

PROPOSAL 232

5 AAC 28.1XX. New section.

Create a new spiny dogfish pot fishery in Southeast Alaska, as follows:

Create a new Spiny Dogfish pot fishery in Southeast Alaska with regulations as described below to be determined by ADF&G.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?

1. Spiny Dogfish are currently an underutilized fishery.
2. In processing Spiny Dogfish nearly all of the carcass is utilized, (including some organs) except the head. When markets are developed this fishery could provide new revenue streams and opportunities for fishers, processors and communities.
3. Spiny Dogfish tend to travel in large dense packs by size and sex. Longline Spiny Dogfish fisheries in British Columbia's Strait of Georgia have resulted in concerns over the inability to fish selectively, resulting in unwanted harvests of fecund females. A pot fishery could resolve those issues by the fact that the fish are harvested live and can be released unharmed, coupled with regulations on:
 - a. Season duration,
 - b. Pot limits
 - c. Tunnel size
 - d. Escapement rings
 - e. legal size retention (slot limits)

- It is important to realize from the outset -this is not a hook-and-line proposal, it is a live capture fishery that is being considered;
- Fish will come up live and can be sorted, sized, sexed, and unwanted catch such as fecund females and bycatch, can be released live, reducing mortality of all discards including bycatch;
- It can be managed by, among other things, tunnel ring size, slot limits and pot limits;
- Spiny Dogfish are an underutilized species -there are not too many species left in that category
- If we leave them alone (unexploited) they will proliferate and become a problem across many fisheries and gear types. They are already a problem in some areas of the west coast.
- It will take marketing to create a demand. Finding markets will have its challenges but if there can be a market for Asian Tilapia raised in sewage treatment pools, surely we can sell whitefish filets from our pristine Alaskan waters.
- U.S. fishermen and processors are no strangers to selling fish into foreign markets and Europe might be a good place to start where they are already consuming similar products;
- There are many similarities between Arrowtooth Flounder and Spiny Dogfish. Arrowtooth went largely unexploited, proliferated, and became a problem. Now steps are being taken to harvest, process and market them. Arrowtooth fillets in a New York supermarket selling at \$12.00 a pound.
- Although there is the possibility to obtain a Commissioner's Permit the process can be cumbersome and daunting to most fishermen, whereas if there is a fishery on the books, fishermen and processors are more likely to take advantage of it.

In summary: Our hope is that by starting a discussion now we may be able to get out ahead of this one, not trying to play catch-up after it has become a problem as with Arrowtooth.

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