

PROPOSAL 279

5 AAC 39.670. Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Crab Fisheries Management Plan.

Amend vessel gear sharing and transfer provisions in the rationalized Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery west of 174° W. longitude, as follows:

5 AAC 39.670 is amended by adding subsections (c)(2)(A)(i) and (c)(3)(A)(i) to read as follows:

(c) The following provisions apply to the fisheries specified in this section:

1. a vessel participating in an Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ), Community Development Quota (CDQ), or the Adak community allocation crab fishery must have on board the vessel an activated vessel monitoring system (VMS) approved by NMFS;

2. a vessel operator who is registered for one of the fisheries listed in (b) of this section may (A) authorize other vessel operators who are registered for the same fishery to operate crab pot gear registered to that vessel; before a vessel operator may operate crab pot gear registered to another vessel, the registered operator of the pot gear must file a cooperative gear authorization form with the department authorizing other vessels to operate the crab pot gear;

(i) vessel operators participating the WAG fishery may only authorize other vessel operators to operate pot gear registered to that vessel after the vessel has checked out of the fishery under 5 AAC 39.670(c)(3)(G);

3. each crab pot deployed must bear the ADF&G number of the vessel that initially registers the crab pot, and if deployed in a fishery with a crab pot limit, each pot must bear a buoy tag registered to the vessel registering that pot; in addition, A. an active vessel may collectively operate and transport crab pot gear of another registered and active vessel;

(i) vessel operators participating the WAG fishery may only authorize other vessel operators to operate pot gear registered to that vessel after the vessel has checked out of the fishery under 5 AAC 39.670(c)(3)(G);

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery participants are currently allowed to share gear with other vessels. This gear sharing provision in the Western Aleutians (WAG) is being abused by vessels sharing gear with another vessel in order to pre-empt the fishing grounds. The result is that much of the gear is not being actively worked, but simply sitting on the fishing grounds creating a conservation concern for crab dead loss, as well as inhibiting other vessels from participating in the fishery in an efficient and productive manner. This issue would be resolved by only allowing the gear sharing provision to apply at the end of a vessel’s activity in this area.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This proposal is presented on behalf of the owners of the golden king crab harvester vessel, F/V Alaska Trojan.

PROPOSED BY: F/V Alaska Trojan

(HQ-F24-037)
