

PROPOSAL 37

5 AAC 35.325. Lawful gear for Registration Area E.

Establish a pot limit of 30 pots per vessel in the Prince William Sound Tanner crab fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 35.325(d) is amended to read:

d) The number of Tanner Crab pots that may be operated from a vessel will be [ESTABLISHED BY EMERGENCY ORDER BEFORE THE OPENING OF EACH COMMERCIAL TANNER CRAB SEASON, NOT TO EXCEED] 30 Tanner Crab pots per vessel. [IN DETERMINING THE ANNUAL POT LIMIT, THE DEPARTMENT WILL CONSIDER THE

- (1) TOTAL NUMBER OF REGISTERED VESSELS;
- (2) ESTIMATED CATCH PER UNIT EFFORT; AND
- (3) THE GUIDELINE HARVEST LEVEL.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Remove language allowing for an annual adjustment to pot limits that was put into place in 2017.

Adjusting gear limits based on registered participants is not a common practice in other Alaska commercial fisheries and there is no reason to do so in Area E. A known number of pots gives some consistency to the daily harvest a fisherman can expect to achieve each year they participate in the fishery. By lowering pot limits, the department decreases the daily harvest potential of participants, therefore increasing the cost to participate in the fishery. Pots are also expensive and sold in matching sets. If the pot limit increases from one year to the next, it can be extremely difficult to find more pots that stack well with the ones a operator already owns. This results in an unsafe and inefficient load. We do not believe that changing pot limits on an annual basis is a necessary tool for the department because it currently manages all other Alaska crab fisheries without this regulation.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.

PROPOSED BY: Cordova District Fishermen United (CDFU) (EF-F24-123)
