

PROPOSAL 16

5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

Resolve conflict in season opening dates between Chignik Area state-waters and parallel Pacific cod fisheries, as follows:

5 AAC 28.357 is amended to read:

...

(d)(4) the state-waters season shall reopen 48 hours after the closure of the federal Central Gulf of Alaska jig gear “B” season if the mechanical jigging machine and hand troll gear allocation has not been taken; if the commissioner determines that the mechanical jigging machine and hand troll gear allocation or pot gear allocation will not be taken by August 14, the commissioner may close, by emergency order, the state-waters season for mechanical jigging machine and hand troll gear and immediately reopen a state-waters season during which all state-waters Pacific cod legal gear may be used and may [SHALL] close the state-waters season for all gear types on August 28 or when the annual guideline harvest level is achieved, whichever occurs first.

...

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Season dates for the Chignik Area state-waters and federal/parallel Pacific cod seasons have been historically coordinated to avoid concurrent fisheries for the same gear type. The Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan contains provisions to roll over unharvested jig gear GHL to pot gear vessels late in the season to promote full harvest of the GHL. This rollover traditionally occurred after the fall federal/parallel B season concluded for the year to avoid overlap across seasons. During the 2013 and 2015 board cycles, the state-waters Pacific cod management plan was modified and the GHL rollover date and other related provisions were moved from October 30 to August 15.

Longstanding regulations instruct the department to close the state-waters season on August 28 and open the parallel B season on September 1. During years when a state-waters GHL rollover occurs, this results in a state-waters pot gear season that opens on August 15 then closes on August 28 prior to the parallel B season opening. A two week late summer pot gear season typically does not yield enough effort to harvest the remaining GHL consistent with the intent of the rollover regulations. Moreover, gear limits, permit and reporting requirements, and closed waters differ across the state waters and parallel fisheries which may limit access for some participants depending on which fishery is open. Therefore, the department seeks guidance from the board and fishery stakeholders as to which fishery, state waters or parallel, should open during August and September.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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