



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 Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands crab.

Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands crab. During the 2017/18 season, fisheries opened for Aleutian Islands golden king crab, Bristol Bay red king crab, Western Bering Sea Tanner 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.

Aleutian Islands Golden King Crab

The 2017/18 Area O (Aleutian Islands) golden king crab fishery opened August 1, 2017. 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 2.413 million pounds, or about 73% of the TAC. In the west area, three vessels have harvested 1.672 million pounds, or about 75% of the TAC. Catch rates were higher in the east area, at 31 crabs per pot compared to 17 crabs per pot in the west area.

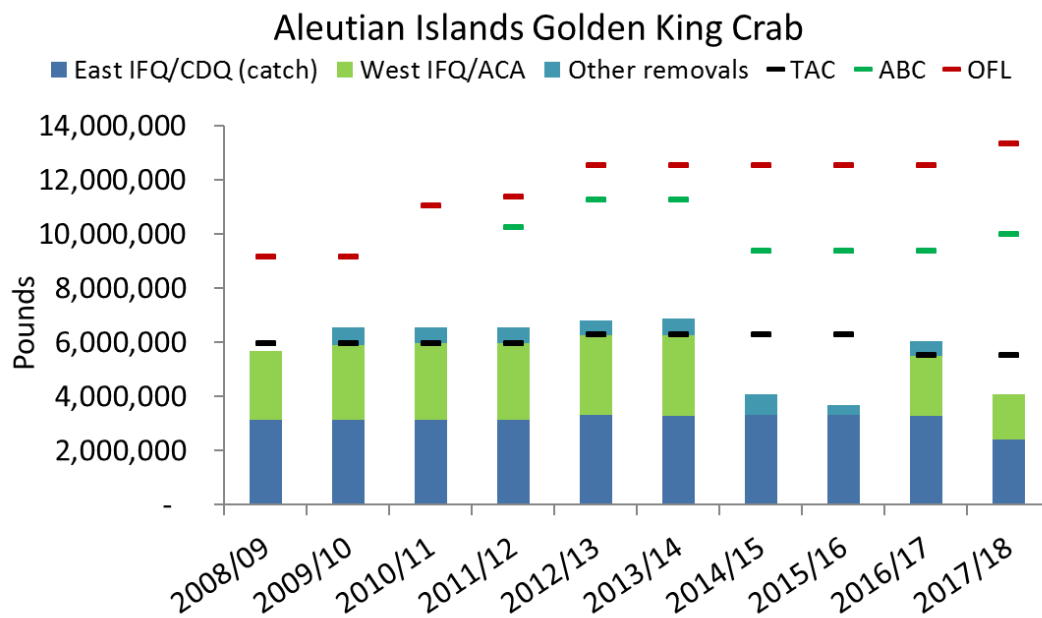


Figure 1. Aleutian Island Golden crab harvest, TAC level, OFL, and ABC; 2008/09 – 2017/18 seasons.

Bristol Bay red king crab

The 2017/18 Bristol Bay red king crab fishery opened October 15, 2017 with a TAC of 6.601 million pounds. All vessels have checked out of the fishery and total catch is 6.588 million pounds. Sixty-one vessels participated this season and the average catch rate was 20 crabs per pot (down from 37 crabs per pot in 2016). Average weight also increased this year to 6.84 lbs (up from 6.75 pounds in 2016). This fishery closes by regulation on January 15, 2018.

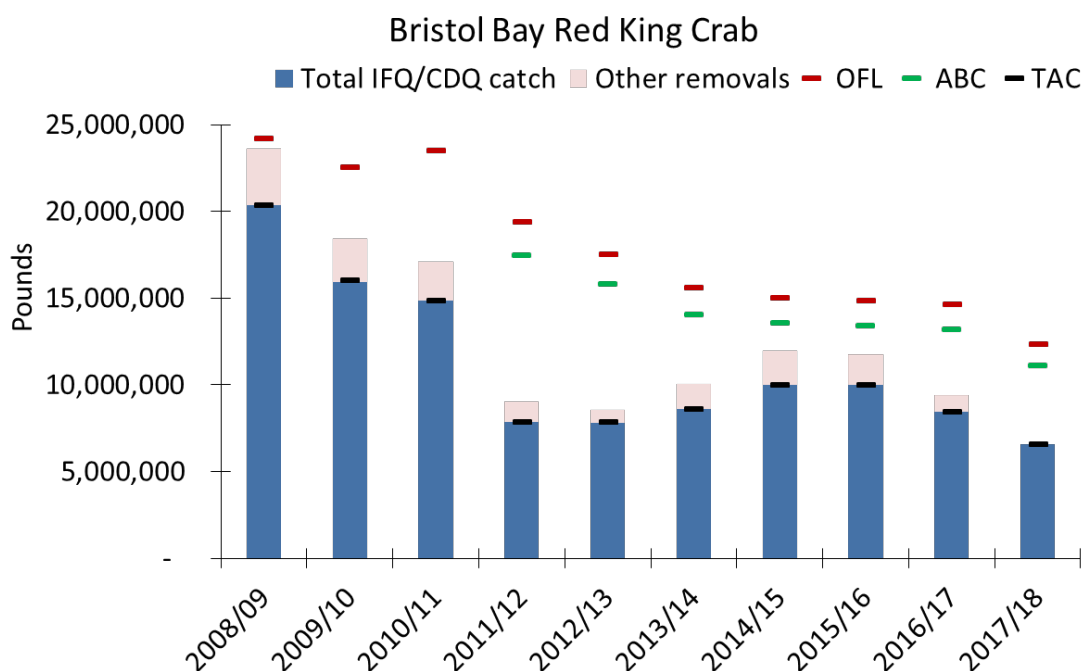


Figure 2. Bristol Bay red king crab harvest, TAC level, OFL, and ABC; 2008/09 – 2017/18 seasons.

Bering Sea snow crab

The Bering Sea snow crab fishery opened on October 15, 2017 and will remain open through May 15, 2018 in the Eastern Subdistrict (between 166° W long. and 173° W long.) and through May 31, 2018 in the Western Subdistrict (west of 173° W long.). The 2017/18 snow crab TAC is 18.961 million pounds. No directed fishing has occurred this season; however, fishing is expected to begin in late December or early January.

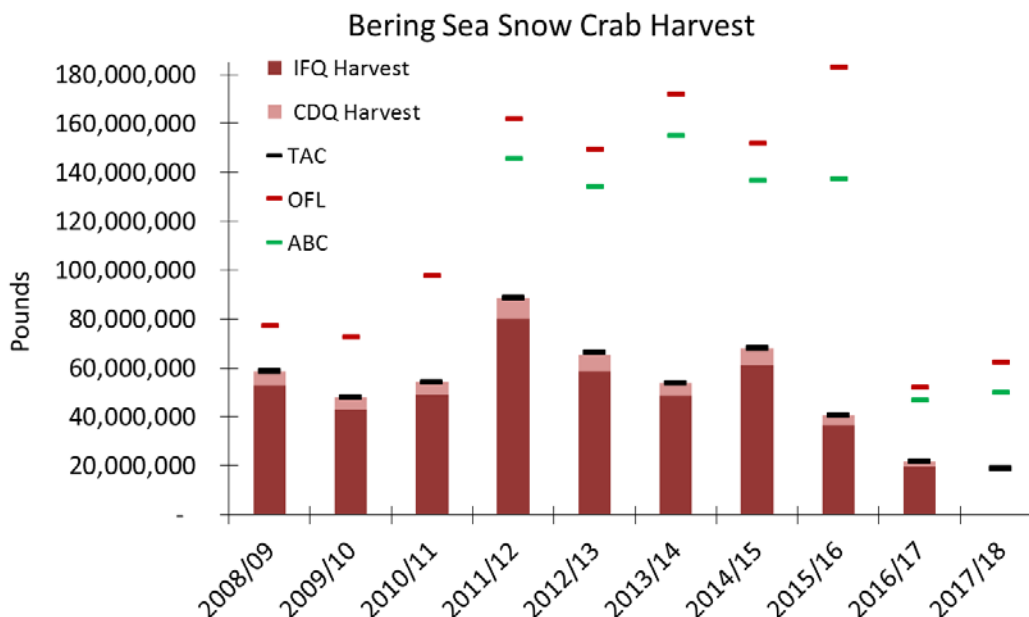


Figure 3. Bering Sea snow crab harvest, TAC level, OFL, and ABC; 2008/09 – 2017/18 seasons.

Eastern Bering Sea tanner crab

The 2017/18 Western Bering Sea tanner crab fishery opened October 15, 2017 with a TAC of 2.5 million pounds. Total catch is 1.278 million pounds. Sixteen registered vessels are participating this season and the average catch rate is 64 crabs per pot.

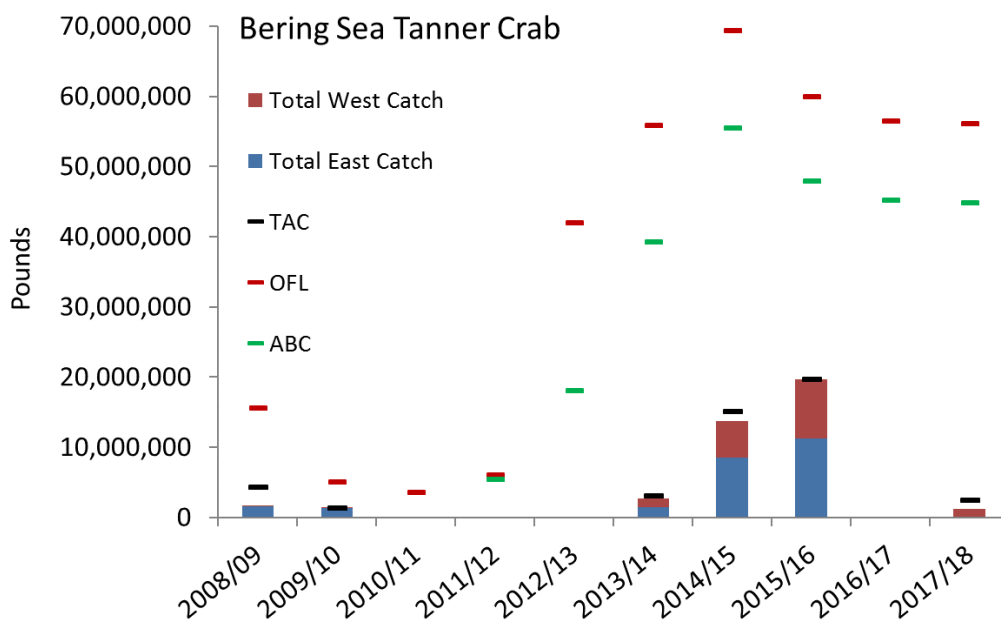


Figure 4. Eastern Bering Sea snow crab harvest, TAC level, OFL, and ABC; 2008/09 – 2017/18 seasons.