

RKC Management Plan Draft Proposal:

5 AAC 34.113. Southeast Alaska Red King Crab Management Plan; 5 AAC 34.125. Lawful gear for Registration Area A; 5 AAC 77.664 Personal Use King Crab Fishery; Substitute language to implement a biological based harvest strategy for the commercial red and blue king crab fishery and the bag and possession limit maximum for the personal use fishery.

5 AAC 34.113. Southeast Alaska Red King Crab Management Plan. is repealed and readopted to read:

5 AAC 34.113. Southeast Alaska Red and Blue King Crab Harvest Strategy.

(a) The commissioner may by, emergency order, open the red and blue king crab fishery only if the department's preseason biomass estimate of legal male red and blue king crab equals at least 50 percent of the average biomass estimate of legal males.

(b) If the commercial red and blue king crab fishery is open under (a) of this section, and the preseason biomass estimate of legal males is:

(1) at least 50 percent but less than 100 percent of the average biomass estimate of legal males, the biomass of legal males available for harvest will be no more than $0.1 \times \text{LMB} \times (\text{LMB}/\text{LMB}_{\text{AVG}})$, where "LMB" is equal to the current year preseason biomass estimate of legal males, and " LMB_{AVG} " is equal to the average biomass estimate of legal males;

(2) equal to or greater than the LMB_{AVG} , the biomass of legal males available for harvest will be no more than 10 percent of the preseason estimate of LMB.

(c) In implementing this harvest strategy, the department shall consider the reliability of biomass estimates of red and blue king crab, the manageability of the fishery, and other factors the department determines important to manage consistent with sustained yield principles, and shall use the best scientific information available and consider all sources of uncertainty as necessary to avoid overfishing.

(d) In Registration Area A, the holder of a CFEC permit for red and blue king crab may not retain more king crab in the directed fishery than the annual amount of king crab Individual catch limits that is specified by the department. The department shall determine the annual amount of king crab Individual catch limits by dividing the annual total allowable catch by the number of CFEC permits eligible to be fished in the fishery. The department shall use the best available information, including harvest rate and biological data, to set the total allowable catch.

(e) If a permit holder's harvest exceeds the permit holder's Individual catch limits established under (d) of this section all king crab on board the vessel must be weighed and reported. Any commercial and personal use harvest that exceeds the permit holder's equal quota share will be reported as an overage on an ADF&G fish ticket and surrendered to the state. All proceeds from the sale of excess king crab shall be surrendered to the state. Based on harvest data, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close a fishing season.

(f) Except as provided in (a) – (e) of this section, when the biomass of legal males available for harvest is equal to or greater than 200,000 pounds a competitive fishery may open.

(g) If multiple CFEC permit holders are registered to fish from a vessel the maximum number of king crab pots that may be operated may not be more than as described in 5 AAC 34.125(b)(1).

(h) For the purposes of this section,

(1) “preseason biomass estimate” means the sum of surveyed and non surveyed biomass estimates of legal male red and blue king crab present at the time of the preseason survey as estimated directly by the catch survey analysis method from annual pot survey data;

(2) “legal males” means all male red and blue king crab at least 7 inches or greater in width of shell.

5 AAC 34.125 (b)(1)(A) is amended to read:

5 AAC 34.125. Lawful gear for Registration Area A.

(b) The following king crab pot limits are in effect in Registration Area A:

(1) during the commercial red king crab season, the maximum number of king crab pots that may be operated from a vessel registered to fish for king crab is as follows:

(A) no more than 20 king crab pots when the guideline harvest level **is less than** 399,999 pounds;

5 AAC 34.126 (b) is amended to read:

5 AAC 34.126. King crab pot marking requirements for Registration Area A.

(b) If multiple CFEC permit holders are registered to fish from a vessel simultaneously for the **red and blue king crab fishery or** for the golden king crab and Tanner crab fisheries, the tags are issued to the vessel for the duration of the fishing seasons.

5 AAC 77.664 is amended to read:

5 AAC 77.664 Personal use king crab fishery.

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(b) Except as specified (e) of this section, the daily bag and possession limit is three male crab per person; if the **preseason biomass estimate of legal male** [REGIONWIDE HARVESTABLE BIOMASS OF MATURE] red and blue king crab is **less than 50 percent of the average surveyed and non surveyed biomass estimate of legal males** [BELOW 200,000 POUNDS], the commissioner may, by emergency order, reduce the bag and possession limit of red and blue king crab.