

**PROPOSAL 261**

**5 AAC 35.508. Bering Sea District *C. bairdi* Tanner crab harvest strategy.**

Adopt a new Bering Sea Tanner crab harvest strategy used to set annual harvest limits, as follows:

A detailed analysis and recommended harvest strategy scenarios will be provided by the department prior to the March 2020 Statewide King and Tanner Crab meeting.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The Eastern Bering Sea Tanner crab stock is characterized by highly variable and episodic recruitment leading to substantial changes in annual abundance levels. The current Bering Sea Tanner crab harvest strategy was established in 1999 and requires minimum abundance threshold levels for both mature male and female crab to be met before fisheries can occur. In recent years the fishery has been closed or occurred at reduced harvest limits based on low female abundance.

The analysis in support of the revised harvest strategy will evaluate the utility of including female abundance when considering harvest limits for the male only Tanner crab fishery. The recommended harvest strategy is expected to reduce probability of fishery closures, allow for best application of population estimates, and improve yield and stability for stakeholders.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F19-172)

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