



# NORTH PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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## Action Memo

**File Number:Crab 15-073**

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**Agenda Date**10/5/2015

**Agenda Number:**C11

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**Dan Hull, Chairman**  
**Chris Oliver, Executive Director**

**SUBJECT:**

Western Aleutian Islands golden king crab offload requirement - Final Review

**ACTION REQUIRED:**

Final Action on Public Review of WAG offload requirements

**BACKGROUND:**

In June 2015 the Council established a preliminary preferred alternative (PPA) on an action that would create a regulatory exemption allowing vessels participating in the Western Aleutian Islands golden king crab (WAG) fishery to continue fishing after offloading a portion of their retained catch. Under current regulations, a vessel participating a crab rationalization fishery is not permitted to deliver a portion of their retained harvest to a processor and subsequently resume fishing for additional crab.

More specifically, this action would allow vessel harvesting WAG to deliver partial loads of live crab to the plant in Adak opportunistically; when the markets and commercial flights are available. Relaxing the full offload regulation for this specific fishery could allow vessels harvesting WAG to do partial deliveries to Adak and continue harvesting crab before fully offloading at a processor that could accommodate the full volume of crab onboard these catcher vessels.

Based on comments from the SSC and the Council, the analysis has been expanded especially in two areas. The analysis clarifies why it is understood that illegal discarding is not commonly occurring in this fishery and why it is not expected that this action would exacerbate any illegal discarding. Additionally, the analysis provides more detail on this action's potential effect on observer coverage. The analysis explains why the PPA would not be likely to create an incentive for vessels to conduct non-representative fishing when observers are not present.

The fishery is primarily managed through State of Alaska management. ADF&G provides several recommendations if the Council were to implement the PPA. It does not anticipate that changes to State regulations would be necessary. This action would require a Federal regulatory amendment, but no amendments to the Fisheries Management Plan for King and Tanner crab would be necessary.

At this meeting, the Council is scheduled to take final action and choose a preferred alternative.