

PROPOSAL 231

5 AAC 75.006. Harvest record for finfish with annual limit. and 5 AAC 47.060. General provisions for seasons and bag, possession, annual, and size limits for the salt waters of the Southeast Alaska Area.

Amend harvest record recording requirements for lingcod, as follows:

LINGCOD

Season: May 16–November 30.

- Charter operators and crew members may not retain lingcod while clients are on board the vessel.

Northern Southeast Lingcod Area:

- Alaska Residents—No size limit: 1 per day, 2 in possession.
- Nonresidents—1 per day, 1 in possession; 30–35 inches or 55 inches and longer, annual limit of 2 fish, one of which is 30–35 inches in length, and one that is 55 inches or greater in length, harvest record required **including the length of the fish in inches.**

Southern Southeast Lingcod Area

- Alaska Residents—No size limit: 1 per day, 2 in possession.
- Nonresidents—1 per day, 1 in possession; 30–45 inches or 55 inches and longer, annual limit of 2 fish, one of which is 30–45 inches in length, and one that is 55 inches or greater in length, harvest record required **including the length of the fish in inches.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently, nonresident anglers in central southeast Alaska (CSEO) are allowed one Lingcod 30-35 inches in length, and one 55 inches or greater annually. For non-resident anglers in southern southeast Alaska (SSEO), the slot limit is 30-45 inches, and one greater than 55 inches in length annually. Upon landing/retention of a Lingcod, anglers must record the date of harvest, the area the fish was caught, and the species (Lingcod in this instance). The intent of the current regulation is to provide opportunity to retain Lingcod in an effort to stay within the allocation for sport, while simultaneously providing opportunity for anglers to retain trophy Lingcod (55 inches or greater). The state record Lingcod from 2002 was 68.25 inches long (ADFG Trophy Fish Program), so catching a trophy Lingcod that is greater than 55 inches is likely a unique opportunity. The issue is that there is no enforcement mechanism to prevent non-resident anglers from retaining two Lingcod that are within the slot or two that are greater than 55 inches on separate days. I proposed that when a non-resident harvests a Lingcod in all of southeast Alaska, anglers would be additionally required to write the length of the fish on the back of the license. This proposed regulation change is not onerous for non-resident anglers or charter boat captains because they are already required to measure the fish and make a harvest record on the back of the fishing license. The proposed change would provide the Alaska State Wildlife Troopers with an enforcement mechanism to enforce the current size limits, and likely we would see a further reduction in annual sport harvest of Lingcod which translates into opportunities to modify (increase) the restrictive slot limit.

PROPOSED BY: Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee

(HQ-F20-087)
