

**PRELIMINARY DRAFT
OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
FOR
BERING SEA AND ALEUTIAN ISLANDS CRAB FISHERIES
INITIAL COUNCIL REVIEW**

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Abstract: The North Pacific Fishery Management Council proposes to rationalize the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands crab fisheries in the United States Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska by amending the Fishery Management Plan for Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs. The alternative rationalization programs presented in this Environmental Impact Statement represent substantial changes from current management of the fisheries and are designed to address the specific conditions and circumstances in these fisheries. The goal of rationalization is to end the race for fish and solve the problems of overcapacity while providing for a balanced distribution of benefits and improving fisheries management and resource conservation. This Environmental Impact Statement provides decision-makers and the public with an evaluation of the environmental and economic effects of the proposed program and alternatives to the proposed action. It is intended that this Environmental Impact Statement serve as the central environmental document for the National Marine Fisheries Service and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council to make a decision on which alternative to implement.

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