

PROPOSAL 32

5 AAC 02.215. Subsistence Dungeness Crab fishery, 5 AAC 32.210. Fishing seasons for Registration Area, and 5 AAC 32.290. Prince William Sound Dungeness Crab Fishery Management Plan.

Reopen the subsistence and commercial Dungeness crab fisheries in Prince William Sound, as follows:

In the subsistence taking of Dungeness crab in the Prince William Sound Area: [IS CLOSED UNTIL THE DUNGENESS CRAB STOCKS RECOVER ENOUGH TO PROVIDE A HARVESTABLE SURPLUS AND REGULATIONS ARE ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF FISHERIES THAT REOPEN THE FISHERY.]

- 1. Dungeness Crab may be taken from March 20 through May 20 and from August 25 through December 31**
- 2. the daily bag and possession limit is 5 crab per person**
- 3. only male Dungeness Crab six and one-half inches or greater in shoulder width may be taken or possessed; male Dungeness Crab less than the minimum legal size and female Dungeness Crab that have been taken must be immediately returned to the water unharmed; for the purposes of this paragraph, the shoulder width measurement of Dungeness Crab is the straight-line distance across the carapace immediately anterior to the tenth anterolateral spine, not including the spines;**
- 4. a pot used to take Dungeness Crab under this section must have at least two escape rings that each are not less than four and three-eighths inches, inside diameter; the escape rings must be located on opposite sides of the pot and the upper half of the vertical pane of the pot**
- 5. no more than 10 ring nets or pots per person, with a maximum of 20 ring nets or pots per vessel, may be used to take Dungeness Crab.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Dungeness fishery in Area E closed in 1992 for reasons stated by the department as "low crab abundance". However, no other Dungeness Crab fishery in Alaska is managed based on abundance. Dungeness Crab fisheries from California to the Aleutian islands are managed by regulating size, sex, and season (3-S management) with no crab abundance estimates or GHLS. 3-S management has proven to be extremely effective as it restricts harvest to large Dungeness males that have already had a chance to reproduce.

Incidental capture on the Copper River and by subsistence Tanner crabbers in Orca Inlet shows evidence of growing Dungeness populations in Area E; which is consistent with the recent statewide boom from Southeast to Area M. ADFG has not shared data to support their assertion of low crab abundance. The last survey conducted by ADFG was in 2013 with only 13 pot lifts - not enough data to draw population conclusions.

We ask the board to open the commercial and subsistence Dungeness fisheries using the successful 3-S management employed elsewhere in Alaska.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.

PROPOSED BY: Cordova District Fishermen United (CDFU)

(EF-F24-127)
