

PROPOSAL 119

5 AAC 28.110. Sablefish fishing seasons for Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area.

Amend gear and season dates for Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict commercial sablefish fishery, as follows:

(a)(2) in the Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict, from 8:00 a.m. **March** [JUNE] 1 until 12:00 noon August 15 with longline gear **or pot gear**, and from 8:00 a.m. September 1 **for the three existing pot permits until their quota is caught, then all permit holders fishing longline gear or pot gear** until 12:00 noon November 15 [WITH POT GEAR].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Change the timing and allowable gear types for Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict sablefish permit holders.

Several Southern Southeast Sablefish longline permit holders have been unable to fully harvest their quota and thus have not been able to realize the economic benefits of their permits due to marine mammal interaction. Changing the timing and use of gear types will minimize the loss of sablefish due to marine mammal interaction, reduce bycatch and lost bait, increase the average size of fish, and reduce waste caused by hagfish and sand fleas.

The solution I recommend is allowing all sablefish permit holders for the Southern Southeast area to fish using either longline or pot gear at their discretion. Currently there are 22 permit holders, but 19 are required to use longline gear.

PROPOSED BY: John M. Johanson

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