

Bering Sea Habitat Conservation
Council Motion December 12, 2005
Earl Krygier 4:30pm
Passed Unanimously

Motion to Revise Problem Statement
December 2005

The Council intends to evaluate potential new fishery management measures to protect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) in the Bering Sea. The analysis will tier off of the 2005 EFH Environmental Impact Statement and will consider ~~a range of alternative measures such as~~ **alternatives**-open and closed areas and gear modifications. The purpose of the analysis is to consider practicable and precautionary management measures to reduce the potential adverse effects of fishing on EFH and to support the continued productivity of managed fish species.

The Council requests that staff develop a suite of alternatives for review. Bering Sea alternatives 4 and %A from the previous EIS should be retained with the following modifications:

1. Exclude the rotations in the area-based measures
2. Analyze the alternative on gear modification, with consideration of recent work by Dr. Rose
3. Incorporate locations of recent bottom trawl effort in the development of the open areas-alternative.

Further, the Council directs staff to develop a discussion paper to evaluate the need for possible protection measures for St. Matthew blue king crab and Eastern Bering Sea snow crab. Elements of the paper would address the distribution of St. Matthew blue king crab and snow crab in the Eastern Bering Sea, including any information of the location of egg-bearing females, post-larval distribution and historical trawl effort in those areas.