

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



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**BRISTOL BAY RED KING CRAB FISHERY OPENS OCTOBER 15  
TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH ANNOUNCED**

The Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) have completed analysis of NMFS trawl survey data for Bristol Bay red king crab. The 2008 total allowable catch (TAC) is based on abundance and biomass estimates from the ADF&G length-based analysis model.

The Bristol Bay red king crab stock is above the mature female abundance threshold of 14.5 million pounds of effective spawning biomass (ESB). The 2008 Bristol Bay red king crab ESB is estimated at 75.4 million pounds.

Since the ESB estimate is greater than 55.0 million pounds, a 15 percent exploitation rate is applied to the estimated mature male abundance. Mature male abundance increased 5.1% over the 2007 estimate and legal male abundance increased 3.7%. The total allowable catch (TAC) for the 2008/09 season was calculated using an average live weight of 6.42 pounds per legal male crab and is apportioned as follows:

IFQ	18,327,600 pounds
CDQ	2,036,400 pounds
Total	20,364,000 pounds

The 2008/09 Bristol Bay red king crab fishery will open at 12:00 noon on October 15 and will remain open through January 15, 2009.

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In March 2008 the Alaska Board of Fisheries repealed the pot limit and buoy tag marking requirements for this fishery. In addition the board adopted a new regulation allowing vessel operators to carry and deploy up to 10 groundfish pots during the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery.

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: 1-800-478-5555.

Preseason gear inspections will be available beginning on October 10, 2008 in Dutch Harbor, Akutan and King Cove. Vessel registration will begin on the morning of October 14, 2008. An individual holding a 2008 Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) Bristol Bay red king crab interim use permit card (K91T or K09T) 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 Bristol Bay commercial red king 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.

Vessel operators registered for the Bristol Bay red king crab fishery may retain Tanner crabs taken east of 166° W long., up to 5% of the weight of the Bristol Bay red king crabs onboard the vessel and reported on an ADF&G fish ticket.

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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