

lube and hydraulic oil from three of the vessels before suspending operations due to adverse weather conditions.

Due in part to recent discharges of oil from the vessels, the USCG has determined that an imminent pollution threat exists and intends to eliminate the risk of pollutant discharge by removing all fuel oil and other hazardous materials (including ammonia, asbestos and zinc) from the vessels. To accomplish this, the USCG proposes to dismantle the vessels to allow access to the double bottom tanks and remove all of the hazardous materials, oil and oily debris, and other toxic substances. After removal of the pollutants, the remainder of the vessels may be left for possible future removal by another, as yet unidentified, party. The USCG response approach is detailed in the June 28, 1999, Incident Action Plan.

Pursuant to section 1006 of the Oil Pollution Act and 15 CFR 990.26, the natural resource trustees intend to take emergency restoration action to minimize continuing injuries and prevent additional response related injuries. The Trustees for this incident are the U.S. Department of Commerce through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); the U.S. Department of the Interior; and the Government of American Samoa. The Trustees are designated pursuant to the National Contingency Plan, 40 CFR Sections 300.600 and 300.605.

During the week of June 28, 1999, the Trustees visited the vessel sites to collect baseline data to assist in the evaluation of potential injuries caused by the USCG response, which is expected to begin on or about August 1, 1999. Based on these data and other information, the Trustees have determined that the response will likely cause natural resource and resource service injuries.

Injuries that may result from the response will be documented in an Emergency Assessment and Restoration Plan being developed by the Trustees. The objective of this plan will be to determine appropriate restoration alternatives for injuries caused by the USCG response. The justification for and extent and nature of emergency restoration required will be described more fully in the Emergency Assessment and Restoration Plan.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information contact: Jim Hoff, at (301) 713-3038, ext. 188; or Lelei Peau, (684) 633-5155, or Sheila Wiegman, at (684) 633-2304.

Dated: August 4, 1999.

John Oliver,

*Director, Management and Budget Office,
National Ocean Service.*

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 080999F]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Crab Interim Action Committee Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces a Crab Interim Action Committee (CIAC) meeting to review an appeal of recent Alaska Board of Fisheries (Board) preseason management decisions to revise State regulations governing the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner crab fisheries.

DATES: The meeting will be held Wednesday, August 11, 1999, from 10:00 am to 5:00 p.m., Alaska local time.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the NMFS Regional Office in the Federal Building, 709 West 9th Street, Room 445, Juneau, AK 99801.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gretchen Harrington, 907-586-7445 (phone), (907) 586-7465 (fax), or gretchen.harrington@noaa.gov (e-mail).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: An appeal has been submitted to the Secretary of Commerce requesting Secretarial review of three management decisions made by the Board at its meeting in March 1999. The Fishery Management Plan for the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands King and Tanner Crabs (FMP) requires the CIAC to review the appeal prior to action by the Secretary. The CIAC has no authority to grant or reject the appeal, but will comment on the appeal for the benefit of the Secretary. The CIAC will review the Board's actions to determine whether the management measures adopted by the Board are consistent with the FMP (including compliance with framework criteria), the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and other Federal law.

The FMP delegates management of the king and Tanner crab fisheries in Federal waters to the State of Alaska,

with Federal oversight. The appeal requested Secretarial review of the Board's decision to (1) move the Bristol Bay red king crab fishing season from November 1 to October 15, (2) implement a 30-day exclusion period when no pot or trawl gear can be fished in Area T before the red king crab fishery in that area, and (3) implement a 30-day exclusion period when no pot or trawl gear can be fished in Area J prior to the *C. bairdi* Tanner crab fishery in that area and include trawl gear in the existing 14-day exclusion period for *C. opilio* Tanner crab.

Subsequent to the March 1999 meeting, the Board decided to abate the implementation through regulation of the trawl gear exclusion periods until consultation with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) and further deliberation. The Board consulted with the Council during a joint meeting on July 27, 1999. The Board will decide at an August 6, 1999, teleconference meeting whether to proceed to implement the trawl gear exclusion periods or continue to abate this action pending further deliberation and consultation with the Council. If the Board continues to abate implementation of the exclusion periods, the CIAC only will review the Board's action to change Bristol Bay red king crab season. Further abeyance by the Board on the trawl gear exclusion periods would alleviate the urgency for the August 11, 1999, CIAC meeting and the meeting may be rescheduled for a later date.

NMFS invites the public to attend the CIAC meeting to listen to staff presentations, however, no public testimony will be heard. Interested public should contact NMFS prior to August 11, 1999, to confirm the meeting date (See **ADDRESSES**).

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Gretchen Harrington (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**) prior to the workshop date.

Dated: August 9, 1999.

Gary C. Matlock,

*Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,
National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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