

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



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**SAINT MATTHEW ISLAND SECTION BLUE KING CRAB  
SEASON 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 2011 NMFS trawl survey results for the Saint Matthew Island Section. Blue king crab biomass was calculated using area-swept estimates.

The 2011 area swept estimate of mature male biomass is above the minimum required to open the fishery. The 2011/2012 Saint Matthew Island Section blue king crab total allowable catch (TAC) will be 2.359 million pounds and apportioned as follows:

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ)    | 2,123,100 pounds |
| Community Development Quota (CDQ) | 235,900 pounds   |
| Total                             | 2,359,000 pounds |

The 2011/2012 Saint Matthew Island Section blue king crab fishery will open at 12:00 noon on October 15, 2011 and will remain open through February 1, 2012.

A valid United States Coast Guard (USCG) Commercial Fisheries Vessel Safety Decal is required before a vessel registration is issued. Vessels must also have an activated vessel monitoring system (VMS) 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: (907) 581-3466 ext. 1 or (907) 359-6739.

Fishermen are reminded that all state waters surrounding Saint Matthew, Hall, and Pinnacle Islands are closed to commercial fishing.

Preseason gear inspections will be available beginning on Tuesday, October 11, 2011 in Dutch Harbor, Akutan and King Cove. Vessel registration will begin at noon on October 12, 2011. An individual holding a 2011 Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) Bering Sea king crab interim use permit card (K91Q or K09Q) must be present during registration. Vessel operators may

participate concurrently in IFQ and CDQ fisheries, but a separate registration and CFEC permit card is required for each fishery. At the time of registration, all pots on board the vessel or in wet storage must be in compliance with current Saint Matthew Island Section commercial blue king crab fishing regulations.

The pot limit for the Saint Matthew Island blue king crab fishery is 250 pots per vessel. Buoy tags are currently available for purchase and are available by mail. No groundfish pots may be operated from a vessel registered for the fishery. Vessel operators may register gear operation cooperatives with other registered vessels. 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 7 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 must 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 or transferred to another vessel. Unbaited gear may be stored outside of designated storage areas after fishing is completed for up to 14-days. 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 contact the Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game in Dutch Harbor at (907) 581-1239 or in Kodiak at (907) 486-1840.

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