

PROPOSAL 179

5 AAC 34.612. Harvest levels for golden king crab in Registration Area O.

Adopt a new Aleutian Islands golden king crab harvest strategy, as follows:

Detailed description and analytical review of draft harvest strategy scenarios will be provided by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game prior to the March 2019 Statewide Finfish and Supplemental Issues meeting of the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current Aleutian Islands golden king crab harvest strategy uses a fixed Total Allowable Catch (TAC) that may be modified only to ensure for adequate protection of the stock. An Aleutian Islands golden king crab stock assessment model has been in development since the mid-2000s. After substantial review, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council’s Crab Plan Team and Scientific and Statistical Committee recently adopted an Aleutian Islands golden king crab stock assessment model that provides annual estimates of crab biomass and a better understanding of stock status and this model is now used to establish Overfishing Levels and Allowable Biological Catch. Once the model was adopted, department staff started development of a new harvest strategy that uses model estimates to establish annual harvest limits. Adopting a harvest strategy that uses annual assessment results will reduce uncertainty in the TAC setting process, improve yield for fishery participants, and provide for stock conservation.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (formerly ACR #3)

PROPOSAL 180

5 AAC 34.6XX. Registration Area O red king crab management plan, and 5 AAC 35.5XX. Registration Area O *C. bairdi* Tanner crab management plan.

Establish commercial state-waters red king crab and Tanner crab fisheries in the Aleutian Islands, as follows:

Management measures include:

Establish a 3-S (size, sex, and season) management framework.

Create new management districts for king and Tanner crab west of 170° W. longitude.

Limit participation to vessels 60 feet overall length or less.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? State-waters king and Tanner crab fisheries that promote small boat fishermen would benefit harvesters, processors, and communities in the Aleutian Islands.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Board of Fisheries

(BGP)

PROPOSAL 181

5 AAC 21.310. Fishing Seasons.

Exempt EO hours used in the NKB 600-foot fishery from weekly EO hourly restrictions, making use of the NKB area consistent with the Kasilof Section 600-foot fishery and the KRSHA, as follows:

5 AAC 21.310(b)(2)(C)(ii) Fishing Seasons.

...

(ii) Kenai and East Forelands Sections: from July 8 through August 15, unless closed earlier by emergency order under (iii) of this subparagraph; from August 11 through August 15, the fishery is open for regular periods only; on or after July 8, when the Kasilof Section is open to commercial fishing with set gillnets and the Kenai and East Forelands Sections are closed to commercial fishing with set gillnets, commercial fishing with set gillnets may be allowed within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark in that portion of the Kenai Section north of the latitude of the Blanchard Line at 60° 27.10' N. lat., and south of the latitude of the ADF&G regulatory marker located south of the Kenai River mouth at 60° 30.49' N. lat. **and is not subject to the time limitations in 5 AAC 21.359(e)(3) and 5 AAC 21.360;**

...

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal seeks to exempt hours fished with the set gillnet fishery in the North Kalifornsky Beach (NKB) statistical area (244-32) within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark from weekly emergency order (EO) hour restrictive provisions found in the Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 21.359) or in the Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 21.360).

The provision which allows the set gillnet fishery in the NKB statistical area to be open within 600-feet of the mean high tide mark was first adopted at the 2017 Upper Cook Inlet board meeting. The intent of this provision was to harvest Kasilof River sockeye salmon, which could result in less fishing time needed in the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area (KRSHA). At this same meeting, the board modified the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan 5 AAC 21.365(c)(3), by stating if the Kasilof Section set gillnet fishery was restricted to fishing within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark, the hours used in this fishery were not subject to the time limitations in 5 AAC 21.359(e)(3) and 5 AAC 21.360. This is the same exemption that is applied to hours fished in the KRSHA. However, during committee discussions, board deliberations, and in submitted RCs, there was no mention of including the recently adopted NKB 600-foot fishery in any hourly exemptions. Therefore, it is unclear whether this was board intent or if it was an oversight.

If fishing hours used in the NKB 600-foot fishery are not exempt from weekly EO hour restrictions, the department will be less likely to use this area because the hours used would count toward the entire Upper Subdistrict weekly EO hour restrictions.

PROPOSED BY: Gary Hollier (formerly ACR #7)

Proposal 182

5 AAC 06.368. Nushagak River Coho Salmon Management Plan.

Modify the Nushagak River Coho Salmon Management Plan to provide additional fishing opportunity when the department projects the sustainable escapement goal range of 60,000–120,000 coho salmon will be achieved, as follows:

5 AAC 06.368 is amended to read:

5 AAC 06.368 Nushagak River Coho Salmon Management Plan. (a) The purpose of this management plan is to provide guidelines to ensure an adequate spawning escapement of coho salmon into the Nushagak River system. It is the intent of the Board of Fisheries (board) that Nushagak coho salmon be harvested by the fisheries that have historically harvested them. The plan in this section provides management guidelines to the department in an effort to preclude allocation conflicts between various users of this resource. The department shall manage coho salmon stocks in a conservative manner consistent with sustained yield principles and the subsistence priority.

(b) The department shall manage the commercial fishery in the Nushagak District to achieve an inriver run goal of XXXX [70,000 - 130,000] coho salmon present in the Nushagak River upstream from the department sonar counter located near the village of Portage Creek by August 25. The inriver goal provides for

(1) the department's sustainable escapement goal of 60,000 - 120,000 coho salmon upstream from the sonar counter by August 25;

(2) a reasonable opportunity for subsistence harvest of coho salmon; and

(3) a daily bag and possession limit of five coho salmon, and a guideline harvest level of 2,000 fish in the sport fishery; the sport fishery guideline harvest level of 2,000 fish does not apply if the total inriver coho salmon return is projected to be greater than 120,000 fish by August 25; the department shall manage the sport fishery to ensure that the sustainable escapement goal of 60,000 - 120,000 coho salmon is achieved.

(c) If the total inriver coho salmon return in the Nushagak River is projected by the department to be less than XXXX [120,000] but at least XXXX [70,000] fish by August 25, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the directed coho salmon commercial fishery in the Nushagak District by XXXX [AUGUST 1]; and

(1) repealed 4/16/2016;

(2) the commissioner may restrict, by emergency order, the coho salmon sport fishery in the Nushagak River drainage upstream from the department sonar counter located near the village of Portage Creek so that the harvest does not exceed 2,000 coho salmon by one or more of the following:

(A) reduce the bag and possession limit;

- (B) prohibit the use of bait;
- (C) restrict fishing times and areas;
- (D) restrict terminal tackle to single-hook artificial lures; and
- (E) allow catch-and-release fishing only;

(3) it is the intent of the board that the lower the projected inriver coho salmon return is, the more restrictive that management measures will be in the sport and commercial fisheries under this section.

(d) If the total inriver coho salmon return in the Nushagak River is projected by the department to be less than XXXX [70,000] fish and the number of spawners is projected to be more than XXXX [60,000] fish on August 25, the commissioner shall

(1) close, by emergency order, the directed commercial fishery no later than XXXX [AUGUST 1];

(2) close, by emergency order, the coho salmon sport fishery in the Nushagak River drainage; and

(3) restrict the coho salmon subsistence fishery in the Nushagak River drainage by establishing periods by emergency order, during which

(A) coho salmon may be taken only from

- (i) 9:00 a.m. Monday to 9:00 a.m. Tuesday;
- (ii) 9:00 a.m. Wednesday to 9:00 a.m. Thursday; and
- (iii) 9:00 a.m. Friday to 9:00 a.m. Saturday; and

(B) set gillnets may not be more than 10 fathoms in length.

(e) If the number of coho salmon spawners in the Nushagak River is projected by the department to be less than 60,000 fish by August 25, the department shall close the subsistence, commercial, and sport fisheries.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? During the 2015 Bristol Bay board meeting, management triggers in the *Nushagak River Coho Salmon Management Plan* were modified to ranges based on the sustainable escapement goal of 60,000–120,000 coho salmon. The plan now restricts fishing opportunity under all scenarios, unless the department projects on August 1, that the coho salmon escapement will be above 120,000 fish on August 25. Reexamining the inseason management projection date of August 1 and inseason management

triggers may provide additional coho salmon fishing opportunity for Nushagak River subsistence, sport, and commercial fishermen.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Board of Fisheries

(BGP)
