




UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 National Marine Fisheries Service
 P.O. Box 21668
 Juneau, Alaska 99802-1668

May 27, 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR: Paul N. Doremus
 NOAA NEPA Coordinator

FROM: James W. Balsiger, Ph.D.  for J/B
 Administrator, Alaska Region

SUBJECT: Amendment 34 to the Fishery Management Plan for Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs to Revise Crab Sideboard Exemptions for the Gulf of Alaska Pacific Cod and Pollock Fishery RIN 0648 – AY33

The attached subject environmental assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) are forwarded for your review. The EA and FONSI have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of: (1) NOAA Administrative Order 216-6, Environmental Review Procedures For Implementing The National Environmental Policy Act; and (2) the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations For Implementing The Procedural Provisions of The National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508).

Based on the environmental impact analysis within the attached EA, I have determined that no significant environmental impacts will result from the proposed action. I therefore have approved the FONSI for this proposed action. I request your concurrence with the EA and its FONSI. I also recommend, subject to a request from the public, that you release the documents for public review.

1. I concur.  31 May 11
 NOAA NEPA Coordinator Date

2. I do not concur. _____
 NOAA NEPA Coordinator Date





MAY 31 2011

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

- TITLE:** Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis for Amendment 34 to the Fishery Management Plan for Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs to Revise Crab Sideboard Exemptions for the Gulf of Alaska Pacific Cod and Pollock Fishery [RIN 0648-AY33]
- LOCATION:** Exclusive economic zone of the Bering Sea
- SUMMARY:** This Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis analyzes Amendment 34 which amends the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program to exempt additional recipients of crab quota share from Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod and pollock harvest limits, called sideboards. Sideboards apply to some vessels and license limitation program licenses that are used to participate in these fisheries. The North Pacific Fishery Management Council determined that these recipients demonstrated a sufficient level of historical participation in Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod or pollock fisheries and should be exempt from the Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod and pollock sideboards. This action is necessary to give these recipients an opportunity to participate in the Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod and pollock fisheries at historical levels. This final rule revises regulations governing exemptions from and calculations of sideboard harvest limits in the Gulf of Alaska Pacific cod and pollock fisheries and revises Tables 17 and 18 that establish the 2011 - 2012 Gulf of Alaska groundfish harvest sideboard limits. To fully implement Amendment 34 NMFS will reissue Federal fisheries permits and license limitation program licenses to all participants that are affected by the action.



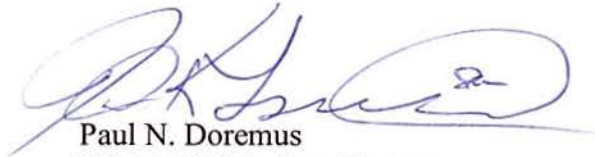
RESPONSIBLE
OFFICIAL:

James W. Balsiger, Ph.D.
Administrator, Alaska Region
National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration (NOAA)
P.O. Box 21668
Juneau, AK 99802
908-586-7221

The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement was not prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact (FONSI), including the environmental assessment, is enclosed for your information.

Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed EA/FONSI we will consider any comments submitted that would assist us in preparing future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the Responsible Official named above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul N. Doremus", is written over a faint, larger signature that is mostly illegible.

Paul N. Doremus
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure