

# Egan Protests Russian Crab Pot Intrusions

JUNEAU—Governor William A. Egan lodged his second protest this month against intrusions by Russian trawlers into an area north and west of Unimak Island which is a crab pot "sanctuary" under a U.S.-Soviet fisheries agreement.

In a telegram to Ambassador Donald McKernan in the U.S. State Department, Egan said the situation "is becoming critical."

The governor said Coast Guard vessels can only warn Russian vessels since the area involved is outside the 12-mile limit.

"It is incumbent on State Department and Soviet authorities to enforce the sanctuary agreement," Egan told McKernan. "I urgently request this be done."

The latest intrusions, by two Soviet trawlers, were reported over the weekend. Robert Thorstenson, of Petersburg, reported his vessel "Viking King" lost 15 to 20 pots, after losing 18 to Russian trawlers earlier this month, and as a result will have to end its crab fishing in the area two months early.

Egan said these kinds of losses are "highly costly to Alaska fishermen."

"I strongly urge once again that utmost effort be given to halting these violations of U.S.-Soviet agreement, as the situation is becoming critical," Egan told McKernan.

The governor lodged a similar

protest with the State Department on March 4 after nine Russian trawlers were sighted in the sanctuary area.

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