

PROPOSAL 260 - 5 AAC 35.521. Identification of Bering Sea Tanner crab. Adopt by reference the Alaska Department of Fish and Game *Chionoecetes* Crab Quick Reference Guide for *C. bairdi* and *C. opilio* Tanner crab, as follows:

5 AAC 35.521(c) is amended to read:

(c) For the purpose of 5 AAC 35.510(f)(3) and 5 AAC 35.520(b), a hybrid Tanner crab that conforms to the description in (a) of this section is considered to be a *C. bairdi* Tanner crab, and a hybrid Tanner crab that does not conform to that description is considered to be a *C. opilio* Tanner crab, **as illustrated in the Alaska Department of Fish and Game *Chionoecetes* Crab Quick Reference Guide, revised as of February, 2016 and adopted by reference.**

Editor's note: A copy of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game *Chionoecetes* Crab Quick Reference Guide adopted by reference in 5 AAC 35.521(c) can be found on the department's website at (INSERT WEB ADDRESS).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The species range for *C. bairdi* and *C. opilio* Tanner crab overlap in the Bering Sea and these two species hybridize with resultant Tanner crab having morphological characteristics forming a continuum between the two species. A separate fishery for hybrid crab does not exist; however, hybrid Tanner crab are classified as either *C. bairdi* or *C. opilio* according to characteristics described in 5 AAC 35.521. Adopting the department's quick reference guide is a measure to help fishermen identify the two harvestable species *C. bairdi* and *C. opilio*.

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