

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[RTID 0648–XF024]

Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Cost Recovery Program

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

ACTION: Notification of fee percentage.

SUMMARY: NMFS publishes notification of a 1.2 percent fee for cost recovery under the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program (Program). This action is intended to provide holders of crab allocations notice of the 2025/2026 crab fishing year fee percentage so they can calculate the required cost recovery fee payment, which must be submitted to NMFS by July 31, 2026.

DATES: The Crab Rationalization Program Registered Crab Receiver permit holder is responsible for submitting the fee liability payment to NMFS by July 31, 2026.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Amy Hadfield, (907) 586–7228.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**Background**

NMFS Alaska Region administers the Program in the North Pacific. Fishing under the Program began on August 15, 2005. Regulations implementing the Program can be found at 50 CFR part 680.

The Program is a limited access privilege program authorized by section 313(j) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act). The Program includes a cost recovery provision to collect fees to recover the actual costs directly related to the management, data collection, and enforcement of the Program. The Program is consistent with the cost recovery provisions included under section 304(d)(2)(A) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. NMFS developed the cost recovery regulations to conform to statutory requirements and to reimburse the agency for the actual costs directly related to the management, data collection, and enforcement of the Program. The cost recovery provision allows collection of 133 percent of the actual management, data collection, and enforcement costs not to exceed 3 percent of the ex-vessel value of crab harvested under the

Program. The Program provides that a proportional share of fees charged will be forwarded to the State of Alaska for reimbursement of its share of management and data collection costs for the Program.

A crab allocation holder generally incurs a cost recovery fee liability for every pound of crab landed. Catcher vessel and processor quota shareholders split the cost recovery fees equally with each paying half, while catcher/processor quota shareholders pay the full fee percentage for crab processed at sea. The crab allocations subject to cost recovery include Individual Fishing Quota, Crew Individual Fishing Quota, Individual Processing Quota, Community Development Quota, and the Adak community allocation. The Registered Crab Receiver (RCR) permit holder must collect the fee liability from the crab allocation holder who is landing crab. Additionally, the RCR permit holder must collect their own fee liability for all crab delivered to the RCR. The RCR permit holder is responsible for submitting this payment to NMFS on or before July 31, in the year following the crab fishing year in which landings of crab were made.

The dollar amount of the fee due is determined by multiplying the fee percentage (not to exceed 3 percent) by the ex-vessel value of crab debited from the allocation. Program details may be found in the implementing regulations at § 680.44.

Fee Percentage

Each year, NMFS calculates and publishes in the **Federal Register** the fee percentage according to the factors and methodology described at § 680.44(c)(2). The formula for determining the fee percentage is the “direct program costs” divided by “value of the fishery,” where “direct program costs” are the direct program costs for the Program for the previous fiscal year, and “value of the fishery” is the ex-vessel value of the catch subject to the crab cost recovery fee liability for the current year. Fee collections for any given year may be less than or greater than the actual costs and fishery value for that year, as regulations establish the fee percentage in the first quarter of the crab fishing year based on the fishery value and costs in the prior year.

According to the fee percentage formula described above, the estimated percentage of costs to value for the 2024/2025 fishery is 1.2 percent. This is lower than the effective fee percentage for the 2023/2024 crab fishing year of 3 percent (89 FR 54785 July 2, 2024). The fishery value increased by approximately 38 percent from the prior

year and overall direct program costs decreased by approximately 42 percent, resulting in a reduced fee percentage. A more detailed explanation will be provided in the annual Cost Recovery Report, which will be published in April of 2026. Similar to previous years, the largest direct Program costs were incurred by the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1862; Pub. L. 109–241; Pub. L. 109–479.

Dated: July 23, 2025.

Kelly Denit,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

[RTID 0648–XF075]

Gulf Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public hearings and webinars.

SUMMARY: The Gulf Fishery Management Council (Gulf Council) will hold three in-person public hearings and one webinar to solicit public comments on *Reef Fish Amendment 58B: Modifications to Deep-water Grouper* complex changes based on the recent stock assessment for *Yellowedge Grouper*, Scientific and Statistical Committee recommendations, and feedback from the June 2025 Council meeting.

DATES: The public hearings will take place August 11–19, 2025. The in-person public hearings and webinar will begin at 6 p.m. and will conclude no later than 9 p.m., EDT. For specific dates and times, see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION**. Written public comments must be received on or before 5 p.m. EDT on August 19, 2025.

ADDRESSES: Please visit the Gulf Council website at www.gulfcouncil.org for meeting materials and webinar registration information.

Meeting addresses: The public hearings will be held in Madeira Beach, Ft. Myers, and Panama City, FL; and one virtual webinar. For specific locations, dates and times see **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** below.