

Title: **Preliminary Findings From the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands Crab Rationalization Program**

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Abstract: In the fall of 2005, the NOAA Fisheries implemented a share-based management program in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Island crab fisheries. Allocations of harvest and processing quota were issued to vessel and plant owners based on historical landings, with a share matching requirement applied to 90% of harvest quota. The remaining 10% of vessel owners' harvest quota is exempt from the share matching requirement and can be landed for sale to any licensed buyer. The processor quota component of this system is intended as a community protection measure and to prevent stranded capital in remote Bering Sea processing facilities, while the initial 90/10 split was intended to maintain competitive ex-vessel prices. As part of the rationalization program, a detailed cost and earnings data collection was implemented contemporaneously, in part, to provide for a more thorough understanding of the impacts of the change in management. Economic data are collected from all sectors (catcher vessels, catcher processors, shore-based processors, and floating processors) concerning most aspects of their crab fisheries operations. This paper presents findings from the first two years of the rationalized fishery, with a focus on the distribution of rents between processing plant and vessel operators, quota owners, and harvest crews, and the efficacy of the 90/10 share split.