

PROPOSAL 78

5 AAC 35.310. Fishing seasons for Registration Area E.

Remove district references and include all districts in the Prince William Sound Area (PWS; Area E) and include a weather-delay provision for the opening date of the fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 35.310 is amended to read:

(a) In Registration Area E [THE NORTHERN AND HINCHINBROOK DISTRICTS], male Tanner crab may be taken only from January 15 until April 15 [MARCH 31], during periods established by emergency order.

(b) The season opening shall be delayed for 24 hours if the opening day National Weather Service forecast for the following 48 hours for Prince William Sound, as defined by the National Weather Service as PKZ125, contains a gale warning, in which case the season opening in all districts will be delayed 24 hours; if after the initial weather delay, the 4:00 a.m. National Weather Service forecast for the current day and night or the following day and night again contains a gale warning, the season opening in all districts will be delayed an additional 24 hours; the season opening delays may continue for 7 days, when the season will open regardless of any gale warning in the National Weather Service forecasts.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The department is proposing new Tanner crab district definitions for PWS along with a new harvest strategy. This proposal removes district references; the department has time and area authority to open and close districts in PWS. In addition, adding a weather delay provision provides for a safe and fair start to this Tanner crab fishery that has had diverse participation in terms of vessel size and port of entry.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F20-142)
