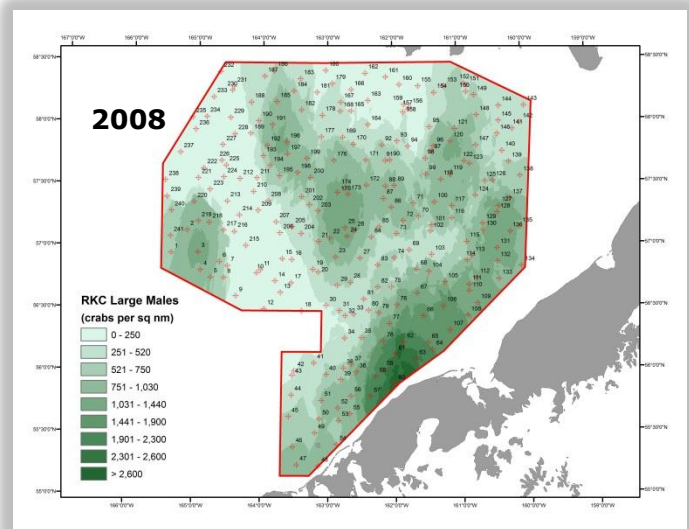
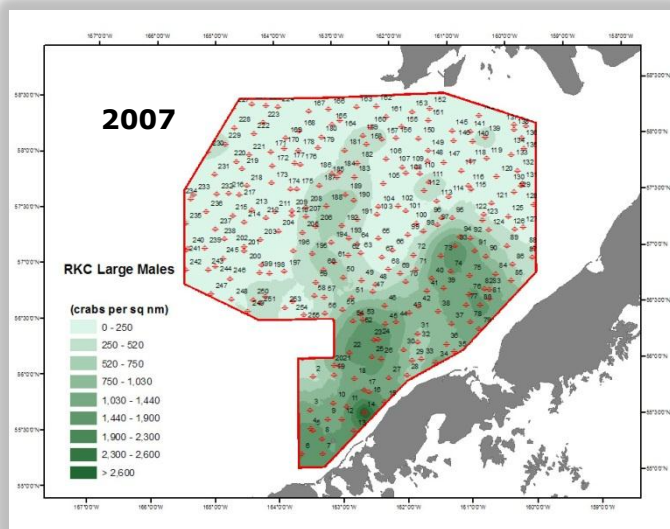
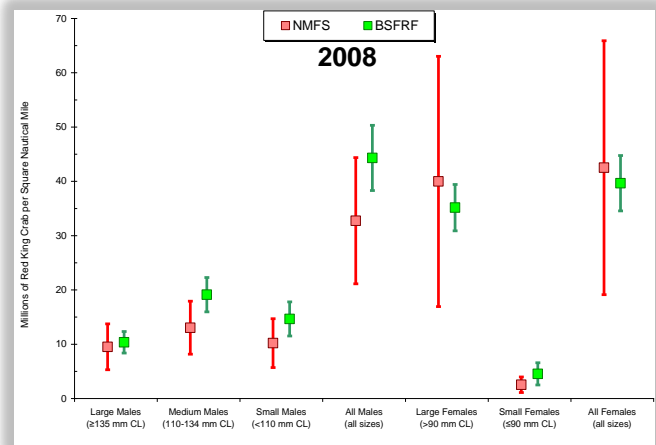
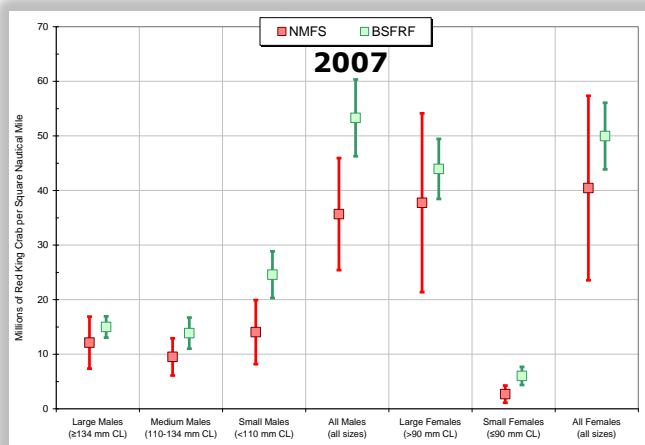


2008 Bristol Bay Red King Crab Cooperative Survey

The Bering Sea Fisheries Research Foundation (BSFRF) cooperating with NMFS and ADF&G conducted a second full survey of Bristol Bay red king crab (BBRKC) in late May - June 2008 under NPRB project 825, as continuing work of NPRB project 625. The 2008 survey used the same specialized trawl gear with a NETMIND trawl mensuration package aboard the same chartered vessel the *F/V American Eagle*. The area swept for each trawl tow was accurately measured by the trawl mensuration sensors and the use of the NMFS newly designed bottom contact sensor developed for the 2007 survey that provided the ability to measure on-bottom time of the trawl. Survey methodology relied on results from a 2005 pilot study for design, conduct and analysis of full-scale assessments for 2007 and 2008 of the BBRKC stock. The 2008 survey sampling was conducted in 30 days at sea with an experienced scientific crew of four. The survey was conducted over approximately the same 24,000 sq.nm. region as in 2007, consisting of 255 random site tows. Fourteen



additional stations were added along the eastern edge of the survey area in 2008 to expand survey coverage over the eastern-most distribution of the BBRKC. As in the prior year survey, the 2008 survey methodology and gear proved highly effective. The specialized trawl is believed to have a crab catchability coefficient near 1.0 resulting in a more accurate measure of adult and small sized juvenile crab densities. The large number of stations sampled and the application of geostatistics generated higher precision BBRKC biomass estimates than estimates from the standard NMFS survey in the same area and time. BSFRF research for 2008 provided for a 2nd year of consistent comparative survey results. Abundance and biomass estimates and station catch rates have been compared with the standard NMFS



survey for the same region. Results have been shared with NPRB, ADFG and NMFS and presented at a formal peer review workshop in the spring of 2009 where a working agreement was reached for current implementation of project 625/825 results and for future research application. Further reporting of the entire survey and results are available in NPRB Final Report #825.