

PROPOSAL 192

5 AAC 34.114. Southeast Alaska Golden King Crab Management Plan.

Establish minimum guideline harvest level and guidance on inseason adjustment of guideline harvest levels in the Southeast Alaska golden king crab fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 34.114. Southeast Alaska Golden King Crab Management Plan

(a) The Southeast Alaska golden king crab fishery shall be managed consistently with the board's Policy on King and Tanner Crab Resource Management (90-04-FB, March 23, 1990), adopted by this reference, and according to the principles set out in this section.

(b) To the extent possible, golden king crab shall be managed as a separate stock in each defined fishing area. The department shall close an area if the abundance of various sizes of male crabs is inadequate to provide for a sustained harvest, or when potentially high effort precludes an orderly fishery.

(c) The department shall base management on historical fishery performance, catch, and population structure information. A lack of adequate information will result in conservative management.

(d) The Policy on King and Tanner Crab Resource Management (90-04-FB, March 23, 1990) states that a Guideline Harvest Level is a preseason estimate of the level of allowable king and Tanner crab harvest. In those fisheries with accurate population estimates the appropriate harvest rate is applied to the best point estimate to determine the GHL. For those fisheries without surveys or historical catch information adequate for estimating the population size, the GHL will be set based on historical fishery performance, catch, and population trend. Due to the lack of formal assessments and only data being available from the fishery, each Golden King crab area shall open for a set of tides to a pre-season guideline harvest level that is a minimum of 10% of the upper range of the guideline harvest range set for the area. After one set of tides, the GHL can be re-assessed and the fishery will be managed in-season accordingly.

(e) In-season adjustments may be made to the guideline harvest level and length of the fishing season. Information upon which such adjustments are based may include: 1.) overall fishing effort; 2.) catch per unit of effort and rate of harvest; 3.) relative abundance of Golden King crab; 4.) achievement of guideline harvest level (GHL); 5.) proportion of soft-shelled crabs and rate of dead loss; 6.) general information on stock condition including adequacy of reproductive stock; 7.) timeliness and accuracy of catch reporting; 8.) adequacy of subsistence harvests; 9.) the impact of severe or unexpected environmental conditions on the handling and trapping morality of crab; and 10.) other factors that affect ability to meet objectives of the policy. When this information shows that continued fishing effort would jeopardize the reproductive viability of king crab stocks within a registration area, or continued fishing would be counter to the goal and policies established by the Board, the registration area or a portion of the registration area will be closed by Emergency Order.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Amend the Southeast Alaska Golden King Crab Management Plan to further clarify for fishermen the expectations of how the fishery will be managed.

PROPOSED BY: Petersburg Vessel Owner's Association and Southeast Alaska Fishermen's Alliance (HQ-F20-071)
