

*Sport Tanner Crab (6 proposals)*

**PROPOSAL 249**

**5 AAC 58.022. Waters; season; bag, possession, annual and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet- Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.**

Align tanner crab sport fishery season dates for all areas, as follows:

5 AAC 58.022. is amended to read:

(a)(11) Tanner crab: may be taken as follows;

(A) only from **September 1** [JULY 15]

March 15, except as specified under 5 AAC 35.410(c); bag and possession limit of five male crab; minimum size is four and one-half inches across the widest part of the shell, including spines; a shellfish harvest recording form is required as specified in 5 AAC 58.026;

(b)(1)(B) [TANNER CRAB: IN KACHEMAK BAY, EAST OF A LINE FROM POINT POGIBSHI TO ANCHOR POINT, THE OPEN SEASON IS FROM SEPTEMBER 1- DECEMBER 31 AND FROM JANUARY 15 OR THE BEGINNING OF THE COMMERCIAL TANNER CRAB SEASON, WHICHEVER IS LATER, THROUGH MARCH 15]

(b)(2)(D) [TANNER CRAB: IN KACHEMAK BAY, EAST OF A LINE FROM POINT POGIBSHI TO ANCHOR POINT, THE OPEN SEASON IS FROM SEPTEMBER 1- DECEMBER 31 AND FROM JANUARY 15 OR THE BEGINNING OF THE COMMERCIAL TANNER CRAB SEASON, WHICHEVER IS LATER, THROUGH MARCH 15]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Currently, there are two different sport fishery seasons for Cook Inlet –Resurrection Bay Area Tanner crab. A reduced season sport fishery opens from October 1 through the end of February in all areas in the absence of trawl survey data or when Tanner crab abundance is below thresholds. The regular sport fishery season has differing opening dates between Kachemak Bay (September 1) and all other areas (July 15). The regular sport fishery is managed with the Registration Area H Tanner crab harvest strategy (5 AAC 35.408). This strategy uses abundance estimates from the Kachemak and Kamishak bays trawl surveys. The Kachemak Bay trawl survey is only used to manage the Kachemak Bay fisheries and the Kamishak Bay trawl surveys is used to manage all other areas. The Kamishak Bay survey has been discontinued since 2013. This proposal would align the season start date of the regular sport fishery for all areas similar to the reduced sport fishery.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-157)

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**PROPOSAL 250**

**5 AAC 58.026. Shellfish harvest recording form required.**

Include an appeal process for failure to report for the Tanner crab sport fishery harvest recording form, as follows:

5 AAC 58.026 is amended to read:

(a) Before harvesting shellfish with pots, a person must obtain a sport fishing shellfish harvest recording form, described in 5 AAC 75.016 and provided by the department. Upon taking shellfish with pots, and before concealing the shellfish from plain view or removing the shellfish from the fishing site, the person must enter, in ink, the **harvest** and catch information requested in the form. A person who fails to comply with the requirements of this subsection or 5 AAC 75.016, **including any requirement to return harvest and catch information to the department**, may be ineligible to **obtain a shellfish harvest recording form** [PARTICIPATE] during the following **season** [CALENDAR YEAR] in the fishery for which the form was required, **unless the permit applicant demonstrates to the department that failure to report was due to unavoidable circumstances.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Prior to 2017, the noncommercial Tanner crab fisheries in Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay included subsistence, personal use and sport fisheries. These noncommercial fisheries required a permit for participation and all fisheries were included in one permit. In 2017, the Board of Fisheries (board) eliminated the personal use Tanner crab fishery in Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay because it was redundant to the sport fishery. As a result, a separate permit was needed for the sport fishery; it was only offered online with reporting only available online. 5 AAC 58.026 requires a shellfish harvest recording form prior to harvesting shellfish with pots in the Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Area. In addition, it specifies that a person who fails to comply with the requirements may be ineligible to participate in the next calendar year’s fishery. Online permits and reporting provide the department a more functional process to identify persons who have not reported their harvest and deny permits as provided in regulation for persons who do not report. Sport fishing regulation is needed to outline an appeal process for permittees that fail to comply with permit requirements, similar to statewide personal use and subsistence permit regulations.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F19-156)  
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**PROPOSAL 251**

**5 AAC 58.035. Methods, means, and general provisions — Shellfish.**

Require two escape mechanisms per pot in the tanner crab sport fishery in the Cook Inlet and North Gulf coast areas, as follows:

**All pots used in the Cook Inlet and North Coast tanner crab sport fishery must have 2 not 1 openings at least 18” long on opposite sides of the pot. Laced with biodegradable untreated twine no larger than #30 thread.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Biodegradable escape mechanism in sport Tanner Crab pots for Cook Inlet and North Gulf Coast areas. There are many different configurations of pots being used. Some of the pots being used are not very heavy. In series of large tides with wind and big marking buoys or when a boat runs over the buoys and drags the pot and cuts buoy line. We end up with ghost pots. These light weight pots under these circumstances can lay over on the biodegradable opening possibly trapping crab indefinitely. The additional escape opening will benefit this fishery.

**PROPOSED BY:** Dan Anderson

(EF-F19-006)

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**PROPOSAL 252**

**5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet — Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.**

Establish a seasonal limit for Tanner crab in Kachemak Bay, as follows:

Establish a reasonable seasonal limit for tanner crab, in the neighborhood of 36-48.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Over exploitation of tanner crab in Kachemak Bay

**PROPOSED BY:** Dave Lyon

(EF-F19-127)

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**PROPOSAL 253**

**5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area; and 5 AAC 58.035. Methods, means, and general provisions – Shellfish.**

Allow crab rings in the Cook Inlet Area Tanner crab sport fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet - Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area

(a) Except as provided in (b) and (c) of this section, and unless otherwise specified in this chapter, the following are the seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and special provisions for finfish and shellfish in the Cook Inlet - Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area:

...

(11) Tanner crab: may be taken as follows:

(A) only from July 15 - March 15, except as specified under 5 AAC 35.410(c); bag and possession limit of five male crab; minimum size is four and one-half inches across the widest part of the shell, including spines; a shellfish harvest recording form is required as specified in 5 AAC 58.026;

(B) notwithstanding the provisions of (a)(11)(A) of this section, if the provisions of 5 AAC 35.408(d) apply then male Tanner crab may be taken only from October 1 through the last day of February; bag and possession limit of three male crab; minimum size is four and one-half inches across the widest part of the shell, including spines; no more than one pot **or crab ring** per person with a maximum of one pot **or crab ring** per vessel; a shellfish harvest recording form is required as specified in 5 AAC 58.026;

5 AAC 58.035. Methods, means, and general provisions - Shellfish

(a) Unless otherwise specified in 5 AAC 58.022 or by an emergency order issued under AS 16.05.060, the provisions of this section apply to shellfish sport fishing in the Cook Inlet - Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

...

(d) Notwithstanding 5 AAC 75.035(3), no more than two pots **or crab rings or combination thereof** per person, regardless of type, with a maximum of two **pots or crab rings or combination thereof** per vessel, regardless of type, may be used to take shellfish at any time, except that in the waters between the longitude of Gore Point (150\_ 57.85' W. long.) and the longitude of Cape Fairfield (148\_ 50.25' W. long.), no more than two pots **or crab rings or combination thereof** per person with a maximum of six pots **or crab rings or combination thereof** per vessel may be used to take Tanner crab.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The new Cook Inlet Tanner Crab Sport fishery has regulations wording that inadvertently left out the use of crab rings as legal gear. The regulations establishing this fishery were written defining the limit of pots per person, and pots per vessel with no reference to the allowance of crab rings which are also typical legal gear in all sport, personal use, and subsistence crab fisheries around the state. This proposal addresses this ‘technical’ omission which has currently prevented the use of crab rings in this fishery.

The smaller sport fishing boats and even kayakers are not equipped with pot pullers for handling tanner size crab pots and therefore have been excluded from participating in this winter fishery. The statewide sport crab fishery regulations allow pots and crab rings, or a combination of both when a fishery allows more than one piece of gear for harvest. Correcting the wording to include the use of a crab ring(s) along with crab pots will standardize the regulations to conform with the traditional gear and allow more participants to engage in this limited winter fishery. Even kayakers are capable of deploying and retrieving a crab ring from their vessel.

**PROPOSED BY:** Gary Barnes (HQ-F19-008)  
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**PROPOSAL 254**

**5 AAC 02.307. Lawful subsistence fishing gear for the taking of Tanner crab; and 5 AAC 02.325. Subsistence Tanner crab fishery.**

Allow crab rings in the Cook Inlet Area Tanner crab subsistence fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 02.307. Lawful subsistence fishing gear for the taking of Tanner crab  
In that portion of the Cook Inlet Area outside the nonsubsistence area described in 5 AAC 99.015(a)(3),

(1) Tanner crab may be taken only with pots, ring nets, dip nets, diving gear, hooked or hookless hand lines, and by hand;

(2)...

(3) no more than two pots **or crab rings or combination thereof** per person with a maximum of two pots **or crab rings or combination thereof** per vessel may be used to take Tanner crab, except that in the waters of the Outer and Eastern Districts between the longitude of Gore Point (150\_ 57.85' W. long.) and the longitude of Cape Fairfield (148\_ 50.25' W. long.), no more than two pots **or crab rings or combination thereof** per person with a maximum of six pots **or crab rings or combination thereof** per vessel may be used to take Tanner crab.

5 AAC 02.325. Subsistence Tanner crab fishery

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(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of 5 AAC 02.307 and (a) of this section, if the provisions of 5 AAC 35.408(d) apply, then male Tanner crab may be taken only from October 1 through the last day of February; bag and possession limit of three male Tanner crab; no more than one pot or crab ring per person with a maximum of one pot or crab ring per vessel may be used to take Tanner crab.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The new Cook Inlet Tanner Crab subsistence fishery has regulations wording that inadvertently left out the use of crab rings as legal gear. The regulations establishing this fishery were written defining the limit of pots per person, and pots per vessel with no reference to the allowance of crab rings which are also typical legal gear in all sport, personal use, and subsistence crab fisheries around the state. This proposal addresses this ‘technical’ omission which has currently prevented the use of crab rings in this fishery. The smaller boats often are not equipped with pot pullers to handle tanner size crab pots and therefore have been excluded from participating in this winter fishery. The statewide subsistence crab fishery regulations allow pots or crab rings, or a combination of both when a fishery allows more than one piece of gear for harvest. Correcting the wording to include the use of a crab ring(s) along with crab pots will standardize the regulations to conform with the traditional gear and allow more participants in this limited winter fishery.

**PROPOSED BY:** Gary Barnes

(HQ-F19-009)

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