

## **PROPOSAL 22**

### **5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet - Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.**

Establish a sport fishing closure for rockfish in Cook Inlet from June 1 - July 31 as follows:

5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet - Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

Lower Cook Inlet Saltwater Rockfish Regulations and Bag Limits

5 per day, 10 in possession, only 1 per day, 2 in possession may be non pelagic

### **June 1st - July 31st All rockfish species both pelagic and non pelagic may not be retained North of Latitude Line 59.18.513' N (Magnet Rock).**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Rockfish harvest North of Magnet rock Latitude line 59.18.513' N and north within Kachemack Bay Saltwaters to be closed June 1st-July 31st

As Regulatory actions continue to pressure our fisheries, we see operators turn to target rockfish in Kachemack bay more and more to create in bay multi species trips end up productive during poor salmon fishing or unfavorable weather to align with the value given of the trip, the recent uptick in harvest among rockfish has left myself wanting to find a path that protects in bay rockfish populations from over harvest during a very short summer session when fishing intensity is highest. Without placing a safeguard on rockfish in Kachemack bay i strongly feel we will see a localized decimation within the next 10 years while having coastal biomass populations staying consistently healthy and without such a firmly established population we may not see returning winter populations of black rockfish in the years to come. This proposal protects in bay rockfish populations from in bay harvest around the two heaviest months of fishing intensity and will help the overall harvest for Cook Inlet saltwater that may be overall helpful in the long term goal of sustainability for years to come.

One concern with this proposal is charter fisherman returning with rockfish from south of the proposed area often continue to fish for halibut under 28" before returning home, the targeted areas are not at all areas with rockfish populations but my language states that retention is not allowed and i hope the language for continued fishing of other species.

The Charter sector being of the smallest user group within the directed fishery for all species alike continues to take the fall for the conservation burden, we are the most documented user group as well as the cleanest fishery for bycatch mortality and released methods used, especially for rockfish species both pelagic and non pelagic, our businesses are entering a new era of catch allocations that has left many long time clients among many businesses call for cancelations after years and years of enjoyment into this sector and this great state.

My only aim is to keep our harvest rates within the scope of sustainability for the future of the industry and the biomass we rely on. I do not want to see Cook Inlet go down the road Sitka did

with their in bay rockfish numbers being overfished while coastal populations are thriving yet a 2 rockfish limit and non pelagic closures are being endured while longline vessels are hauling yelloweye after yelloweye in front of charter clients and they do not understand where the conservation concern is. These are the stories I get from charter members of the ACA from Southeastern Alaska, one large blanket regulation treating local waters the same as coastal or longer ranged waters. Thank You.

**PROPOSED BY:** Garrett Lambert

(EF-F23-102)

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