protect areas of high crab abundance/density
- b. Protect female broodstock
- c. Protect molting and mating crab
- d. Remove PSC limit floor
- e. Manage PSC across entire stocks range
- f. Include unobserved mortality estimates towards PSC
- g. Fixed gear modifications to minimize bycatch
- h. Encourage voluntary measures by all sectors to minimize crab bycatch
- i. Goal is to keep all sectors fishing

Clarifying questions were asked by committee members regarding directed fishery efforts to reduce bycatch and associated mortality, as well as avoidance practices for core female and sublegal crab areas.

Chair Kozak requested a brief summary be provided to the committee to more clearly separate out research and management priorities. A short discussion was held regarding leveraging state resources for cooperative research.

- 8. Public comment: three-minute (3) limit to individual comments
  - a. No Comments from the public

9. Task Force comments

Committee members thanked the department for the very thorough and detailed presentation and upcoming Task Force and committee meeting schedules were announced.

Next Meeting Date: July 26, 2022 at 9 AM

- 10. Adjournment: 12:18 PM, June 17, 2022.