

Division of Commercial Fisheries
Sam Rabung, Director

Headquarters Office
PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner

PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
www.adfg.alaska.gov

Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: January 01, 2024

CONTACT: Kevin Clark or Ethan Kelso

**Norton Sound Area Manager &
Shellfish Management Biologist
(907) 443-5167 (800) 560-2271**

Norton Sound 2024 Winter Commercial Crab Fishery Opens February 1

The winter commercial crab fishery will open Thursday, February 1, 2024, under authority of **5 AAC 34.910 (d)(2) Fishing seasons for Registration Area Q**. By regulation, the GHL for the winter commercial red king crab fishery is 8% of the total commercial GHL.

At present, no buyers have registered for the winter commercial crab season. Participating commercial crab permit holders will need their own market (i.e. a catcher-seller permit or other direct marketing program). All crabbers must contact the Nome Fish & Game office to register their catcher-seller or other direct marketing permits before they can sell crab to the public. Catcher-seller and direct marketer application forms can be picked at the Nome Fish & Game office or can be obtained online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishlicense.main

Commercial crab permit holders must register at the Fish & Game office in Nome and receive crab pot tags before crabbing. Village residents can call 907-443-2825 to register and crab pot tags will be sent via local airlines.

Those assisting in the commercial fishery must be in possession of a 2024 commercial crewmember license or a 2024 State of Alaska commercial fishery permit for any fishery can substitute. Crewmember licenses are available at the Nome Fish & Game office or can be bought online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/Store/

The North Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) Crab Plan Team (CPT) has not met to make recommendations on 2024 Norton Sound stock status; however, the department estimates that the Legal male biomass (LMB) will be similar to last year. Once the Council adopts the overfishing level (OFL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) the department will set the guideline harvest level (GHL) for the 2024 summer and winter commercial crab season and issue an Advisory Announcement.

Crab pots in the winter commercial crab fishery must be set through the ice and regulations require those intending to participate in the commercial crab fishery to stop subsistence crab fishing 14 days before the season start date. Therefore, anyone intending to participate in the winter commercial crab fishery as a permit holder or crewmember must stop subsistence crab fishing before January 18, 2024.

Good Luck, Good Crabbing and Be Safe Out There.