

**PROPOSAL 197**

**5 AAC 35.113. Registration Area A Tanner crab harvest strategy.**

Modify Tanner crab harvest strategy definition of core, non-core, and exploratory areas, as follows:

5 AAC 35.113(b) (2) (c) (2,3).

(b)(2) at the end of the initial period, the core areas will close to fishing, and the noncore and exploratory areas will remain open for an additional five days. After the noncore areas close to fishing, the exploratory areas will remain open for an additional fourteen days. After the inside exploratory areas close to fishing, the exclusive economic zone exploratory area will remain open for an additional fourteen days.

(c)(2) "noncore areas" include the following waters in Registration area A:

(any statistical area determined not to have had any pots hauled in the 3 previous years)

(3) "exploratory areas" include all waters of Alaska in those portions of districts in Registration Area A that are not described in (1) or (2) of this subsection and in the exclusive economic zone.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** The current harvest strategy for Tanner crab in registration area A is not meeting the ADF&G goal of optimized economic benefit from fish resources. The core, noncore, and exploratory areas, as currently defined, leave many districts, sub districts, and stat areas of registration area A unfished.

In order to reach the goal of optimized economic benefit any statistical area in the "noncore area" that has been fished in the last three years should be defined as a "noncore area"(in the same way the "core areas" are specifically defined), and any statistical area in the "noncore area" that has not been fished in the last three years should be redefined as "exploratory area", and remain open fourteen days after the "noncore areas" close.

Registration area A is a very large area. In a vessel that makes 8 knots it would take 50+/- hours, depending on the tide/wind, to drive from one end to the other. Many fisherman end up fishing "non core areas" close to where they fished in the "core areas" to avoid losing too much fishing time. Redefining the "noncore areas" that are currently not getting fished to "exploratory areas" and giving fishermen extra time to fish them, would help ADF&G reach its goal of optimizing benefit from the registration area A tanner crab fishery.

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