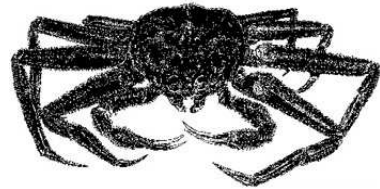


**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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**BERING SEA TANNER CRAB FISHERY OPENS OCTOBER 15
TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH ANNOUNCED**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) have completed analysis of NMFS trawl survey data for the Bering Sea Tanner crab stock. The Bering Sea Tanner crab stock is above the minimum mature female biomass threshold of 21.0 million pounds.

The Bering Sea District Tanner crab stock is managed east and west of 166° W longitude, with a separate total allowable catch (TAC) for each area. The 2009/10 federal overfishing level (OFL) for Bering Sea Tanner crab is 5.57 million pounds of total Tanner crab mortality (the retained catch plus Tanner crab bycatch mortality in all fisheries). The Tanner crab TAC for 2009/10 is set so that the combined TAC and estimated bycatch mortality are projected to remain below the OFL.

High Tanner crab bycatch and associated mortality in the snow crab and directed Tanner crab fishery is projected for the area west of 166° W longitude, therefore the Tanner crab fishery west of 166° W longitude will be closed.

The TAC for the area east of 166° W longitude is 1,350,000 pounds. The 2009/10 Bering Sea District Tanner crab TAC is apportioned as follows:

IFQ - East	1,215,000 pounds
CDQ - East	135,000 pounds
Total - East	1,350,000 pounds

The 2009/10 Bering Sea District Tanner crab fishery will open at 12:00 noon on October 15, 2009 and will remain open through March 31, 2010.

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In addition to the directed Tanner crab fishery, fishermen registered for the for the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery and operating east of 166° W longitude may retain incidentally caught Tanner crabs at up to 5% of the weight of the king crab onboard the vessel. A vessel operator registered for the directed Tanner crab fishery east of 166° W longitude, may only fish between 163° W longitude and 166° W longitude.

A valid United States Coast Guard (USCG) Commercial Fisheries Safety Decal is required before a vessel registration is issued. Participating vessels must also have an activated vessel monitoring system approved by NMFS. The operator of a vessel participating in IFQ, or CDQ crab fisheries must notify the USCG at least 24-hours prior to departing port when carrying crab pot gear. USCG can be contacted at: Unalaska/Dutch Harbor, (907) 581-6738, and Kodiak, (907) 654-5588.

Preseason gear inspections will be available in Dutch Harbor, Akutan and King Cove beginning on October 10, 2009. Vessel registration will begin at 12:00 noon on October 13, 2009. An individual holding a current Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) Bering Sea Tanner crab interim use permit card (T91Q or T09Q) must be aboard the vessel when it is registered. Vessel operators may fish concurrently for IFQ and CDQ crab, but a separate registration and CFEC permit card is required for each fishery. At the time of registration, all pots onboard the vessel or in wet storage must be in compliance with current Bering Sea commercial Tanner crab fishing regulations.

Vessel operators participating in IFQ or CDQ fisheries may form gear operation cooperatives with other registered vessels. Each vessel operator must specifically list those vessels authorized to operate the vessel's gear at the time of vessel registration. A vessel operator may transport crab pot gear to the fishing grounds for another vessel operator, however, the registered vessel operator of the crab pot gear has seven days to be active in the registration area where the gear was deployed. A vessel operator may make a one time transfer of all registered pot gear to another vessel operator at the completion of fishing operations.

Vessel operators shall notify the department within 72-hours of completing fishing operations in a registration area or when departing the registration area with gear in long-term storage. The Board of Fisheries established a 14-day period when unbaited gear may be stored outside of designated storage areas after fishing is completed. Pots must be removed from the water or placed in long-term storage if left unattended in a registration area for more than a 14-day period. Additionally, a vessel operator's registration will be invalidated after 14-days of inactivity in a registration area.

For questions regarding issuance of quota share and IFQ/IPQ, contact NOAA Fisheries RAM Division at 1-800-304-4846 (option #2). For questions regarding federal Crab Rationalization Program regulations, contact NOAA Fisheries Sustainable Fisheries Division at (907) 586-7228 or the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement in Kodiak at (907) 486-3298 or Dutch Harbor at (907) 581-2061. For further information on state management contact the Alaska Department of Fish & Game in Dutch Harbor at (907) 581-1239 or in Kodiak, at (907) 486-1840.

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