

**Division of Commercial Fisheries**  
**Sam Rabung, Director**

Dutch Harbor Area Office  
PO Box 920587  
Dutch Harbor, AK 99692



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

PO Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526  
[www.adfg.alaska.gov](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov)

## **Advisory Announcement**

*For Immediate Release: 10/6/2023*

## **CONTACT:**

**Ethan Nichols, Acting Area Management Biologist**  
**907-581-1239**

### **2023/24 Pribilof District Red and Blue King Crab Seasons Closed** **Emergency Order # 4-S-14-23**

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and National Marine Fisheries Service have completed analysis of 2023 NMFS trawl survey results for Pribilof District red and blue king crabs. Pribilof District red and blue king crab fisheries will remain closed for the 2023/24 season.

The 2023 Pribilof District blue king crab abundance estimates remain below the federal minimum stock size threshold and the stock has been declared overfished. Total mature biomass also falls below minimum harvest strategy thresholds required for a fishery. Therefore, the Pribilof District blue king crab fishery will remain closed for the 2023/24 season.

Due to uncertainty in 2023 Pribilof District red king crab abundance estimates and high potential for blue king crab bycatch during a directed red king crab fishery, the Pribilof District red king crab fishery will remain closed for the 2023/24 season.

To decrease the likelihood of bycatch of Pribilof Island blue king crab and prevent over-fishing from occurring, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has closed waters surrounding the Pribilof Islands to commercial crab fishing for the 2023/24 fishing season. This closure also applies to commercial fishing for Pacific cod for use as bait in the Bering Sea crab fisheries.

Waters enclosed by connecting the following coordinates are closed to the operation of commercial crab pot gear and commercial groundfish pot gear for Pacific cod taken as bait during commercial IFQ/CDQ crab fisheries from October 15, 2023, to April 1, 2024:

<u>Latitude</u>	<u>Longitude</u>
58° N	171° W
58° N	168° W
57° N	168° W
56°30' N	169° W
56°30' N	170° W
57° N	171° W
58° N	171° W

The associated closed ADF&G statistical areas are: 685730, 695730, 705730, 705701, 705703, 695701, 695700, 685700, 695631, 695632, the northeast half of 705630, and the northwest half of 685630. A map of the closed area will be provided at the time of registration.

Additional information will be available during the annual ADF&G/Crab Industry meeting. Meeting details will be announced shortly.

For questions regarding federal Crab Rationalization Program regulations, contact NOAA Fisheries Sustainable Fisheries Division at (907) 586-7228 or the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement in Kodiak at (907) 486-3298 or Dutch Harbor at (907) 581-2061.

For further information contact ADF&G Dutch Harbor at (907) 581-1239, or ADF&G Kodiak at (907) 486-1840.

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