

PROPOSAL 170

5 AAC 32.020. Dungeness crab area registration. 5 AAC 32.425. Lawful gear for Registration Area J.

Establish vessel and overall fishery pot limit for the North Peninsula District Dungeness fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 32.020(b) is amended to read:

(b) The Dungeness crab registration year is January 1 through December 31, **except that in the North Peninsula District, the registration deadline for the registration year is April 1.**

5 AAC 32.425(b) is amended to read:

(b) The following Dungeness crab pot limits are in effect for Registration Area J:

...

(2) in the Alaska Peninsula District, an aggregate of no more than 500 pots may be operated from a validly registered Dungeness crab vessel;[.]

(3) in the North Peninsula District, an aggregate of no more than 500 pots may be operated from a validly registered Dungeness crab vessel and no more than 10,000 pots may be operated in the fishery during a registration year. If more than 20 vessels register for the Dungeness crab fishery in the North Peninsula District, the 10,000-pot cap would be divided by the total number of vessels registered by the registration deadline which would result in a pot limit less than 500 pots per vessel.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Vessel participation and gear effort in the North Peninsula District Dungeness commercial crab fishery has historically been low. The North Peninsula District is typically among the smallest commercial Dungeness crab fisheries in the state. Beginning in 2021, effort increased substantially, and 2022 participation, effort, and harvest are highest on record. During 2022, 17 vessels registered 8,512 pots and harvested 2.8 million pounds, making it the second largest Dungeness crab fishery in Alaska. Lack of a pot limit likely contributed to record gear use and harvest during the 2022 fishery. It is unknown if the current harvest is sustainable or presents a conservation concern and the large influx of new boats has disproportionately impacted harvest opportunity for historical participants.

PROPOSED BY: Diego Castillo
