

**PROPOSAL 258**

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

Close the harvest of littleneck clams and butter clams, as follows:

(a)(12) littleneck clams and butter clams: **no open season; may not be retained or possessed;** [MAY BE TAKEN FROM JANUARY 1- DECEMBER 31 ; WITH A COMBINED BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT OF 80 CLAMS; MINIMUM SIZE FOR LITTLENECK CLAMS IS ONE AND ON-HALF INCHES IN LENGTH ACROSS THE WIDEST PART OF THE SHELL; MINIMUM SIZE FOR BUTTER CLAMS IS TWO AND ONE-HALF INCHES IN LENGTH ACROSS THE WIDEST PART OF THE SHELL;]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Hardshell clams (Pacific littleneck clams and butter clams) have declined to historical low abundances throughout Kachemak Bay. Recent monitoring in three subareas (Jakolof Bay, China Poot Bay, and Chugachik Island) has found that densities of legal-sized hardshell clams have declined 94–100% from their historical densities in all subareas. Additionally, the recent observed densities of sublegal-sized hardshell clams in these subareas suggests that these stocks will not likely recover in the near future. Based on Statewide Harvest Survey data, the sport harvest of hardshell clams in Kachemak Bay has declined over 90% since 2011.

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

(HQ-F20-167)

\*\*\*\*\*