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STATEWIDE SHELLFISH, PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND **SHRIMP, AND SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES**

Miscellaneous Subsistence, Sport, Personal Use Shellfish (9 proposals)

Dungeness (3 proposals)

PROPOSAL 263

5 AAC 02.315. Subsistence Dungeness Crab Fishery.

Open the Cook Inlet subsistence Dungeness crab fishery, as follows:

In that portion of the Cook Inlet Area outside the nonsubsistence area described in 5 AAC 99.015(a)(3), in the subsistence taking of Dungenous crab, we propose opening the subsistence Dungenous crab fishery at a very small-scale with the following provisions:

- (1) male Dungenous crab may be taken only from July 1st through September 30th
- (2) before harvesting Dungenous crab, a person must obtain a subsistence permit; upon taking Dungenous crab, and before concealing the Dungenous crab from plain view or removing the Dungenous crab from the fishing site, the person must enter the catch information requested on the permit;
- (3) the daily bag and possession limit is five male Dungenous crab and the seasonal limit is 40 male Dungenous crab;
- (4) only male Dungenous crab six inches or greater in width of shell may be taken or possessed (or whatever size the department defines as a legal mature male in Lower Cook Inlet); no more than one pot or ring net per person with a maximum of three pots or rings net per vessel may be used to take Dungenous crab.

***We are requesting a summer Dungenous crab fishery because we consulted with knowledge bearers in Port Graham and Nanwalek and they have traditionally only harvested Dungenous crabs from July-Sept because 1) The Dungenous crab come closer to shore to feed on pink salmon eggs/carcasses and generally feed in shallower waters during this time and 2) the waters are safer for the smaller skiffs these communities own and are only able to drop crab pots during these months.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Section 5 AAC 02.315 - Subsistence Dungeness crab fishery

In the Cook Inlet Area, a person may not take Dungeness crab for subsistence purposes.

This fishery has been closed since 1998 but continues to be a very important subsistence resource for the Lower Cook Inlet Tribes: Specifically Nanwalek and Port Graham. These two small, remote Alaska Native communities that are in subsistence zoning and off the road system would like the opportunity to try and harvest Dungenous crab for subsistence purposes. There is limited data and information on the Dungenous crab population in Lower Cook Inlet. The last year Dungenous crab surveys were conducted is 2009 by the department. Currently the state has no program to assess Dungenous crab abundance, as stated by ADFG Fish Biologist Jan Rumble during her report of proposal 260 at the Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Westward, Arctic Shellfish and Shellfish General Provisions, and Prince William Sound Shrimp Board of Fish meeting (March 26 - April 2, 2022). Ms. Rumble also stated at this meeting that “the board should consider reopening a subsistence

fishery before opening a commercial fishery for Dungenous crab in the Cook Inlet Southern Region” (03/29/22 meeting audio records). The subsistence Dungenous crab fishery is currently closed mostly due to a lack of survey information, but there was consideration at the same Statewide Shellfish Board of Fish meeting from past Board Member Israel Payton who stated that “even before these potential surveys get done, if the department feels they want to do some exploring a little, it's up to the board but issuing subsistence permits through a strict permit tracking progress would be one way to gather some citizen science, and I would be supportive of that moving forward” (03/29/22 meeting audio records).

Since this board of fish meeting in 2022, the department has made no progress towards applying for grants with Chugach Regional Resources Commission (CRRC) as a partner to conduct Dungenous crab surveys in the Lower Cook Inlet, as proposed by the department as a solution during the 2022 meeting. CRRC is an organization that supports and protects the subsistence resources of Port Graham and Nanwalek, and we have limitations to our capacity to apply for grant funding for every subsistence resource. Therefore, we strongly agree with Mr. Payton that issuing subsistence permits that would collect data on the Dungenous crab fishery would be an efficient and effective way to fill in data gaps and inform the department with harvest data on the Lower Cook Inlet Dungenous crab population. We have spoken with the Chiefs and community members of Port Graham and Nanwalek to learn more about the local and traditional knowledge of the Dungenous crab populations in English Bay and Port Graham Bay. The Native Village of Nanwalek has reported an abundance of mature Dungenous crab returning to the shallow waters of English Bay. The Native Village of Port Graham reported that they are not seeing Dungenous crabs in the shallow waters near their beaches like they used to. Both communities have a long history of harvesting Dungenous crabs for subsistence use. Nanwalek and Port Graham would both like to have the regulations changed to open the Cook Inlet subsistence Dungenous crab fishery under specific guidelines, as listed below in question 3. Both communities are committed to participating in citizen science programs to collect survey data (e.g. size, sex, location) on Dungenous crabs to inform fisheries management in collaboration with Chugach Regional Resources Commission

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. We talked and worked with the Native Village of Port Graham and Native Village of Nanwalek. Chugach Regional Resources Commission worked with the ADFG Division of Subsistence to conduct subsistence household surveys in Port Graham where we asked household members questions about subsistence use of the Dungenous crab resource in Port Graham Bay (Jan 22-26,2024). CRRC also hosted a Board of Fish Proposal Writing workshop in Cordova (Feb 27-28, 2024) where the second Chief of Nanwalek and Nanwalek Tribal Members attended and discussed this proposal as a group.

PROPOSED BY: Chugach Regional Resources Commission (HQ-F24-075)

PROPOSAL 264

5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area. Regulation language goes here. Allow harvest of Dungeness crab in the Cook Inlet sport Tanner crab fishery, as follows:

This would give a limited harvest opportunity for large male dungeness.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Modify Cook Inlet sport Tanner crab. Limited fishery bag limit to include Dungeness crab at no more than one legal crab 7 inch male day and a total of five per season limit.

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

PROPOSED BY: Thomas Hagberg (HQ-F24-116)

PROPOSAL 265

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

Establish season, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for Dungeness crab in Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay, as follows:

Dungeness Crab: October 1 – February 28; bag and possession limit of 1 male crab, annual limit of 5 male crab; minimum size of six and one-half inches; no more than 1 pot or ring net per vessel.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Dungeness sport fishery has been closed many years without any recent surveys done in many years. Many of us that fish the Tanners out of Kachemak Bay have been seeing good numbers of Dungeness in our pots as well. A small opening for Dungeness crab could give people another harvest opportunity while also giving fish and game some insight on the stock of the fishery. This opening would mirror the Limited Tanner Crab opening for Cook Inlet and North Gulf Coast. It could be its own sport permit or just added to the Tanner Crab permit. This would make enforcement and ease of implementation quite simple. The Tanner crab harvest records since 2017 have been around 6k to 8k crabs. Predicting similar effort in the Dungeness fishery you could expect harvest levels to be around 1500 to 2000 crab.

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

PROPOSED BY: Josh Wickboldt (EF-F24-105)

Tanner (3 proposals)

PROPOSAL 266

5 AAC 77.010. Methods, means, and general restrictions.

Allow additional gear types in the personal use crab fishery, as follows:

crab may be taken only with pots, ring nets, diving gear, dip nets, hooked or hookless handlines, **CRAB LOOP TRAPS "SNARES", FOLDABLE CRAB NET**, or by hand; **A LINE ATTACHED TO A POLE OR ROD MAY BE USED TO REEL OR CAST CRAB GEAR.** [A LINE ATTACHED TO A POLE OR ROD MAY BE USED IN THE BERING SEA ONLY WHEN FISHING A LINE THROUGH THE ICE];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? "crab may be taken only with pots, ring nets, diving gear, dip nets, hooked or hookless handlines, or by hand; a line attached to a pole or rod may be used in the Bering Sea only when fishing a line through the ice;"

The restriction on gear types for crabbing is unnecessarily restrictive and eliminates ethical methods of take that are utilized in other states. Crab snares and foldable crab nets allow for the take of crabs without posing harm to crab populations or pose a significant risk of continued catch if gear is unrecoverable. Many Alaskans own a fishing rod, but not a boat. Widening the regulations would allow for increased access to crabbing as both a hobby and as a source of food.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. I did not, hence the need for editing.

PROPOSED BY: Zach Taylor (EF-F24-040)

PROPOSAL 267

5 AAC 35.408. Registration Area H Tanner crab harvest strategy.

Modify the noncommercial Tanner crab fishery thresholds, as follows:

5 AAC 35.408 is amended to read:

...

(d) The noncommercial Tanner crab fisheries in the Cook Inlet Area will be managed as provided in **5 AAC 58.022(a)(11)(A)** [5 AAC 58.022(11)(A)] and 5 AAC 02.325(a) when the most recent [CONSECUTIVE THREE-YEAR AVERAGE OF] legal male stock abundance estimated from the Kachemak Bay trawl survey is greater than or equal to 200,000 crab [AND THE ANNUAL ESTIMATE FOR THE MOST RECENT YEAR IS AT LEAST 100,000 CRAB]. The harvest rate is not expected to exceed approximately 10 percent of legal male Tanner crab abundance managed under this section.

The noncommercial Tanner crab fisheries in the Cook Inlet area will be managed as provided in **5 AAC 58.022(a)(11)(B)** [5 AAC 58.022(11)(B)] and 5 AAC 02.325(b) in the absence of a trawl survey, or if the most recent [CONSECUTIVE THREE-YEAR AVERAGE OF] legal male stock abundance estimated from the Kachemak Bay trawl survey is less than 200,000 crab [OR THE ANNUAL ESTIMATE FOR THE MOST RECENT YEAR IS BELOW 100,000 CRAB]. The harvest rate is not expected to exceed approximately 10 percent of legal male Tanner crab abundance managed under this section.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current regulations for the noncommercial Tanner crab fisheries require three years of trawl survey data to be used to open the standard noncommercial Tanner crab fishery. The Kachemak Bay trawl survey has not been conducted since 2019. This proposal would provide harvest opportunity directly following a single year of the trawl survey, given a legal male abundance estimate that exceeds the threshold. Only requiring one survey would provide the department with a more cost-effective approach to providing additional subsistence and sport harvest opportunity for Tanner crab.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-180)

PROPOSAL 268

5 AAC 58.035. Methods, means, and general provisions – Shellfish.

Prohibit harvest of Tanner crab from a charter vessel, as follows:

Stop allowing commercial operators to include Tanner crab access as part of their service. No commercial charter or related commercial activity type will be allowed to transport persons for the purpose of harvesting Tanner crab in Kachemak Bay or Cook Inlet and their surrounding waters.

Add a new section: A person may not harvest Tanner Crab from a sport chartered vessel.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I'm concerned about the excess pressure on tanner crab in Kachmak Bay and Cook Inlet due to Charters selling combo fishing trips while also including Tanner crab access. Unnecessary commercial pressure is being applied to this fishery because of this type of access. This crab fishery was closed for several years due to lack of mature crab and it seems unrealistic to encourage and allow access from commercial charter boats and any other commercial access providers. I would encourage you to limit all types of commercial access to this subsistence/sport Tanner crab fishery. It appears non-residents are increasingly participating in the fishery is likely due to charger provide access.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Yes I requested help from Fish and Game for assistance with the specifics of this proposal.

PROPOSED BY: Dan Green

(EF-F24-012)

Razor Clam (3 proposals)

PROPOSAL 269

5 AAC 58.026. Shellfish harvest recording form required. and 5 AAC 77.507. Shellfish harvest recording form required.

Implement a permit for harvesting razor clams in Cook Inlet sport and personal use fisheries as follows:

5 AAC 58.026 is amended to read:

...

(a) Before harvesting shellfish with pots **or razor clams**, a person must obtain a sport fishing shellfish harvest recording form, described in 5 AAC 75.016 and provided by the department. Upon taking shellfish with pots, and before concealing the shellfish from plain view or removing the shellfish from the fishing site, the person must enter the harvest and catch information requested on the form. A person who fails to comply with the requirements of this subsection or 5 AAC 75.016, including any requirement to return harvest and catch information to the department, may be ineligible to obtain a shellfish harvest recording form during the following season in the fishery for which the form was required, unless the permit applicant demonstrates to the department that failure to report was due to unavoidable circumstances.

5 AAC 77.507 is amended to read:

...

5 AAC 77.507. Shellfish harvest recording form required. A person must obtain a personal use shellfish permit described in 5 AAC 77.015, from the department before harvesting shellfish with pots or razor clams in the Cook Inlet Area. Upon taking shellfish and before concealing the shellfish from plain view or removing the shellfish from the fishing site, the person must enter the catch information requested on the personal use permit. A person who fails to comply with the requirements of this subsection or 5 AAC 77.015, including any requirement to return harvest and catch information to the department, may be ineligible to obtain a shellfish harvest recording form during the following season in the fishery for which the form was required, unless the permit applicant demonstrates to the department that failure to report was due to unavoidable circumstances.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The sport and personal use Cook Inlet razor clam fisheries are concurrent and identical in regulation and managed in unison except that only Alaska residents can participate in the personal use fishery. Because of this, only sport harvest data is collected. Currently, harvest data for razor clam sport fisheries in Cook Inlet is available from the Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS), but the number of responses for shellfish fisheries in the SWHS has been low, which results in imprecise harvest estimates. Implementing a razor clam harvest reporting form would be consistent with other sport shellfish fisheries such as Prince William Sound shrimp and Cook Inlet Tanner crab and would provide more accurate and timely harvest information. The east Cook Inlet razor clam fishery was closed from 2015 through 2022 and opened in 2023 to a limited fishery in the Ninilchik area, requiring intensive creel surveys to provide timely harvest estimates. A permit would also provide more robust harvest data for the razor clam fisheries open in the remainder of Cook Inlet year-round, which are difficult to monitor given their remote locations in west Cook Inlet. Requiring a permit for harvesting razor clams in Cook Inlet is a precautionary management approach that is appropriate given the decline in Cook Inlet shellfish stocks.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-181)

PROPOSAL 270

5 AAC 58.040. East Cook Inlet Razor Clam Sport Fishery Management Plan. and 5 AAC 77.519. East Cook Inlet Razor Clam Personal Use Fishery Management Plan.

Modify the East Cook Inlet Razor Clam Sport and Personal Use Fishery Management Plan, as follows:

5 AAC 58.040(b)(2) is amended to read:

...

(2) if the estimated adult clam abundance is greater than or equal to 50 percent of the average 1989 – 2012 abundance but the population does not meet the criteria outlined in (1) of this subsection, then razor clams may be taken from either July 1 through July 31 or August 1 through August 31 [MAY 1 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30] and the bag and possession limits are the first 15 [30] clams taken or possessed; the combined harvest rate of the sport and personal use fisheries is not expected to exceed 10 percent of the adult clam abundance.

5 AAC 77.519(b)(2) is amended to read:

...

(2) if the estimated adult clam abundance is greater than or equal to 50 percent of the average 1989 – 2012 abundance but the population does not meet the criteria outlined in (b)(1) of this subsection, then razor clams may be taken from **either July 1 through July 31 or August 1 through August 31** [MAY 1 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30] and the bag and possession limits are the first **15** [30] clams taken or possessed; the combined harvest rate of the sport and personal use fisheries is not expected to exceed 10 percent of the adult clam abundance.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The East Cook Inlet razor clam management plans were adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries at the March 2022 Miscellaneous Shellfish meeting. Razor clam abundance surveys in 2023 estimated adult clam abundances met the threshold to open the limited fisheries outlined in 5 AAC 58.020(b)(2) and 5 AAC 77.519(b)(2). This opening provided an opportunity to assess harvest and effort for the first time in nearly a decade. The department issued a preseason emergency order to ensure a conservative harvest as expected effort was unknown. Resulting harvest estimates from extensive creel surveys during the fishery indicate the current regulations would result in harvest of over 10 percent of the adult clam abundance. These proposed modifications provide a harvest opportunity that is better aligned with a harvest of less than 10 percent of adult razor clam abundance and gives the public and board the opportunity to decide a preference for season.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-182)

PROPOSAL 271

5 AAC 58.040. East Cook Inlet Razor Clam Sport Fishery Management Plan and 5 AAC 77.519. East Cook Inlet Razor Clam Personal Use Fishery Management Plan.

Reduce the East side razor clam bag limit, as follows:

When and if we can open a fishery, we need to be very conservative with bag limits.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Reduce the East Side Cook Inlet Sport and Personal Use Razor Clam Limited Fishery Bag Limit to 15 Clams.

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

PROPOSED BY: Thomas Hagberg (HQ-F24-117)

Commercial Shellfish (27 proposals)

Crab (26 proposals)

PROPOSAL 272

5 AAC 34.910. Fishing seasons for Registration Area Q.

Modify the start of the fishing season to open July 1 instead of June 15.

(d) In the Norton Sound Section of the Northern District, male red king crab, male blue king crab, and male Hanasaki king crab may be taken only as follows:

(1) during a fishing season established by emergency order to open on or after **July 1** [JUNE 15] and close 12:00 noon September 3 (summer season); and

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The start date for the Norton Sound summer king crab fishery is too early and often results in lower quality crab with poor meat fill. Since this fishery's GHF is in pounds, this also results in more individual crab being harvested when the crab weigh less.

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

PROPOSED BY: Adem Boeckman (EF-F24-165)

PROPOSAL 273

5 AAC 34.910. Fishing seasons for Registration Area Q.

Modify the start of the winter fishing season to open by emergency order on or after February 1 instead of opening on February 1, as follows:

34.910 (d) (2) through the ice only, during a fishing season established by emergency order to open on or after February 1 and to close no later than April 30;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently the winter season opens on February 1 regardless of weather or ice conditions. Most fisheries allow the manager some discretion to adjust the openings to address unforeseen issues which would affect the safety or conservation. This fishery has a history of pot loss due to unstable ice and even a few people in need of rescue. Pot loss and ghost fishing by lot pots is poorly documented but is generally frowned upon. Programs to retrieve lost pots have been conducted in multiple locations with limited success. The best idea is to avoid pot loss.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Yes, this proposal was proposed to the NNSAC and passed unanimously.

PROPOSED BY: Northern Norton Sound Advisory Committee (HQ-F24-073)

PROPOSAL 274

5 AAC 34.920. Size Limits for Registration Area Q. and 5 AAC 34.925. Lawful gear for Registration Area Q.

Increases the legal size of male red king crab from four and three-quarter inches to five inches and increase size of pot escape mechanisms, as follows:.

34.920 (d)(1) male red king crab five inches or greater in width of shell;
Escape mechanism regulations are tied to legal size generally. In this case the need for adjusting the escape mechanisms does not seem needed. The current regulations will be adequate since these fisheries have short soak times with little time for bait spoilage or for crab seek egress. The

current regulation reads: 34.925 (b)(3) (d)(4) must have at least four circular escape rings with a minimum inside diameter of four and one-half inches... or an escape mesh of six and one-half inch stretched mesh webbing.... (no change regarding escape mechanisms)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In the late 1970s, the legal size of Norton Sound red king crab was set at 4.75 inches in width based on a now obsolete estimate of maturity and by adding a year's growth. This maturity estimate is now thought to be too large making the current size limit a couple years beyond male sexual maturity. The fact that the Norton Sound population has been allowed more time for reproduction has not resulted in any perceived detriment to the population, rather it may be more resilient than populations to the south which have legal size determinations close to maturity plus one year. Crab in the 4.75-5 inch size range have relatively lower mortality and higher growth rates than crabs a year older. High volume sorting is reducing long term harvest due to handling mortality. The half year of negligible mortality for mature crab that the legal-size increase allows is not likely to produce any detrimental biological effects.

This proposal would raise the legal threshold to five inches to make the harvested crab more marketable. The single buyer has required a five-inch threshold for deliveries at their buying stations for over five years. They plan on continuing the practice. The management of the fishery still estimates the biomass of the less desirable small crab along with the desired crab. When a cohort of crab are recruiting to the fishery this provides a misleading biomass of marketable crab resulting in greater handling mortality as crab are sorted. The misleading expectations of marketable crab causes the season to drag on with marginal rates of marketable crab harvest.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Yes, this proposal was proposed to the NNSAC and passed unanimously.

PROPOSED BY: Northern Norton Sound Advisory Committee (HQ-F24-074)

PROPOSAL 275

5 AAC 34.816 Bristol Bay red king crab harvest strategy.

Update Bristol Bay red king crab harvest strategy used to set annual harvest limits, as follows

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current Bristol Bay red king crab (BBRKC) harvest strategy was last updated in the mid-1990s and is composed of three components, minimum stock size thresholds to ensure for conservation of the stock, an abundance-based harvest control rule used to set an exploitation rate when stock size thresholds are met, and a maximum harvest cap on legal males. Over the last decade, the BBRKC stock has undergone a broad decline. During this time the fishery has occurred under reduced harvest limits or was closed because estimated abundance of mature female crab was below regulatory thresholds established in the harvest strategy.

Minimum stock size thresholds established in the harvest strategy are derived, in part, from the BBRKC stock assessment model. Assessment methodology has changed and improved over time and this proposal would update elements of the BBRKC regulatory harvest strategy to reflect

current assessment and management practices. Proposed changes will focus on updating the minimum stock size thresholds that must be met before a fishery can occur. Additional recommendations will include options for transitioning from a stair step to a sloping harvest control rule. Updating the harvest strategy will address conservation of the stock and fishery stability for stakeholders during a period of high uncertainty.

Full analysis and recommended harvest strategy updates will be provided by the department prior to the 2025 Statewide shellfish meeting.

The BBRKC harvest strategy is a Category 2 management measure under the federal Fishery Management Plan for Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs (FMP; FMP Section 8.2.5 Fishing Seasons). Changes to Category 2 management measures occur at the discretion of the board but should be consistent with the criteria set out in the FMP and the Magnuson – Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act National Standards.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-162)

PROPOSAL 276

5 AAC 34.627. King crab storage requirements for Registration Area O.

Amend longline king pot storage depth from 75 to 100 fathoms or less, as follows:

Golden king crab storage depths 100 fathoms or less.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Would like to change the storage depth from 75 fathoms or less to 100 fathoms or less.

Due to ship jogging during storms and loosing are buoy ends. As a result have to drag up our stored gear which is very dangerous.

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

PROPOSED BY: Mark Medjo (EF-F24-077)

PROPOSAL 277

5 AAC 34.6XX. New Section.

Establish Aleutian Islands state-waters golden king crab fishery, as follows:

5AAC 34.6XX State waters Aleutian Islands golden crab Harvest strategy

Points to be included

State waters east of 169 deg

Vessels 58' and under

Fishing hours 8:00 AM to 7:59 PM

90 pot limit

Single pot only

Close east of 169 deg to longline crab pot gear

Season, Sept 1 – Apr 30

GHL set annually by ADF&G, not to exceed 100,000 pounds
Size limit, 6" male crab
Daily reporting

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Create a single pot golden crab fishery for vessels 58' and under with its own allocation. Currently, area O golden crab is fully rationalized and allocated to the federal fishery. There exists, however, an open access parallel State fishery that if prosecuted would create uncertainty for management, possibly forcing closure to the State waters of area O where 10% of existing quota is traditionally caught. A dedicated allocation for vessels 58' and under would reduce uncertainty and retain opportunity for smaller local boats.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. A few local fishermen have talked about this potential for several years.

PROPOSED BY: Roger Rowland (HQ-F24-004)

PROPOSAL 278

5 AAC 34.625. Lawful gear for Registration Area O

Establish pot limit for the Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 34.625 is amended by adding subsection (h) to read as follows:

(h) In the Registration Area O commercial golden king crab fishery established under 5 AAC 34.610(b), the following pot limits are in effect:

1. An aggregate of no more than 2,500 pots may be operated from a validly registered king crab vessel.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? There are currently no pot limits in this longline pot crab fishery. Vessels have historically utilized as many pots as needed in order to work the gear every 20-25 days, and this has been less than 2,000 pots. Recently, a few vessels have been setting gear far in excess of this amount in order to pre-empt the fishing grounds and they are unable to clear the pots in a reasonable amount of time. While this is an allocative issue, there is also a conservation element of concern. Pots are not being worked and sit for a significant amount of time before being pulled, if they are pulled at all during the season. This can result in unnecessary deadloss for the resource.

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-F24-036)

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)

PROPOSAL 280

5 AAC 39.645. Shellfish onboard observer program.

Amend contracting agent performance standards, as follows:

5 AAC 39.645 is amended to read:

(j) An independent contracting agent that provides onboard observers under this section shall

(13) ~~repealed~~ / / [ENSURE THAT NO LESS THAN 65 PERCENT OF OBSERVER DEPLOYMENT DAYS PER YEAR PER CONTRACTOR ARE PERFORMED BY CERTIFIED OBSERVERS.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Onboard observer deployment practices have evolved over time. The performance standard specifying certified observers must account for least 65 percent of all deployment days is not achieved most years and this issue has been recently compounded by unpredictability in Bering Sea crab fisheries and labor market constraints. Most observer deployments now occur under the provisions of a contract between observer provider companies and the State of Alaska. Observer performance standards are best administered under conditions of contracts guided by the State procurement process rather than in regulation.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-163)

PROPOSAL 281

5 AAC 39.646. Shellfish onboard observer trainee program qualifications and requirements.

Amend observer trainee minimum qualifications, as follows:

5 AAC 39.646 is amended to read:

(a) To qualify as a crab onboard observer trainee, an applicant must have one of the following:

(1) a Bachelor degree or higher from an accredited college or university with a major in the sciences of biology, any branch of biology, or limnology that includes a minimum of 30 semester hours in applicable biological sciences with use of dichotomous keys in at least one course, and the successful completion of at least one course [EACH] in mathematics [AND STATISTICS WITH A MINIMUM OF FIVE SEMESTER HOURS TOTAL FOR BOTH]; or

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In practice, specifying minimum course requirements to the level currently in regulation is not critical to the observer performing their duties and creates an unnecessary burden for observer provider companies when recruiting candidates for the observer program.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-164)

PROPOSAL 282

5 AAC 35.525. Lawful gear for Registration Area J..

Amend escape mechanism requirements for Kodiak District commercial Tanner crab gear., as follows:

Bolded language is additive.

PROPOSAL XXX

5 AAC 35.525. Lawful gear for Registration Area J. Amend lawful gear for Tanner crab in Kodiak District of Registration Area J, as follows:

(a) Tanner crab may be taken only with Tanner crab pots. Tanner crab taken by other means must be returned to the water without further harm.

(b) The following Tanner crab pot requirements are in effect in Registration Area J:

(1) to permit the escapement of undersize *C. bairdi* Tanner crab, pots used to take *C. bairdi* Tanner crab in

(A) Registration Area J, except the **Kodiak and Bering Sea Districts**, must have at least one-third of one vertical surface of the pot composed of not less than six and three-quarter inch stretched mesh webbing or have no less than four circular escape rings of no less than five inches inside diameter installed on the vertical surface of the pot;

(B) the Bering Sea District, must have at least one-third of one vertical surface of the pot composed of not less than six and one-half inch stretched mesh webbing or have no less than four circular escape rings of no less than four and one-half inches inside diameter installed in a manner on the vertical surface of the pot so that the bottom of a ring is no higher on the vertical surface than the first full mesh from the bottom of the pot; [AND]

(C) the Kodiak District, rectangular and pyramid pots must have at least one-third of one vertical surface of the pot composed of not less than six and three-quarter inch stretched mesh webbing; cone pots must have at least one-third of one vertical surface of the pot composed of not less than six and three-quarter inch stretched mesh webbing or have no less than eight circular escape rings of no less than five inches inside diameter installed on the vertical surface of the pot.

Original Language:

5 AAC 35.525. Lawful gear for Registration Area J.

(a) Tanner crab may be taken only with Tanner crab pots. Tanner crab taken by other means must be returned to the water without further harm.

(b) The following Tanner crab pot requirements are in effect in Registration Area J:

(1) to permit the escapement of undersize *C. bairdi* Tanner crab, pots used to take *C. bairdi* Tanner crab in

(A) Registration Area J, except the Bering Sea District, must have at least one-third of one vertical surface of the pot composed of not less than six and three-quarter inch stretched mesh webbing or have no less than four circular escape rings of no less than five inches inside diameter installed on the vertical surface of the pot;

(B) the Bering Sea District, must have at least one-third of one vertical surface of the pot composed of not less than six and one-half inch stretched mesh webbing or have no less than four circular escape rings of no less than four and one-half inches inside diameter installed in a manner on the vertical surface of the pot so that the bottom of a ring is no higher on the vertical surface than the first full mesh from the bottom of the pot; and

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Handling of sublegal and female tanner crab in the Kodiak District. This proposal would allow additional escapement of

both sublegal and female of tanner crabs and reduce mortality associated with sorting. The new language would improve conservation.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Was discussed with F&G staff and other Kodiak Area Tanner Crab fishermen

PROPOSED BY: Ron Kavanaugh (EF-F24-008)

PROPOSAL 283

5 AAC 35.525. Lawful gear for Registration Area J.

Allow longlining of Bering Sea District commercial snow and Tanner crab pot gear, as follows:

Language would mirror current Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery regulations which allows for longlining of pots.

35.525. Lawful gear for Registration Area J.

(b)(3) In the Bering Sea District, Tanner crab pots may be operated from a shellfish longline; a buoy is not required for each pot, but each end of the longline must be marked by a cluster of four buoys; one buoy in the cluster must be marked in accordance with 5 AAC 35.051 and have the initials "SL" to identify it as a shellfish longline; for purposes of this subsection "a shellfish longline" is a stationary, buoyed, and anchored line with at least 10 shellfish pots attached;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Allow longlining of pot gear during rationalized Bering Sea snow crab and C. bairdi Tanner crab fisheries. Longlining of pots in these fisheries would have numerous efficiencies as well as potential increased safety impacts.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Met with regional ADFG staff to discuss proposal prior to submitting.

PROPOSED BY: Gabriel Prout (EF-F24-025)

PROPOSAL 284

5 AAC 35.5XX. New section.

Allow catcher vessels to operate as tenders during the Kodiak District commercial Tanner crab fishery, as follows:

If adopted, I recommend the board utilize the same regulatory language used to amend the Kodiak Area Dungeness fishery in recent years. Substitute language as follows:

5 AAC 35.5XX. Tenders for Tanner crab in the Kodiak District

Notwithstanding 5 AAC 35.033(a), in the Kodiak District, a vessel registered to fish for Tanner crab may tender Tanner crab from other registered Tanner crab vessels. A tender

operator must be an authorized agent of a processor. Before using a vessel as a tender under this section, the tender operator shall register as a tender with the department at the department office in Kodiak. A tender operator shall complete an ADF&G fish ticket at the first point of delivery from the catcher vessel.

Below are three sections of regulation for reference:

1. 32.033 is a general reg that says you *can't* fish and tender Dungeness at the same time.
2. 32.460 is an Area J reg that says, despite what 32.033 says, you *can* fish and tender Dungeness in the Kodiak District
3. 35.033 is a general reg that says you *can't* fish and tender Tanners at the same time. This is the reg your new language needs to reference to carve out an exemption in the Kodiak District similar to what's on the books for Dungeness.
4. Below is the language used in the Dungeness fishery. *[Note from Boards Support: the author of this proposal attempted to submit a photo to accompany this proposal, however we do not publish photos in the proposal book]*

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? For the Kodiak area Tanner crab fishery, I would like to see Kodiak area Tanner crab catcher vessels be allowed to also be a tender vessel for Kodiak Tanner crab during and after the fishery. This practice is already being utilized in the Kodiak Dungeness fishery proving it can work and provide a benefit to the fisherman. A catcher vessel could tender crab from another vessel during the Tanner fishery and after the closure of a section. This change would be valuable to the fishery and permit holders in a variety of ways. It would allow smaller vessels a chance to harvest more crab with the potential to offload crab to a larger participating catcher vessel. It would also allow Kodiak tanner crab fisherman greater opportunity to bring the crab to another port for an opportunity at higher ex-vessel prices and likely decrease the offload wait times we have experienced in recent years. This reduced wait time would lessen the likelihood of deadloss related to vessels holding the crab too long. This change would also likely decrease the cost of tender related fees recently experienced in the fishery and allow other catcher vessels in the fleet to benefit through the shared value, overall allowing more money to stay with participating permit holders and vessels.

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

I spoke with participating fisherman and permit holders in the Kodiak Area tanner fishery and department staff assisted with developing the substitute regulatory language.

PROPOSED BY: Kevin Abena (EF-F24-036)

PROPOSAL 285

5 AAC 35.507. Kodiak, Chignik, and South Peninsula Districts *C. bairdi* Tanner crab harvest strategies.

Repeal and replace the South Peninsula District Tanner crab harvest strategy, as follows:

We would like the Area J South Peninsula District tanner crab fisheries to be managed with the same management guidelines as Southeast Alaska tanner crab fisheries. Maintain the current South Peninsula pot limit and vessel length limit.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Under utilization of mature tanner crab in the South Peninsula District. Reduced opportunity to find and utilize the resource outside of the core area.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This proposal was developed with other fishermen from the region.

PROPOSED BY: Andrew Manos, Kiley Thompson, Ben Ley, Julian Manos & Ken Mack
(EF-F24-091)

PROPOSAL 286

5 AAC 35.507. Kodiak, Chignik, and South Peninsula Districts *C. bairdi* Tanner crab harvest strategies.

Repeal South Peninsula District Tanner crab harvest strategy and replace with size, sex, and season management, as follows:

We would like the Tanner crab fisheries in the South Peninsula of Area J to be managed similar to South Peninsula Dungeness crab fisheries size, sex and season. Maintain the South Peninsula Tanner crab pot and vessel length limits.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Underutilization of the Tanner crab resource in the South Peninsula District of Area J.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. The proposal was developed with other fishermen from the region.

PROPOSED BY: Andrew Manos, Kiley Thompson, Ben Ley, Julian Manos Ken Mack
(EF-F24-092)

PROPOSAL 287

5 AAC 35.508. Bering Sea District *C. bairdi* Tanner crab harvest strategy.

Amend definition of preferred sized males in the commercial Bering Sea District Tanner crab harvest strategy, as follows:

5 AAC 35.508. Bering Sea District *C. bairdi* Tanner crab harvest strategy. Revise the harvest strategy definition of “ELME” and “ELMW” to allow for flexibility in the size of exploited legal males to be set each season, as follows (additions noted with bold and underlining, deletions in caps and brackets):

...

(e) In this section,

(6) "ELME" means 100 percent of the new-shell male *C. bairdi* Tanner crab in the portion of the Bering Sea District that is east of 166° W. long. that are at least **legal size** [127 MM (FIVE INCHES) CARAPACE WIDTH], including lateral spines, plus a percentage of old-shell male *C. bairdi* Tanner crab that are at least **legal size** [127 MM CARAPACE WIDTH] estimated at the time of the preseason survey; the percentage of old-shell male *C. bairdi* Tanner crab will be based on the expected fishery selectivity for old-shell versus new-shell male *C. bairdi* Tanner crab; **ELME size will be based on landing sizes from the previous open season's fishery harvest;**

...

(9) "ELMW" means 100 percent of the new-shell male *C. bairdi* Tanner crab in the portion of the Bering Sea District that is west of 166° W. long. that are at least **legal size** [127 MM (FIVE INCHES) CARAPACE WIDTH], including lateral spines, plus a percentage of old-shell male *C. bairdi* Tanner crab that are at least **legal size** [127 MM CW] estimated at the time of the preseason survey; the percentage of old-shell male *C. bairdi* Tanner crab will be based on the expected fishery selectivity for old-shell versus new-shell male *C. bairdi* Tanner crab. **ELMW size will be based on landing sizes from the previous open season's fishery harvest.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The basic framework of the Bering Sea bairdi crab harvest strategy applies an exploitation rate to the estimated mature male biomass or a percentage of exploited legal males (i.e., industry-preferred size) to establish annual harvest limits. Currently, the legal minimum size for Bering Sea bairdi crab (*C. bairdi* Tanner crab) is 4.8 inches east of 166° longitude and 4.4 inches west of that line. However, the fishing industry generally targets a larger preferred size of 5-inch male crab both east and west of 166° (defined as ELME and ELMW in the harvest strategy for "exploited legal males" east (E) and west (W)). Retaining crab at the industry preferred size provides for better product recovery and market yield relative to smaller sized legal crab. Several factors highlight the possible need to consider a smaller industry preferred size and build flexibility into the harvest strategy.

During the TAC setting process, harvest limits are scaled to the abundance of exploitable legal males to avoid overharvest of the largest crab in the population. Recent information shows that some *Chionoecetes* crab may reach maturity and terminal molt at smaller sizes. For bairdi, the crab in the west are more likely to be affected by colder water temperatures affecting size at maturity. *Chionoecetes* crab are being impacted, in part, by the effects of climate change and growing environmental uncertainties. To the extent it is causing a shift in the size at maturity, the harvest strategy should be flexible enough to adapt between years while also maintaining safeguards to prevent the overharvest of large males in the population. Further, bairdi is not consistently marketed as a distinct crab species in US markets. It is often sold to consumers in US markets as snow crab alongside smaller snow crab that include Canadian product at 95 millimeters (3.74 inches).

Revising the definitions of "ELME" and "ELMW" to anything above the legal size as the industry preferred size in the harvest strategy creates interannual flexibility that can be more responsive to the biology of the resource and to markets. Each year, ADFG could define ELME and ELMW during TAC setting by using information from landed sizes from the previous open season's fishery harvest. This revision is expected to result in benefits to the Alaskan bairdi crab resource

consistent with Magnuson-Stevens Act National Standards and the *Board's Policy on King and Tanner Crab Resource Management*. Specifically, these benefits include but are not limited to: 1) increased abundance of exploited legal males available to the fishery resulting in higher TACs in some years, and potentially reduced inter-annual variation in TAC levels; 2) improved vessel harvest efficiency; 3) reduced discard mortality of legal bairdi crab (adding to conservation of the stock); and 4) harvest pressure distributed among multiple cohorts of legal bairdi crab. Reducing the size of exploited males and, therefore, re-directing some current exploitation pressure away from larger bairdi crab is consistent with the Board's policy that seeks to maintain crab stocks comprised of various age classes and sizes of mature animals to maintain long-term stock reproductive potential and reduce inter-annual dependency on annual recruitment pulses.

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

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers (EF-F24-156)

PROPOSAL 288

5 AAC 35.517. Bering Sea *C. opilio* Tanner crab harvest strategy

Amend definition of preferred sized males in the commercial Bering Sea District snow crab harvest strategy, as follows:

5 AAC 35.517. Bering Sea *C. opilio* Tanner crab harvest strategy. Revise the harvest strategy definition of "exploited legal males" to allow for periodic changes in the size of exploited legal males, as follows (additions noted with bold and underlining, deletions in caps and brackets):

...

(d) For the purposes of this section,

(5) "exploited legal males" means 100 percent of the new-shell male *C. opilio* Tanner crab that are at least **95 millimeters (3.74 inches)** [102 MILLIMETERS (FOUR INCHES)] in width of shell, plus a percentage of old-shell male *C. opilio* Tanner crab that are at least **95 millimeters** [102 MILLIMETERS] in width of shell estimated at the time of the survey; the percentage of old-shell male *C. opilio* Tanner crab will be based on the expected fishery selectivity for old-shell verses new-shell male *C. opilio* Tanner crab; **the size of exploited legal males will be based on landing sizes from the previous open season's fishery harvest;**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The basic framework of the Bering Sea snow crab harvest strategy applies an exploitation rate to the estimated mature male biomass or a percentage of exploited legal males to establish annual harvest limits. Currently, the legal minimum size for Bering Sea snow crab (*C. opilio* Tanner crab) is 3.1 inches. However, historically an industry preferred size of 4 inches or larger is used to prosecute the fishery, thus, 4 inch or larger male snow crab are defined as "exploited legal males" in the harvest strategy. Retaining crab at the industry preferred size provides for better product recovery and market yield relative to smaller sized legal crab. Several factors highlight the possible need to consider a smaller industry preferred size.

During the TAC setting process, harvest limits are scaled to the abundance of exploitable legal males to avoid overharvest of the largest crab in the population. Recent information is showing that some *Chionoecetes* crab may reach maturity and terminal molt below 4 inches, meaning they

would never enter the fishery under the current definition of exploited legal males. Further, smaller snow crab at 95 millimeters (3.74 inches) is already in US markets largely from imports from Canada.

Revising the definition of “exploited legal males” in the harvest strategy to 95 millimeters remains above the minimum legal male size of 3.1 inches. Each year, ADFG could change the exploited legal male size for the harvest strategy calculation during TAC setting by using information from landed sizes from the previous open season’s fishery harvest. This lower industry preferred size is expected to result in benefits to the Alaskan snow crab resource consistent with Magnuson-Stevens Act National Standards and the *Board’s Policy on King and Tanner Crab Resource Management*. Specifically, these benefits include but are not limited to: 1) increased abundance of exploited legal males available to the fishery resulting in higher TACs in some years, and potentially reduced inter-annual variation in TAC levels; 2) improved vessel harvest efficiency; 3) reduced discard mortality of legal snow crab <4 inches (adding to conservation of the stock); and 4) harvest pressure distributed among multiple cohorts of legal snow crab. Reducing the size of exploited males and, therefore, re-directing some current exploitation pressure away from ≥ 4 inch snow crab is consistent with the Board’s policy that seeks to maintain crab stocks comprised of various age classes and sizes of mature animals to maintain long-term stock reproductive potential and reduce inter-annual dependency on annual recruitment pulses.

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

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Bering Sea Crabbers (EF-F24-157)

PROPOSAL 289

5 AAC 35.525. Lawful Gear for Registration Area J.

Amend pot limit for the Kodiak District commercial Tanner crab fishery, as follows:

(1) in the Kodiak District, **an aggregate of no more than 20 pots may be operated from a validly registered Tanner crab vessel** [WHEN THE GUIDELINE HARVEST LEVEL FOR C. BAIRDI TANNER CRAB IS

(A) LESS THAN 5,000,000 POUNDS, AN AGGREGATE OF NO MORE THAN 20 POTS MAY BE OPERATED FROM A VALIDLY REGISTERED TANNER CRAB VESSEL;

(B) AT LEAST 5,000,000 POUNDS, AN AGGREGATE OF NO MORE THAN 30 POTS MAY BE OPERATED FROM A VALIDLY REGISTERED TANNER CRAB VESSEL;]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Kodiak Tanner Crab fishery currently has a tiered pot limit based on a GHL set by ADF&G. This fishery will always be able to reach its GHL with a 20 pot limit. With over 170 permits available for the Kodiak Tanner Crab Fishery, the GHL will still always be achieved quickly.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Reducing the pot limit has been discussed amongst members of the fleet since the last Board of Fish cycle.

PROPOSED BY: Raymond May

(HQ-F24-039)

PROPOSAL 290

5 AAC 35.510. Fishing seasons for Registration Area J .

Change season opening date for the Kodiak District commercial Tanner crab fishery from January 15 to February 20, as follows:

The only change in regulation we need is the opening date to the season. Everything else can stay exactly as is.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We the Homer small boat fleet would like to propose a change in the Kodiak Bairdi crab fishery opening from January 15 to February 20. We propose this because of extreme cold temperatures and ice that engulfs the harbor and surrounding waters. There has been seasons our small fleet were unable to participate in the season due to the circumstances. There has also been seasons we had to spend lots of money to deal with the ice just to make it out of the harbor, setting us back on profits or even putting us in the red after fishing a full season.

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

PROPOSED BY: David Ivanov

(HQ-F24-103)

PROPOSAL 291

5 AAC 35.535. Closed waters in Registration Area J.

Formalize the closure of Bristol Bay waters east of 163°W. long. to directed Tanner crab fishing, as follows:

5 AAC 35.535 is amended by adding a new subsection (b) as follows:

(a) The waters of Alaska surrounding St. Matthew Island, Hall Island, and Pinnacle Island are closed to the taking of Tanner crab.

(b) The waters of the Bering Sea District east of 163° W long., are closed to the taking of Tanner crab, except as incidental harvest in the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery as specified in 5 AAC 35.506(i)(2).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The eastern boundary of the Bering Sea Tanner crab fishery (EBT) east of 166° W. long. is not currently defined in regulation. Current and historical Tanner crab management in the Bering Sea precludes a directed fishery for Tanner crab east of 163° W. long. due to high bycatch of female red king crab; incidental retention of Tanner crab east of 163° W. long. is allowed during the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery. The proposed regulatory changes would formalize the boundaries of the directed EBT fishery as the Bering Sea waters between 163° W. long. and 166° W. long. to reflect current management practices. Closed waters are a Category 2 management measure under the federal Fishery

Management Plan for Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs. Changes to Category 2 management measures occur at the discretion of the board but should be consistent with the criteria set out in the FMP and the Magnuson – Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act National Standards.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-160)

PROPOSAL 292

5 AAC 35.556. Landing requirements for Registration Area J.

Amend Tanner crab landing requirements for Registration Area J, as follows:

5 AAC 35.556 is amended to read as follows:

(a) Except as provided in (b) of this section, the landing provisions of 5 AAC 35.031 apply to all districts within Registration Area J.

(b) The landing provisions of 5 AAC 35.031(c) do not apply to [THE BERING SEA, WESTERN ALEUTIAN, AND EASTERN ALEUTIAN DISTRICTS OF] Area J.

[(c) NOTWITHSTANDING 5 AAC 35.031(c), FOLLOWING THE CLOSURE OF REGISTRATION AREA J, OR A PORTION OF REGISTRATION AREA J, TO THE TAKING OF A SPECIFIED SPECIES OF TANNER CRAB, A VESSEL VALIDLY REGISTERED FOR THAT AREA MAY NOT HAVE THAT SPECIES OF TANNER CRAB ON BOARD THE VESSEL IN WATERS SUBJECT TO THE JURISDICTION OF THE STATE, IF DELIVERY IS MADE

(1) IN THE DISTRICT OR SUBDISTRICT THAT THE TANNER CRAB WERE TAKEN, OR TO A FLOATING PROCESSOR AT ST. MATTHEW OR THE PRIBILOF ISLANDS IF THE TANNER CRAB WERE TAKEN IN THE WESTERN SUBDISTRICT OF THE BERING SEA, AFTER 24 HOURS FOLLOWING THE CLOSURE;

(2) TO DUTCH HARBOR, AKUTAN, OR KING COVE FROM THE

(A) EASTERN ALEUTIAN DISTRICT, AFTER 24 HOURS FOLLOWING THE CLOSURE;

(B) WESTERN ALEUTIAN DISTRICT, AFTER 72 HOURS FOLLOWING THE CLOSURE, EXCEPT THAT THE OWNER, OR THE OWNER'S AGENT, OF A VESSEL DELIVERING TO KING COVE MAY REQUEST ADDITIONAL TIME TO DELIVER TANNER CRAB USING THE PROCEDURE SPECIFIED IN (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION;

(C) EASTERN SUBDISTRICT OF THE BERING SEA DISTRICT, AFTER 24 HOURS FOLLOWING THE CLOSURE, EXCEPT THAT A OWNER, OR THE OWNER'S AGENT, OF A VESSEL DELIVERING TO KING COVE MAY REQUEST ADDITIONAL TIME TO DELIVER TANNER CRAB USING THE PROCEDURE SPECIFIED IN (3) OF THIS SUBSECTION;

(D) WESTERN SUBDISTRICT OF THE BERING SEA DISTRICT, AFTER 72 HOURS FOLLOWING THE CLOSURE;

(3) TO ADAK OR A LOCATION EAST OF KING COVE, OR IF THE VESSEL OWNER, OR THE OWNER'S AGENT, WISHES TO REQUEST ADDITIONAL TIME TO DELIVER TANNER CRAB UNDER (C)(2)(B) OR (C)(2)(C) OF THIS SECTION,

(A) THE VESSEL OWNER, OR THE OWNER'S AGENT, SHALL CONTACT, BY RADIO OR TELEPHONE, A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT IN DUTCH HARBOR WITHIN 24 HOURS AFTER THE CLOSURE;

(B) THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT IN DUTCH HARBOR SHALL GRANT A REASONABLE AMOUNT OF ADDITIONAL TIME FOR THE VESSEL TO REACH THE PORT OF DELIVERY; THE AMOUNT OF ADDITIONAL TIME SHALL BE DETERMINED UNDER THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE VESSEL DEPARTED THE FISHING GROUNDS IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CLOSURE AND PROCEEDED DIRECTLY TO THE PROCESSING LOCATION, EXCEPT THAT A VESSEL MAY STOP EN ROUTE AND OFFLOAD POTS AT A STORAGE FACILITY IF THE VESSEL OPERATOR FIRST CONTACTS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE DEPARTMENT IN DUTCH HARBOR AND PROVIDES INFORMATION ON THE LOCATION OF THE STORAGE FACILITY, THE EXPECTED TIME OF GEAR PLACEMENT AT THAT FACILITY, AND THE EXPECTED TIME THE VESSEL WILL DEPART THE STORAGE FACILITY EN ROUTE TO THE PORT OF DELIVERY.]

(c) In the Kodiak, Chignik, and South Peninsula Districts, or a section of those districts, when the Tanner crab fishery is closed, [AND GEAR HAS BEEN STORED AS SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 35.527(6),] a vessel with Tanner crab on board may not be used for any purpose, except to travel to the port of delivery to offload the Tanner crab. The vessel operator may not pull any gear, baited or stored, or place any gear in storage. [ONCE THE TANNER CRAB ON BOARD THE VESSEL HAS BEEN OFF-LOADED TO THE PORT OF DELIVERY, THE VESSEL OPERATOR SHALL IMMEDIATELY REMOVE ANY POT GEAR REMAINING ON THE FISHING GROUNDS AND RETURN ANY CRAB CAUGHT TO THE WATER WITHOUT FURTHER HARM. ALL POT GEAR MUST BE PLACED IN STORAGE OR ON BOARD THE VESSEL WITHIN THREE DAYS FOLLOWING THE CLOSURE OF A SECTION OR DISTRICT.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Modern advancements in at-sea communication, vessel location monitoring, and inseason harvest tracking have made many Registration Area J Tanner crab landing requirements obsolete. The department proposes to streamline these regulations by clarifying the portions that are still useful for fishery management and removing portions that are no longer needed. The simplified regulations would be easier to communicate and enforce without adversely affecting fishery management or catch accounting.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-161)

PROPOSAL 293

5 AAC 32.410. Fishing seasons for Registration Area J.

Amend season dates for the Kodiak District commercial Dungeness crab fishery , as follows:

Bracketed language is removed and bolded language is additive

PROPOSAL XXX

5 AAC 32.410. Fishing seasons for Registration Area J. Amend Dungeness crab season dates for Registration Area J, as follows:

In the [KODIAK,] Chignik, Alaska Peninsula, and Aleutian Districts, male Dungeness crab may be taken or possessed only from 12:00 noon May 1 until 11:59 p.m. October 31; [EXCEPT THAT IN THE WATERS OF THE KODIAK DISTRICT SOUTH OF THE LATITUDE OF BOOT POINT AT 56° 49.98' N. LAT., AND EAST OF LONGITUDE OF BOOT POINT AT 153° 46.10' W. LONG. AND WATERS SOUTH OF THE LATITUDE OF CAPE IKOLIK AT 57° 17.40' N. LAT., AND WEST OF THE LONGITUDE OF BOOT POINT AT 153° 46.10' W. LONG., MALE DUNGENESS CRAB MAY BE TAKEN OR POSSESSED ONLY FROM 12:00 NOON JUNE 15 UNTIL 11:59 P.M. OCTOBER 31.]

(b) In the North Peninsula District, male Dungeness crab may be taken or possessed from 12:00 noon May 1 until 12:00 noon October 18; [.]

(c) In the Kodiak District, male Dungeness crab may be taken or possessed from 12:00 noon June 1 until 12:00 noon November 30.

Original Language:

(a) In the Kodiak, Chignik, Alaska Peninsula, and Aleutian Districts, male Dungeness crab may be taken or possessed only from 12:00 noon May 1 until 11:59 p.m. October 31, except that in the waters of the Kodiak District south of the latitude of Boot Point at 56° 49.98' N. lat., and east of longitude of Boot Point at 153° 46.10' W. long. and waters south of the latitude of Cape Ikolik at 57° 17.40' N. lat., and west of the longitude of Boot Point at 153° 46.10' W. long., male Dungeness crab may be taken or possessed only from 12:00 noon June 15 until 11:59 p.m. October 31.

(b) In the North Peninsula District, male Dungeness crab may be taken or possessed from 12:00 noon May 1 until 12:00 noon October 18.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like to address the dungeness season start and end dates in the Kodiak district. A later start date will avoid the abundance of soft shell crab early in the season. Aligning the Kodiak area opening dates will spread the fleet out more evenly and reduce gear conflict,

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. I let fish and game know we were going to submit the proposal and received advice on where to insert the new language. I brought this forward after a group of active dungeness fishermen requested it.

PROPOSED BY: Garrett Kavanaugh

(EF-F24-006)

PROPOSAL 294

5 AAC 32.4XX. New section.

Establish 58-foot vessel length limit for Alaska Peninsula District commercial Dungeness crab fishery, as follows:

I would like a 58 feet length overall vessel length limit for the Alaska Peninsula Dungeness crab fisheries participants, similar to the South Peninsula Tanner crab fishery vessel length limit.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Size limit on vessels participating in the Dungeness crab fishery for the Alaska Peninsula District of Area J. Vessel size limit should be uniform for all the state-waters crab fisheries in the area.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This proposal was developed with other fishermen from the region.

PROPOSED BY: Kenneth Mack (EF-F24-095)

PROPOSAL 295

5 AAC 32.410. Fishing seasons for Registration Area J.

Amend Dungeness crab season dates for the North Peninsula District of Registration Area J, as follows:

5 AAC 32.410 is amended to read as follows:

(a) In the Kodiak, Chignik, Alaska Peninsula, **North Peninsula**, and Aleutian Districts, male Dungeness crab may be taken or possessed only from 12:00 noon May 1 until 11:59 p.m. October 31, except that in the waters of the Kodiak District south of the latitude of Boot Point at 56° 49.98' N. lat., and east of longitude of Boot Point at 153° 46.10' W. long. and waters south of the latitude of Cape Ikolik at 57° 17.40' N. lat., and west of the longitude of Boot Point at 153° 46.10' W. long., male Dungeness crab may be taken or possessed only from 12:00 noon June 15 until 11:59 p.m. October 31.

(b) **repealed** / / [IN THE NORTH PENINSULA DISTRICT, MALE DUNGENESS CRAB MAY BE TAKEN OR POSSESSED FROM 12:00 NOON MAY 1 UNTIL 12:00 NOON OCTOBER 18.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The North Peninsula District Dungeness crab season currently closes at 12 noon on October 18, whereas all other Dungeness crab districts in Area J (Kodiak, Chignik, Alaska Peninsula, and Aleutian Islands) close at 11:59 p.m. on October 31. The current closure date of October 18 in the North Peninsula District is based on a regulation specifying that Area J Dungeness crab seasons close 14 days prior to the November 1 opening of the Bering Sea Tanner crab season. The Bering Sea Tanner crab season last opened on November 1 in 1996 and has since transitioned to a rationalized fishery (2005) with a fixed season opening date of October 15. The intent of closing Area J Dungeness crab seasons 14 days prior to the opening of the Tanner crab season was to clear the fishing grounds for orderly Tanner crab openings. Current overlap between Bering Sea Tanner and North Peninsula Dungeness crab fisheries is minimal and not expected to change if this proposal is adopted. All other Area J Dungeness crab districts have had a season closure date of October 31 since 2015. Changing the North Peninsula Dungeness crab season closure from October 18 at 12:00 noon to October 31 at

11:59 p.m. would align it with other all other Area J Dungeness crab fisheries, provide consistency in management, and allow additional harvesting opportunity for fishery participants.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-157)

PROPOSAL 296

5 AAC 32.440 Registration Area J inspection points.

Amend Registration Area J Dungeness crab vessel inspection requirements, as follows:

Repeal and readopt 5 AAC 32.440 as follows:

(a) Unless required under (b) of this section, a vessel fishing for Dungeness crab in Registration Area J is not required to undergo a vessel inspection, as specified in 5 AAC 32.030.

(b) The commissioner, by announcement, may require that vessels fishing for Dungeness crab in Registration Area J be inspected as specified in 5 AAC 32.030.

(c) If the commissioner requires a vessel inspection under (b) of this section, the inspection points for Registration Area J are at Kodiak, Sand Point, and Dutch Harbor, and at other locations that may be specified by the commissioner.

[THE INITIAL INSPECTION POINTS AND REINSPECTION POINTS FOR REGISTRATION AREA J ARE AT KODIAK, SAND POINT, AND DUTCH HARBOR, AND AT OTHER LOCATIONS THAT MAY BE SPECIFIED BY THE COMMISSIONER.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Preseason vessel inspections, commonly referred to as “tank checks,” were historically used to verify that vessels did not have crab onboard prior to the opening of a commercial crab season. Advancements in at-sea communication, vessel location monitoring, and inseason harvest tracking have substantially reduced the likelihood of a vessel fishing prior to the season opening without being detected. Thus, the department has been waiving vessel inspections annually for Area J commercial Dungeness crab fisheries for the last 15 years. This proposal aims to align regulation with current management practice by clarifying that inspections are not required for Area J Dungeness crab vessels; however, if the department deems it necessary, vessel inspections may still be required by emergency order.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-158)

PROPOSAL 297

5 AAC 32.053. Operation of other pot gear.

Amend Dungeness crab pot gear operation requirements for Registration Area J, as follows:

5 AAC 32.053 is amended by expanding subsection (e) and adding subsection (f) to read as follows:

(e) The provisions of (b) of this section do not apply to a person or vessel participating in the commercial Pacific cod fisheries described in 5 AAC 28.467 (Kodiak Area), 5 AAC 28.537 (Chignik Area), [OR] 5 AAC 28.577 (South Alaska Peninsula Area), **5 AAC 28.647 (Aleutian Islands Subdistrict), or 5 AAC 28.648 (Dutch Harbor Subdistrict).**

(f) The provisions of (b–d) of this section do not apply to a person or vessel participating in commercial sablefish fisheries in Registration Area J, as described in 5 AAC 32.400.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Commercial Dungeness crab regulations prohibit vessel operators from 1) operating any pot gear in the 14 days prior to a Dungeness crab season opening and 2) from operating any pot gear, other than Dungeness crab pots, during the Dungeness crab season.

An exemption exists in regulation to allow vessel operators in the Kodiak, Chignik, and South Alaska Peninsula Areas to operate pot gear for Pacific cod in the 14 days prior to the Dungeness crab season opening, in recognition that the Pacific cod pot gear and Dungeness crab fisheries both occur at the same time of year (spring) and that some vessels have historically participated in both fisheries. This proposal would extend this exemption to all state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fisheries in Dungeness crab Registration Area J. The current exemption for Kodiak, Chignik, and South Alaska Peninsula Areas has not led to management or enforcement issues; therefore, the department believes that extending this exemption to all districts of Registration Area J would provide additional flexibility to vessel operators and consistency in regulation without adversely affecting fishery management or catch accounting.

Regulations prohibiting the operation of pot gear, other than Dungeness crab pots, by a vessel participating in a Dungeness crab fishery are intended to aid fishery management and catch accounting by allowing a vessel to participate in only one pot gear fishery at a time. These regulations were adopted prior to the advent of pot gear being used in directed sablefish fisheries. Some vessel operators who have historically participated in both Dungeness crab and directed sablefish fisheries concurrently are now unable to use sablefish pot gear due to these regulations. Little spatial overlap exists between Dungeness crab and sablefish habitat and the department believes allowing vessel operators to operate both types of pot gear concurrently in Registration Area J would provide additional flexibility to individual fishing operations without adversely affecting fishery management, bycatch, or catch accounting.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-159)

Scallops (1 proposal)

PROPOSAL 298

5 AAC 38.078 State-Waters Weathervane Scallop Management Plan

Amend the State-Waters Weathervane Management Plan to ban scallop dredges, allow pots and other gear types to be used, impose trip limits, require observers, and eliminate the VMS requirement.

- 1.) Ban scallop dredges in state waters.
- 2.) Allow pots or other non bottom scraping gear to fish scallops only.

- 3.) impose weekly trip limits of 800 pounds.
- 4.) eliminate observer coverage if gear is shown to fish with no bycatch.
- 5.) no VMS (Vessel monitoring system) required.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? 1.) In the state waters weathervane scallop fishery, eliminate the preseason registration deadline. Allow registration anytime during the scallop fishing season.

- 2.) Eliminate big trips of scallops coming from state waters.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. I approached Kodiak F&G scallop management leader. He said he wasn't interested in any new scallop gear type.

PROPOSED BY: Thomas J Gilmartin Jr (EF-F24-087)

Shrimp (13 proposals)

Management Plan (6 proposals)

PROPOSAL 299

5 AAC 31.XXX. New Section. and 5 AAC 55.055 - Prince William Sound Noncommercial Shrimp Fishery Management Plan.

Develop a Prince William Sound pot shrimp management plan, as follows:

Board action to compel the Department to develop a comprehensive PWS pot shrimp management plan in accordance with 5 AAC 39.200. For example, reference the SE Alaska pot shrimp management plan and the Regional Information report(1J06-08), both Department generated documents.

As a secondary measure, Consider reinstatement of 5 AAC 31.260 Prince William Sound commercial pot shrimp management plan to define management goals.

Implement a shrimp task force similar to the SE Alaska pot shrimp task force approved by the Board of Fish in 2003 (accepted in 2006 _RIR 1J06-08), which remains un-amended. The purpose of this panel would be to develop and maintain a comprehensive management plan. Having a comprehensive plan would lead to proactive management, in contrast to the current historical reporting method used for regulatory changes, which is reactive (managed by EO).

With a comprehensive Management plan, guidance to fishery managers will exist and can be in place before there is negative resource impact. This will limit the Emergency Order process, resulting in proactive, not a reactive, sustained yield management of PWS pot shrimp.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently, there is no comprehensive Prince William Sound pot shrimp management plan. The intent of this proposal is to compel the Board of Fisheries and the department of fish and game to develop a Fishery Management Plan (FMP) as supported by regulation.

To date, The PWS pot shrimp fishery is managed and guided by the regulations cited above. These regulations are useful, but not refined enough, which results in management reliance on emergency orders to operate.

These regulations are vague in the context of a FMP and do not define the specific parameters needed to effectively support the Maximum Sustained Yield (MSY) of the resource.

The existing regulations fail to address concerns such as stock assessment, reporting measures, in-season management, conservation goals, and resource access that may not be appropriately weighted, specifically given the intent or involvement of particular user groups. The goal of a comprehensive plan would be to define a framework that outlasts management changes.

A consistent definition (plan) for conservation and MSY management of this precious resource is more than appropriate.

It is necessary to develop a standing body of regulation that considers all aspects of the PWS pot shrimp fishery, for all user groups, and provide guidance for ADF&G management into the future while prosecuting the fishery in perpetuity.

We Are Addressing the Board of Fish to direct the ADF&G to support achievement of the goal defined regulation as follows.

5 AAC 39.200 - Application of fishery management plans

(a) The Board of Fisheries has implemented by regulation fishery management plans that provide the Department of Fish and Game with guidelines to be followed when making management decisions regarding the state's subsistence, commercial, sport and personal use fisheries. The primary goal of these management plans is to protect the sustained yield of the state's fishery resources while at the same time providing an equitable distribution of the available harvest between various users. The regulations contained in this section are intended to aid in the achievement of that goal and therefore will apply to all fishery management plans contained in 5 AAC 03 - 5 AAC 39.

If a Fishery Management Plan is not considered, developed, and implemented for the harvest of PWS spot shrimp, the fishery will continue to be managed in a reactionary fashion, instead of being proactive for conservation and MSY goals. Continuing to operate the fishery in this way will prevent the progressive management of this stock.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This proposal was developed at length and with considerable input by fishery participants, The Valdez ADF&G Advisory Committee, The Whittier ADF&G Advisory Committee, the staff of the Department of Fish and Game, and ShrimpPros Association.

PROPOSED BY: PWS/Valdez and Whittier Advisory Committee (HQ-F24-047)

PROPOSAL 300

5 AAC 55.055. Prince William Sound noncommercial shrimp fishery management plan.

Modify the Prince William Sound noncommercial shrimp fishery management plan, as follows:

Split the TAH for noncommercial into the same areas used as harvest areas for the commercial spot fishery and manage the noncommercial fishery to achieve these individual harvest limits. This will force the noncommercial users to spread their harvest throughout the sound which is what needs to happen if the TAH is to be based on the Sound-wide population.

Modify as follows:

5 AAC 55.055. Prince William Sound noncommercial shrimp fishery management plan:

(a) The department shall manage the sport and other noncommercial shrimp fisheries in the Prince William Sound Area as follows:

(1) the guideline harvest level for shrimp taken by pot gear in noncommercial fisheries is calculated as 60 percent of the total allowable harvest for the area. **This GHL will be divided between the districts described in 5 AAC 31.210(a) annually based on the pot survey CPUE for each district.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like the department to create three areas for sport fish. The spot shrimp population is in trouble with decreasing survey results and a large drop off in CPUE in both the commercial and noncommercial fishery. We believe this is in part due to the GHL/TAH being based on the population of shrimp in the entire area, but the majority of the harvest occurring in only small sections of the area. Because the noncommercial sector harvests the majority of the shrimp, it is imperative that regulation is in place to prevent this harvest from occurring in too small of an area. We believe this has been happening for years as we've seen evidence of localized depletion of shrimp near ports in areas most accessible to noncommercial users.

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-F24-142)

PROPOSAL 301

5 AAC 55.055. Prince William Sound noncommercial shrimp fishery management plan.

Modify the Prince William Sound noncommercial shrimp fishery management plan, as follows;

Modify 5 AAC 55.055 section (a) by adding:

(4) The estimated total allowable harvest for the waters described in 5 AAC 31.210(a) must be more than 110,000 pounds of spot shrimp by round weight before a sport or personal use shrimp pot fishery may be opened.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current spot prawn management plan closes the commercial fishery when the total allowable harvest for both commercial and noncommercial falls below 110,000lbs. It does not have a similar closure requirement for noncommercial, even though they harvest a larger share of the TAH. Allowing sport and personal use harvest when the population is depressed below that which could support a commercial fishery should not be allowed because these user groups have the same priority under

law. We propose an identical closure of sport and PU as is regulated for commercial use if the shrimp stocks fall below the 110,000 lb threshold.

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-F24-139)

PROPOSAL 302

5 AAC 31.214. Shrimp pot guideline harvest level for Registration Area E.

Modify the Prince William Sound shrimp pot fishery guideline harvest level, as follows

5 AAC 31.214. Shrimp pot guideline harvest level for Registration Area E

~~[The estimated total allowable harvest for the waters described in 5 AAC 31.210(a) must be more than 110,000 pounds of spot shrimp by round weight before a commercial shrimp pot fishery may be opened.]~~ **The total allowable harvest for the waters described in 5 AAC 31.210(a) is set at 150,000 pounds of spot shrimp by round weight.** The guideline harvest level for the commercial pot gear fishery in the waters described in 5 AAC 31.210(a) is 40 percent of the total allowable harvest for the area. The department will, to the extent practicable, manage the fishery to allow no more than 50 percent of the guideline harvest level to be taken from any one statistical area. The commissioner will open and close fishing seasons by emergency order, during which pot limits, time, or area may be adjusted to achieve the 50 percent statistical area harvest target.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently, the PWS total allowable harvest (TAH) is determined each year by a surplus production model. This is difficult to encapsulate in a proposal and I am sure it will be explained and discussed in detail during the Board meeting. The impetus of this proposal is that the model for the TAH is using only as variable inputs 1) Catch per unit effort (CPUE) from the department annual survey, 2) Total Harvest in the Recreational Fishery, and 3) Total harvest in the Commercial Fishery. While at first glance this seems reasonable, a closer investigation reveals that the two most impactful inputs to the model (Recreational and Commercial Harvest) are in fact determined by the model. Theoretically, the model estimates a surplus production, sets a TAH, the fishery is then actively managed to achieve that TAH, which then puts back into the model exactly what it puts out. This is reflected in the TAHs that we have had over the years being remarkably consistent. They seem to be mostly unaffected by changes in survey cpue and in fact almost all the fluctuations in TAH year to year correspond with harvest levels in the previous year sport fishery. This is because the non-commercial fishery is not able to be managed as precisely and consequently fluctuates a good bit. These fluctuations seem to be the primary influence in the TAH. This is problematic as the non-commercial harvest is not really an indice of abundance. It is an indice of angler days on the water which is heavily influenced by weather, fishing opportunities elsewhere in the state, and socio-economic factors. CPUE is consistent year to year for the most part and harvest is subsequently largely a function of effort.

I am not complaining about the model. I have intense investment in this fishery and want it to be managed to the best degree possible in order to preserve the fishery and the resource for years to come. It has been the best available science, and I have always supported it. Recently, fluctuations in the cpue of the department annual survey that have not been observed in the cpue or harvest of

the sport and commercial fisheries, along with other existing factors like the one I mentioned in the previous paragraph, have led to discussions with multiple staff members where they have expressed dissatisfaction in the current method of assigning the TAH. It is my hope that by the time of the meeting we will have some sort of an idea as to a better way of assessing shrimp populations in PWS and can move forward with the best available science.

I am putting this proposal in largely as a "placeholder" in the hope that a new and better method for setting the TAH will be brought forward by the department by the time of the meeting. However, if the department no longer has confidence in the current model and a new method has not been decided upon; the best course of action seems to be to set a fixed GHL the same way we do in most other small state waters fishery without accurate enumeration. This is very common and almost all small state waters fin fish fisheries have GHLS set in this fashion. Usually this has been done by assessing historical harvests. Fortunately in the PWS shrimp fishery historical harvests have been overall fairly consistent. We can see that setting a TAH of 150,000 pounds, which would then be allocated 60% to the sport fishery and 40% to the commercial fishery as it currently is, would be in line with historical harvests that have been sustainable for the 14 years since the fishery reopened.

In general, this fishery is currently in a state of flux and there is a lot of uncertainty surrounding many aspects of it. I have participated extensively in this fishery since its reopening in 2010 and have been heavily involved with the board of fish process regarding the current management plan. This proposal is part of a suite of proposals in which I attempt to anticipate potential issues that exist currently, may arise during the 2024 season or ongoing CFEC process regarding potential limited entry for this fishery, continued uncertainty from the department regarding the current survey and biometric surplus population model, and narratives coming into the 2025 regulatory meeting. I feel that there is significant likelihood of the need to review and adapt much of the current regulatory plan and am submitting proposals concerning several aspects of the plan in order to foster discussion, and serve as a starting point if the need for serious revision of the plan is thought necessary.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. I have discussed the management of this shrimp fishery with multiple ACs, other participants in both the recreational and commercial fisheries, and ADFG staff many times and will continue to do so leading up to the 2025 meeting.

PROPOSED BY: Joseph Person

(EF-F24-073)

PROPOSAL 303

5 AAC 31.214. Shrimp pot guideline harvest level for Registration Area E.

Modify the Prince William Sound shrimp pot fishery guideline harvest level, as follows:

5 AAC 31.214. Shrimp pot guideline harvest level for Registration Area E

~~The estimated total allowable harvest for the waters described in 5 AAC 31.210(a) must be more than 110,000 pounds of spot shrimp by round weight before a commercial shrimp pot fishery may be opened.~~ The guideline harvest level for the commercial pot gear fishery in the waters described in 5 AAC 31.210(a) is 40 percent of the total allowable harvest for the area. The department will, to the extent practicable, manage the fishery to allow no more than 50 percent of the guideline harvest level to be taken from any one statistical area. The commissioner will open and close

fishing seasons by emergency order, during which pot limits, time, or area may be adjusted to achieve the 50 percent statistical area harvest target.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently, the total allowable harvest (TAH) must exceed 110,000 lbs in order for the commercial fishery to open, but the recreational fishery is prosecuted at all levels of the TAH. The Sustainable Salmon Fisheries Policy offers a good template for all fisheries with multiple user groups when it states " the burden of conservation shall be shared among all fisheries in close proportion to each fisheries' respective use". This is easily achieved withing the directed shrimp fisheries by merely maintaining the same allocation levels at all TAH levels. If there are available surplus shrimp for harvest, then the commercial fishery should be able to harvest their share of them. Management in the commercial fishery is extremely precise and has a very good track record of managing to their guideline harvest level (GHL). There is no reason why in times of low abundance a smaller more restricted fishery could not take place to harvest the commercial share of the TAH.

The commercial shrimp fishery in Prince William Sound (PWS) is a very unique entry level small boat fishery, and a majority of harvesters direct market their shrimp or otherwise move them through non traditional value added markets. Very few are sold to large scale processors. It would be extremely damaging to these market streams to have a closed season with zero product available. Being able to offer limited supply to markets during a reduced GHL season in times of lower abundance would be very valuable.

In general this fishery is currently in a state of flux and there is a lot of uncertainty surrounding many aspects of it. I have participated extensively in this fishery since its reopening in 2010 and have been heavily involved with the board of fish process regarding the current management plan. This proposal is part of a suite of proposals in which I attempt to anticipate potential issues that exist currently, may arise during the 2024 season or ongoing CFEC process regarding potential limited entry for this fishery, continued uncertainty from the department regarding the current survey and biometric surplus population model, and narratives coming into the 2025 regulatory meeting. I feel that there is significant likelihood of the need to review and adapt much of the current regulatory plan. Consequently, am submitting proposals concerning several aspects of the plan in order to foster discussion, and serve as a starting point if the need for serious revision of the management plan is thought necessary.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. I have discussed the contents of this proposal with multiple ACs, other participants in both the recreational and commercial fisheries, and ADFG staff many times and will continue to do so leading up to the 2025 meeting.

PROPOSED BY: Joseph Person

(EF-F24-074)

PROPOSAL 304

5 AAC 55.055 Prince William Sound Noncommercial Shrimp Fishery Management Plan, 5 AAC 55.022 General Provisions for Seasons, Bag, Possession, and Size Limits, and Methods and Means for the Prince William Sound Area, 5 AAC 31.210 Shrimp Pot Fishing Seasons for Registration Area E.

Delay the season opening by two weeks in the noncommercial and commercial shrimp fisheries, as follows:

A delayed opening of two weeks would bring the percentage of egg-bearing shrimp to the target 5% ratio. This would allow more shrimp eggs to be released, enhance recruitment and increase brood stock, thereby improving the shrimp fishery. This opening date would apply to all user groups to avoid the harvest of egg bearing shrimp. To achieve this, open all pot shrimp fisheries in Prince William Sound on May 1st by regulation.

- 5 AAC 55.055(a)(3)(A) only from May 1st [APRIL 15] through September 15;
- 5 AAC 55.022(b)(5)(A) may be taken from May 1st [APRIL 15] - September 15;
- 5 AAC 31.210(a) ..., shrimp may be taken from May 1st [APRIL 15] through September 15,

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current regulatory shrimp season opening date of April 15 allows a significant number of egg-bearing females to be harvested early in the season. This practice may be a significant contributor to the current declines of PWS spot shrimp numbers.

Field observations show a high percentage of egg-bearing shrimp are caught early in the season and late in the season. The data shows a significant harvest of egg-bearing shrimp in the beginning of the season that exceeds the desired levels. A two-week delay will bring this number down to a target level of less than 5% ratio, as a suggested guideline. Supporting this proposal will create an increased shrimp spawn release before the shrimp fishing season opens by regulation. This provides increased biomass of shrimp over time by not harvesting the spawning females.

Without implementing this change, there will be continued harvest of egg-bearing female shrimp, thereby reducing the amount of shrimp that would ever be able to be harvested.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. ShrimpPros Association members have worked independently and with Department of Fish and Game staff to verify the sampling methods, collect samples and compile data about the number of egg-bearing shrimp that are being harvested. As long term participants in this fishery, ShrimpPros has taken a leadership role and supports regulatory protection for this resource by working with ADF&G staff, and other stakeholders, encouraging changes that demonstrate good resource stewardship and conservation.

PROPOSED BY: ShrimpPros Association (HQ-F24-050)

Noncommercial (3 proposals)

PROPOSAL 305

5 AAC 55.055. Prince William Sound noncommercial shrimp fishery management plan.

Prohibit noncommercial shrimp participants from carrying additional shrimp gear, as follows:

Modify 5 AAC 55.055 section (a) (3) as follows:

- (3) shrimp may be taken with pots as follows:
 - (A) only from April 15 through September 15;
 - (B) no bag, possession, or size limit;
 - (C) no more than five pots per vessel may be used to take shrimp.

(D) no more than the regulatory number of pots allowed to be used per person and per vessel may be aboard a vessel while participating in the noncommercial shrimp fishery.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The noncommercial shrimp pot fishery is managed in part by a pot limit per vessel set at the beginning of each season based on the GHL. However, shrimpers are allowed to carry "spare pots" in excess of the pot limit aboard their vessel. This allowance for spare pots makes enforcement of the pot limit extremely difficult: a trooper cannot simply board a vessel and count how many pots are aboard when they depart or return to port. Shrimp fishermen in PWS have started exploiting this "spare pot" loophole in order to drastically increase the number of pots fished per vessel. Now vessels are regularly heading out with multiple permit holders aboard and multiple limits of shrimp pots which they call "spares". Once the vessel sets one permit holder's limit worth of shrimp pots, they simply add marked buoys to their "spare pots" for the next permit holder on board and go set those. In this way they are capable of fishing far more gear per boat than was ever intended by the regulations.

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-F24-138)

PROPOSAL 306

5 AAC 31.245. Reporting requirements for Registration Area E.

Modify the Prince William Sound shrimp pot reporting requirements, as follows:

Add additional section (f) to 5 AAC 31.245

5 AAC 31.245. Reporting requirements for Registration Area E:

...

(f) An owner or operator of a vessel registered to fish in the commercial Shrimp pot fishery must report each day to the department as specified on registration:

(1) the number of pot lifts;

(2) the round weight of all shrimp taken by species and statistical area for the 24-hour fishing period preceding the report;

(3) any other information that the commissioner determines is necessary for the conservation and management of the fishery

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The lack of inseason reporting requirements in the PWS spot shrimp fishery forces the department to have long closures in the middle of season to get harvest information. Long closures in the middle of a season are not commonplace in fisheries unless there is a biological concern, as they add to the expenses incurred by commercial fishermen in fuel, insurance, crew and opportunity cost. Daily reporting requirements are no longer a burden on fishermen. Cell phone coverage is available almost everywhere in the Sound. Satellite texting devices such as inreaches are affordable options. We used the inseason reporting regulatory language already in place for Tanner Crab in Prince William sound to draft the proposed regulation.

It is our hope that with this change in regulation the department can manage this fishery like it does almost every other pot fishery in the state, including the Southeast shrimp pot fishery, and

manage with a single open period. This will reduce the cost to participate in the fishery because participants will not have to retrieve their pots and return to port mid-season.

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-F24-145)

PROPOSAL 307

5 AAC 55.022. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area, 5 AAC 55.055. Prince William Sound Noncommercial Shrimp Fishery Management Plan.

Align the season start time of the Prince William Sound noncommercial and commercial shrimp fisheries, as follows:

Open all pot shrimp fisheries in Prince William Sound at the same time by regulation.

5 AAC 55.022(b)(5)(A) may be taken from April 15 **at 8:00AM through** [-] September 15;

5 AAC 55.055(a)(3)(A) only from April 15 **at 8:00AM** through September 15;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? All shrimp fishing in Prince William Sound starts on the same regulatory day, but only the start time for the commercial fishery is specified in regulation;

5 AAC 31.223 - Lawful shrimp pot gear for Registration Area E

(e)(3) shrimp pot gear may be deployed or retrieved only from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. each day;

This has led to a situation where enforcement of the regulatory commercial start time is difficult due to sport gear in the water ahead of the season opener for commercial shrimp gear. Safety concerns related to the derby start time for the commercial season and interaction with recreational vessels operating in the designated commercial area could be mitigated. This has also led to gear conflicts between non-commercial and commercial operators on opening day. These conflicts are avoidable by coordinating the PWS shrimp season start time for all stakeholders.

Failure to implement these changes will result in continued gear conflict, inability to enforce opening times, and general confusion with gear in the water. There will continue to be challenges to safety, enforcement, and regulatory compliance without a standard time for all participants in the season openings.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This proposal was developed at length and with considerable input by fishery participants, The Valdez Advisory Committee, The Whittier Advisory Committee, the staff of the Department of Fish and Game, and ShrimpPros Association.

Commercial (4 proposals)

PROPOSAL 308

5 AAC 31.223. Lawful shrimp pot gear for Registration Area E.

Reduce the total number of shrimp pots allowed in the Prince William Sound shrimp pot fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 31.223. Lawful shrimp pot gear for Registration Area E

...

(e) Shrimp pots may only be operated as follows:

(1) the department will announce annually, before the opening of the commercial shrimp pot fishery season, the number of shrimp pots that may be operated from a vessel in the commercial shrimp pot fishery for that season, not to exceed [100] **25** shrimp pots per vessel; in determining the annual pot limit, the department will consider the

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently vessel pot limits in the Prince William Sound commercial shrimp fishery management plan are set to a maximum of 100 pots per vessel. This is a small fishery in a relatively restricted fishing area with very high levels of participation. Department managers have never set a pot limit over 60 pots and we have not had a pot limit of over 40 pots since 2015. In three of the last 5 years we have had a pot limit of 25 pots and the fishery prosecuted quite successfully. Despite the lower pot limits, during the first opening when up to 60+ vessels participate, it feels like there are shrimp pots at every conceivable place you might think to set a shrimp pot. It is often very crowded and complaints about gear conflict are quite common. In areas 1 and 2 the commercial fishery overlaps heavily with the recreational fishery and there are even more pots in the water. Smaller pot limits requiring more targeted fishing are workable in this fishery, and small pot limits allow the department to more precisely target the GHJ as potential volatility in harvest levels is greatly reduced. It goes without saying that higher pot limits also would lead to more lost gear and bottom impacts from pots which is unnecessary in a fishery with a remarkably low social and environmental impact. In general, I think that this fishery has found a healthy, unique, niche as a low barrier to entry introductory fishery. Slower paced fishing more amenable to direct marketing practices has greatly increased the per pound value by over double relative to other spot prawn fisheries elsewhere in the state. Management practices over the last few years have worked very well, the fishery has thrived, and multiple participants have developed business models working within its unique constraints and still maintaining profitability. I think that moving the regulatory maximum pot limit to numbers more in line with the limits actually used in the modern day fishery is warranted. The current unrealistic maximum pot limit in regulation leads to unknown expectations on gear requirements to participate in the fishery as the first announcement setting pot limits comes out very shortly before the fishery begins. Furthermore the unrealistically high maximum pot limit set in regulations contributes to disruptive efforts to 'over commercialize' and disrupt the orderly operation of this fishery and the unique, high value, low impact advantages that it has by repeated requests from some sectors of the fishery to allow much higher pot limits. I think the BoF should make clear and confirm the unique role this fishery has in the greater overall fisheries eco-system as a low barrier to entry, small boat, low pot limit, direct market fishery.

In general, this fishery is currently in a state of flux and there is a lot of uncertainty surrounding many aspects of it. I have participated extensively in this fishery since its reopening in 2010 and have been heavily involved with the board of fish process regarding the current management plan. This proposal is part of a suite of proposals in which I attempt to anticipate potential issues that exist currently, may arise during the 2024 season or ongoing CFEC process regarding potential limited entry for this fishery, continued uncertainty from the department regarding the current survey and biometric surplus population model, and narratives coming into the 2025 regulatory meeting. I feel that there is significant likelihood of the need to review and adapt much of the current regulatory plan and am submitting proposals concerning several aspects of the plan in order to foster discussion, and serve as a starting point if the need for serious revision of the plan is thought necessary.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. I have discussed the management of this shrimp fishery with multiple ACs, other participants in both the recreational and commercial fisheries, and ADFG staff many times and will continue to do so leading up to the 2025 meeting.

PROPOSED BY: Joseph Person

(EF-F24-072)

PROPOSAL 309

5 AAC 31.510. Fishing Seasons for Registration Area J.

Change season dates for Registration Area J commercial shrimp fishery, as follows:

In Registration Area J, shrimp may only be taken from **April 1 through December 31** [JUNE 1 THROUGH FEBRUARY 28] and only under the terms of a permit issued by the department. In the permit, the department may specify

- (1) fishing area;
- (2) logbook requirements;
- (3) biological sample collection requirements;
- (4) reporting requirements;
- (5) time-period specific harvest limits (trip limits); and
- (6) any other conditions that the department determines as necessary for conservation or management of the fishery.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal addresses a season timing issue for the commercial shrimp fishery in Registration Area J to improve market development, safety, and diversification opportunity. The current fishing season begins at the same time as the salmon fishery, so the small boat fleet that participates in salmon is only able to participate in this shrimp fishery in the fall and winter months with more inclement weather. Moving the start and stop dates forward allows for smaller boats that are busy in the summer months to explore this experimental fishery when the weather is better resulting in increased safety conditions and seasonal opportunity. Furthermore, the current season timing in regulation focuses harvest of shrimp when they are often full of eggs. Developing markets have indicated more demand for shrimp with no or fewer eggs due to meat retention issues, so this proposal change would assist in meeting that demand by working in harmony with processor interest.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. No

PROPOSED BY: Christopher Johnson (HQ-F24-055)

PROPOSAL 310

5 AAC 31.210 Shrimp pot fishing seasons for Registration Area E.

Remove the Prince William Sound shrimp pot fishing area rotation, as follows:

We propose doing away with the tri annual rotation and instead opening all three areas each year each with their own separate harvest limits.

5 AAC 31.210. Shrimp pot fishing seasons for Registration Area E

(a) ...Fishing in this area will be [ROTATED ON A TRI-ANNUAL BASIS BETWEEN THE FOLLOWING WATERS] **divided into the following districts**

5 AAC 31.214. Shrimp pot guideline harvest level for Registration Area E

...The guideline harvest level for the commercial pot gear fishery in the waters described in 5 AAC 31.210(a) is 40 percent of the total allowable harvest for the area. **This GHL will be divided between the districts described in 5 AAC 31.210(a) annually based on the pot survey CPUE for each district.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We would like the department to stop the rotation of commercial areas. The spot shrimp population in PWS is in trouble, with decreasing survey results and a large drop off in CPUE in both the commercial and noncommercial fishery. We believe this is in part due to the area rotation on a tri-annual basis that this regulation requires. Under current regulation, the department sets a total allowable harvest every year based on their population model for the entire Sound. It then allows that entire harvest to come from one of three small areas each year. This results in heavy fishing pressure on the less productive areas like area 3 which currently does not have 1/3 the shrimp biomass. Opportunity to best protect the resource is being missed when the department is using this system to set the harvest/ limit the same for the less productive southwestern part of the Sound as it does for the northern areas with robust shrimp populations. The shrimp population would be better protected by taking a small harvest in each area every year, instead of a large harvest in one area every three years.

We hope the department uses this opportunity to propose a more appropriate shrimp management plan with areas based on shrimp population densities and habitat, not the crude square boxes currently being used.

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-F24-141)

PROPOSAL 311

5 AAC 31. 2XX. New section.

Allow vessels participating in the Prince William Sound shrimp pot fishery to also operate as tenders, as follows:

Create new regulatory language that allows boats to act as tenders while also participating in the fishery. That way fishermen could put all of their catch on one boat to take to a processor. Regulation like this is currently in place for the Kodiak District Dungeness fishery.

5 AAC 31.2XX Tenders for Shrimp

Notwithstanding 5 AAC 31.033, in the Prince William Sound Area, a vessel registered to fish for shrimp may tender shrimp from other registered shrimp vessels. A tender operator must be an authorized agent of a processor. Before using a vessel as a tender under this section, the tender operator shall register as a tender with the department at the department office. A tender operator shall complete an ADF&G fish ticket at the first point of delivery from the catcher vessel.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Allow vessels that are participating in the shrimp fishery to also be used as tender vessels to transport shrimp back to port. Fresh shrimp need to be frozen or sold within three days of harvest. It doesn't make sense for 50 shrimp boats to all run back and forth to town every three days when they could simply consolidate their catch on one boat. The low volume in these fisheries make it difficult to afford a dedicated tender vessel. Allowing participants to tender would greatly increase the profitability of this fishery. It would also enable more access to this resource for local Prince William Sound communities and processors.

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-F24-140)
