



D2 Gulf of Alaska Tanner Crab Protections

April 2025

Action Memo

Council Staff: Dr. Diana Stram
Other presenters: Mike Fey (AKFIN/PSMFC), Mark Stichert (ADF&G)
Action Required: Review discussion paper; action as necessary.

BACKGROUND

In February 2024, the Council reviewed a discussion paper to inform potential measures that could be taken to protect Gulf of Alaska (GOA) Tanner crab *Chionoecetes bairdi*. In response, the Council requested staff prepare an expanded discussion paper to include the following additional information:

- Identify the areas of highest Tanner crab abundance inside the Barnabas Gully in statistical areas 525702 and 525630 for consideration of a smaller closure area.
- Consider modifications to existing closures off the east side of Kodiak Island to consider comprehensive impacts of closures on groundfish fleet.
- Tanner crab distribution in the Kodiak District and to the extent practicable, the proportion of annual surveyed abundance of Kodiak District Tanner crab from 2012 to 2023 in statistical areas 525702 and 525630.
- Updated tables for trawl (pelagic trawl, PTR; non-pelagic trawl NPT) and Pacific cod pot (POT) gear groundfish harvests and Tanner crab prohibited species catch (PSC) from 2012 to 2023; with separate tables for catcher vessels and catcher processors as possible given confidentiality rules.
- Value of the NPT, PTR, POT groundfish and directed Tanner crab fisheries in statistical areas 525702 and 525630 and the Central Gulf of Alaska.
- NPT, PTR, POT groundfish and directed Tanner crab fishery landings by month and the resulting impacts of fishery timing on processing capacity in Kodiak.

This March 2025 revised paper provides the Council's requested updates with additional discussion, and provides additional information on Tanner crab biology, molting, mating and expanded descriptions of the existing closures around Kodiak. The February 2024 discussion paper is incorporated into this revised version as an appendix, and data that were included in the 2024 version are not repeated.

The Council will review the expanded discussion paper and choose whether to take further action on this issue. Further action on this issue could be accomplished by establishing a Purpose and Need statement for this action and a suite of alternatives for analysis. The Council could ask for another expanded discussion paper on this issue with a list of the requests. The Council could also decline to take further action on this issue.