

PROPOSAL 11

5 AAC 28.267. Prince William Sound Pacific Cod Management Plan.

Reduce the Prince William Sound Pacific cod jig/hand troll allocation and create a new, larger allocation for pot and longline gear, as follows:

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(e) During a state-waters season,

(1) the guideline harvest level for Pacific cod in the Prince William Sound Area is 25 percent of the estimated total allowable harvest of Pacific cod for the federal Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area; mechanical jigging machine and hand troll gear [and groundfish pot gear] is allocated **5 percent** [15 percent] of the guideline harvest level; **ground fish pot gear** and longline gear is allocated **95 percent** [85 percent] of the guideline harvest level, except that if.

(A) the guideline harvest level allocated to the mechanical jigging machine and hand troll gear [and groundfish pot gear] is taken in any calendar year, the mechanical jigging machine and hand troll gear [and groundfish pot gear] allocation will increase by five percent beginning the following calendar year to a maximum of **15 percent** [30 percent] of the guideline harvest level and the longline **and ground fish pot gear** allocation will decrease by a corresponding five percent the following calendar year to a minimum of **85 percent** [70 percent] of the guideline harvest level; and

(B) the guideline harvest level allocated to the mechanical jigging machine and hand troll gear [and groundfish pot gear] is not taken in any calendar year, the mechanical jigging machine and hand troll gear [and groundfish pot gear] allocation will decrease by five percent beginning the following calendar year to a minimum of **5 percent** [15 percent] of the guideline harvest level and the longline **and ground fish pot gear** allocation will increase by a corresponding five percent the following calendar year to a maximum of **95 percent** [85 percent] of the guideline harvest level

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The current regulation and allocation does not encourage use of pot gear for the majority of the GHL. Pot gear has been proven to reduce rockfish and halibut bycatch considerably. Recent out of cycle changes were passed at the 2023 AYK meeting, this change has allowed for long-lining of pots. This new change allowed for pot gear to harvest their allocation of the pacific cod GHL for the first time in over two decades, it has proven to be a very successful way to harvest pacific cod efficiently while also reducing bycatch of both halibut and rockfish. It is also a substantially more user friendly method of fishing.

Halibut and Rockfish bycatch in the pacific cod fishery can be greatly reduced if more of the fishery is conducted using slinky pots. Fisherman looking to fish a cleaner gear type and access more of the GHL should be celebrated and encouraged, unfortunately if left unchanged the current allocation plan greatly dis-incentivizes fisherman from pursuing a cleaner fishing gear type. This proposed change would not force anybody currently participating to switch from hook and line to pots, however it would allow pot fisherman to access more of the total GHL currently held exclusively for the hook and line fisherman.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. I have worked with multiple other permit holders and interested parties on this idea.

PROPOSED BY: Kenneth B. Jones

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