

PROPOSAL 73

5 AAC 35.113. Registration Area A Tanner crab harvest strategy.

Manage the Southeastern Alaska Area commercial Tanner crab fishery using an equal quota share, as follows:

(b)

(1) In the Area A Tanner crab fishery, the holder of a CFEC permit or interim use permit for tanner crab may not retain more tanner crab in the directed fishery than the annual amount of tanner crab equal quota share that is specified by the department. The department shall determine the annual amount of tanner crab equal quota share by dividing the annual harvest objective, by the number of CFEC permits and interim use permits eligible to be fished in the fishery. The department shall use the best available information, including harvest rate and biological data, to set the annual harvest objective.

(2) When participating in the Area A Tanner crab fishery, a person holding a CFEC permit or interim use permit for that fishery must retain in the persons possession and present for inspection on board the vessel on which that person is registered to fish, a copy of each completed fish ticket issued to the person during the current season. The permit holder shall provide each buyer with the total weight of tanner crab that the permit holder has landed to date in the fishery for that year.

(3) If a permit holders harvest exceeds the permit holders equal quota share established by the department under (1) or (2) of this section for that year, by not more than five percent, the department shall reduce the permit holders equal quota share for the following year by the amount of the overage. The adjusted equal quota share is the permit holders quota share for that year. If a permit holders harvest exceeds the permit holders quota share by more than five percent, the proceeds from the sale of the overage in excess of five percent shall be surrendered to the state. A permit holder may not assume that the ability to adjust a quota share under this section is an opportunity to knowingly exceed a quota share or to exceed the equal quota share in an amount greater than five percent as such action may be prosecuted under AS 16.05.722 or AS 16.05.723.

(4) If a permit holders harvest is less than the permit holders equal quota share established under (1) or (2) of this section for that year, the department shall increase the permit holders equal quota share only for the following year by the amount of the underage that does not exceed five percent of the equal quota share.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Area A tanner crab fishery is the only active tanner crab fishery left in the state of Alaska. It has gone from a month long fishery in the 1980's to only a week in 2017. Unfortunately, in 2017 the price is roughly the same as it was 30 years ago, unadjusted for inflation. Coincidentally, the product form has not changed in 30 years either. This is because we as commercial fishermen rush out, quickly catch the tanners, and drop them off at the processors where they have no choice but to put them into the same antiquated, easy, quick, box frozen product form. Fishermen and Processors alike need a significantly longer season to creatively market these unique crab. Under 5 AC 35.110, the commercial fishing season for tanner crab in Area A is from February 10 to May 1. Having a

fishery that uses all of these available days will allow fishermen and processors alike to derive the highest value out of this unique State of Alaska resource.

I propose making the Area A Tanner crab fishery a mirror of the EQS in the Northern and Southern Southeast Sablefish fisheries. Divide the total harvest objective by the number of limited entry permits. Allow each permit holder to fish the full three month fishery. Allow each permit holder to sell when and to whom they want to at a price both parties agree is fair. Give the processors incentive to develop new markets that provide themselves, fishermen and the State of Alaska more revenue. The same amount of crab will be caught with either harvest strategy. But the State of Alaska has a duty to help maximize the value of its peoples resource.

PROPOSED BY: Andrew Kittams

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