

CA

October 4, 2016

Members of the Council,

I am putting a letter together concerning the roller coaster ride we are having with Crab quotas being issued. I can't for the life of me understand the cuts we are seeing after the phenomenal fishing we had this last year. In my 30 years of operating in the Bering Sea I have never seen the stocks as healthy as now on King Crab and Tanners. Snow Crab looked healthy on east side as well. Inside in shallows there was large concentrations of recruits females and males. Also there was high by-catch of Bairdi on east side deep and in the shallows.

I am a new participant in Crab as far as buying a boat and purchasing IFQ quotas. So that being said the people who are getting hurt the most out of this will be the new participants that are buying in and I afraid some of them will not survive these latest quota cuts. and the chance of not having a fishery at all with Bairdi will be devastating to these new participants. How will they make payments on quota they purchased if there is no fishery for them to participate in? what kind of example are we setting to new young guys buying into crab.

I would like to point out that the Crab plan team recommend a high overfishing limit of 56 million pounds and an acceptable biological catch limit of 45 million pounds, which makes the option of not having a fishery, especially in the west where survey numbers this year were very similar to last year, incomprehensible.

I would like to say we have been on a strong recovery in crab with fleet being cut in 1/3 and stocks reflect that in my eyes and i was feeling pretty optimistic that we were on a strong recovery till this survey came out. not sure what is going on here but think I would like to see clarity and transparency in the State's harvest strategy for all crab stocks so fishermen may have the opportunity to better understand the management decisions that are made, which have such a dramatic impact of our livelihood.

Regards, Oystein Lone

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October 4, 2016

Dear Members of the Council,

I am writing this letter in an attempt to encourage you to use thoughtful consideration of the future of the Bairdi Crab Fishery in Alaska.

It is my understanding that if you close the fishery it must remain closed for several fishing seasons. This is detrimental in many ways, most importantly to the livelihood of hundreds of fishing families and their dependents.

The scientific results have deemed that the difference between last years census and this years numbers does not justify the complete closure of the fishery. The Crab Plan Team recommended an overfishing limit of 56 million pounds and an acceptable biological catch at 45 million pounds. To completely eliminate the fishery while numbers of this nature are recommended leaves no clear reason to close the fishery entirely, and must be justified to the hundreds of fishing families it will negatively impact.

I implore you to consider the livelihoods this decision will impact, and also that the State would consider transparency in this decision making process so that the front line workers can better understand why their source of income has been eliminated.

The numbers from the Crab Plan Team support a fishery of Bairdi Crab in 2016-17 and the immediate future. Please consider this respected source and keep the Bairdi Crab fishery open.

Sincerely,

Knut E. Knutsen  
Aleutian Spray LLC