



## ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME REPORT TO THE NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Fisheries managed by the State of Alaska since the last Council report includes those for crab and Pacific cod.

**Bering Sea/ Aleutian Islands crab.** During the 2016/17 season, fisheries opened for Aleutian Islands golden king crab, Bristol Bay red king crab and Eastern Bering Sea snow (*opilio*) crab. Ten percent of each TAC is allocated to the Community Development Quota (CDQ) fisheries; ten percent of the western Aleutian Islands golden king crab TAC is allocated to the Adak Community Allocation (ACA) fishery. The fishery for Bristol Bay red king crab has concluded.

### Bering Sea snow crab

The Bering Sea snow crab fishery opened on October 15, 2016 and will remain open through May 15, 2017 in the Eastern Subdistrict (between 166° W long. and 173° W long.) and through May 31, 2017 in the Western Subdistrict (west of 173° W long.). The 2016/17 snow crab TAC is 21.57 mlbs. Twenty-eight vessels are currently active and have harvested a total of 5.68 mlbs (26% of TAC). Catch rates are highly variable between vessels; the average CPUE is 214 crabs per pot.

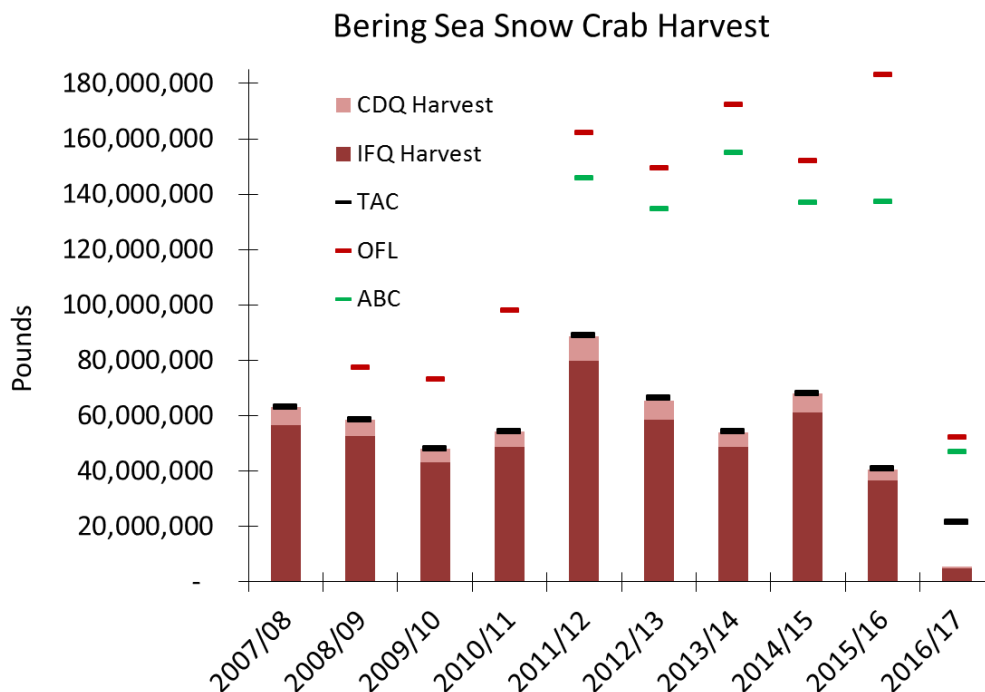


Figure 1. Bering Sea snow crab harvest, TAC, OFL, and ABC; 2007/08 – 2016/17 seasons.

## Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab

The 2016/17 Area 0 (Aleutian Islands) golden king crab fishery opened August 1, 2016. The TAC is set at 5.545 million pounds (2,853 mt) by regulation and is apportioned east and west of 174° W long; the eastern TAC is 3.31 million pounds and the western TAC is 2.235 million pounds. Fishing in both the eastern and western areas is ongoing. In the east area, three vessels have harvested 3.28 million pounds, or about 99% of the TAC. In the west area, three vessels have harvested 1.35 million pounds, or about 60% of the TAC. Catch rates were higher in the east area, at 31 crabs per pot compared to 15 crabs per pot in the west area.

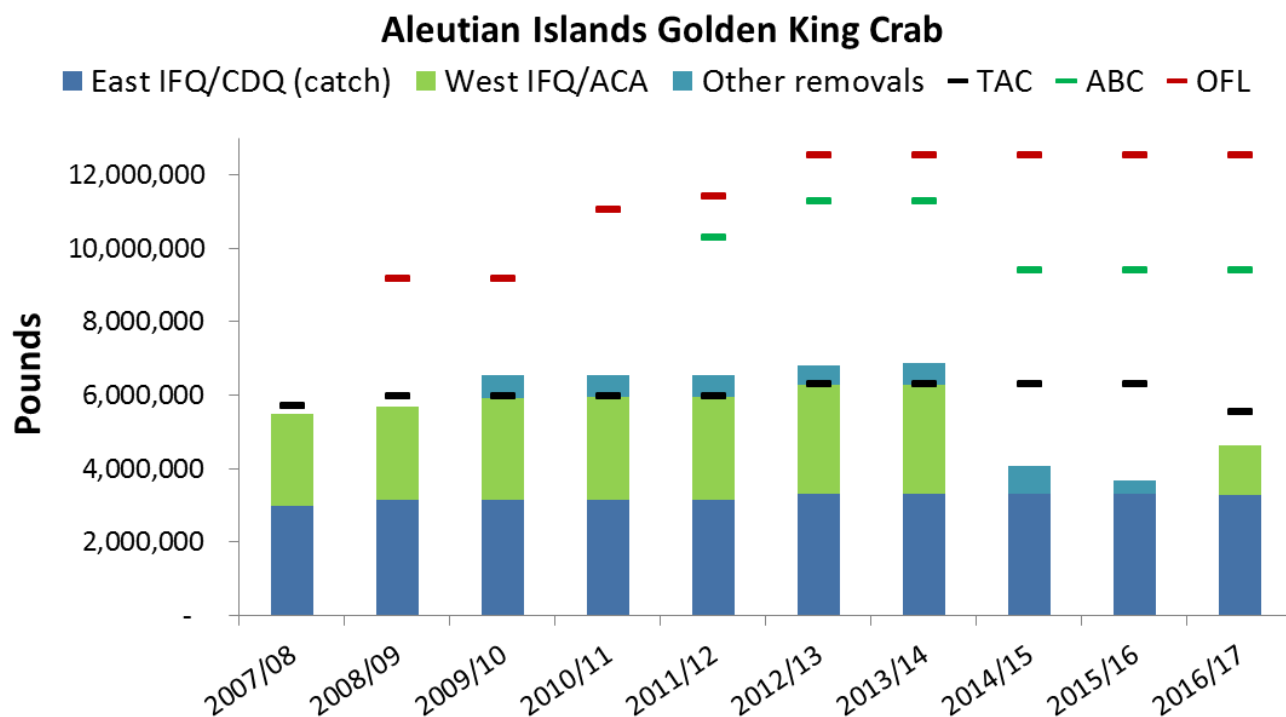


Figure 2. Aleutian Islands golden king crab harvest, TAC, OFL, and ABC; 2007/08 – 2016/17 seasons.

**Pacific Cod.** State-water Pacific cod fisheries are established in the Prince William Sound, Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Chignik, South Alaska Peninsula, and Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Management Areas. Guideline Harvest Levels (GHLs) are calculated as a percentage of area ABCs as follows:

| State Management Area     | Pacific cod ABC | GHL as % of ABC |       | 2017 GHL (mt) |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------|---------------|
| Prince William Sound      | EGOA            | 25%             |       | 1,968         |
| Chignik                   | CGOA            | 25%             | 8.75% | 3,866         |
| Kodiak                    |                 |                 | 12.5% | 5,523         |
| Cook Inlet                |                 |                 | 3.75% | 1,657         |
| South Alaska Peninsula    | WGOA            | 30%             |       | 10,887        |
| Dutch Harbor Subdistrict  | BS              | 6.4%            |       | 15,296        |
| Aleutian Islands District | AI              | 27%             |       | 5,805         |

## **Alaska Board of Fisheries**

### **STATEWIDE KING AND TANNER CRAB AND SUPPLEMENTAL ISSUES MEETING**

March 20–24, 2017, Anchorage, Coast International Hotel;

Public Comment Deadline – February 27, 2017

### ***BSAI King and Tanner Crab***

- 242 Correct an error in regulation to accurately specify the percentage of mature male blue king crab used in setting total allowable catch.
- 250 Allow full retention of legal male *C. opilio* crab incidentally harvested by vessels targeting *C. bairdi* crab in the Bering Sea District west of 166° W. long.
- 251 Change season closure date from March 31 to April 15 for *C. bairdi* Tanner crab in waters west of 166° W long.
- 252 Allow a vessel carrying an onboard observer to rig, bait, and set gear for a new crab fishery before fully exiting the crab fishery for which the observer was briefed.
- 253 Allow a vessel participating in a rationalized crab fishery to rig, bait, and set pot gear for a new crab fishery prior to fully exiting the crab fishery for which the vessel is validly registered.
- 254 Amend the description of a hybrid Tanner crab so that hybrid designation is dependent upon the target Tanner crab fishery for which the vessel is validly registered.
- 255 All full retention of incidentally taken legal male *C. opilio* Tanner crab when a vessel is participating in the *C. bairdi* Tanner crab fishery east of 166° W. long.

- 256 Allow full retention of legal male *C. bairdi* Tanner crab incidentally harvested by vessels targeting Bristol Bay red king crab.
- 257 Extend the Bering Sea District eastern boundary for retention of *C. opilio* crab from 166° W. long. to 165° W. long.
- 258 Extend the Bering Sea District eastern boundary for retention of *C. bairdi* crab from 163° W. long. to 162° W. long.
- 259 Specify that escape rings and mesh are placed on a vertical plane or side of the pot in the Saint Matthew Island Section blue king crab fishery.
- 260 Adopt by reference the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Chionoecetes Crab Quick Reference Guide for *C. bairdi* and *C. opilio* Tanner crab.
- 261 Allow *C. opilio* Tanner crab bycatch retention up to five percent in the Bering Sea District *C. bairdi* Tanner crab fishery, east of 166° W. long.
- 262 Develop a management plan for the Western Aleutian District commercial Tanner crab fishery.
- 263 Reduce onboard observer coverage rates and change observer deployment periods for the Aleutian Islands golden king crab fishery.
- 264 Repeal provisions allowing concurrent harvest of red and golden king crab in Registration Area O.

***Chignik Pacific cod***

- 274 Reduce waters closed for the protection of Steller sea lions during the parallel Pacific cod fishery in the Chignik Area.