

PROPOSAL 19

5 AAC 28.210. Fishing seasons for Prince William Sound Area. 5 AAC 28.206. Prince William Sound Area registration. 5 AAC 28.272. Sablefish harvest, possession, and landing requirements for Prince William Sound Area.

Modify the commercial fishing season for sablefish in Prince William Sound, as follows:

Amend 5 AAC 28.210 to read:

(b) Sablefish may be taken in the Inside District **during the “A” Season** from april 15 through august 31 **and during the “B” season from September 15th - December 31st**. There is no open season for commercial sablefish fishing in the Outside District.

Amend 5 AAC 28.206 to read:

(c) In the Inside District, a Prince William Sound CFEC sablefish permit holder, or The permit holder's agent must register for the commercial sablefish fishery before 5:00 p.m. April 1st. **Registration for “B” season will open September 1st and close September 7th at 5:00 pm.**

Amend 5 AAC 28.272 to read

(c) In the Prince William Sound Area, the holder of a CFEC limited entry permit or interim-use permit to take sablefish may not take more than the [ANNUAL] **seasonal** amount specified by the department. The department will determine the [ANNUAL] **seasonal** amount as follows:

(1) the [ANNUAL] **“A” season** amount will be the sum of one-half of the annual harvest objective divided by the number of permit holders registered to fish in the commercial sablefish **“A” Season** fishery and one-half of the annual harvest objective multiplied by the average percentage of the harvest taken by the vessel category for which the CFEC permit was issued, as specified in 20 AAC 05.779, and divided by the number of permit holders registered to fish sablefish with the permits of that vessel category;

(2) the “B” Season amount will be the sum of one-half of the remaining annual harvest objective unharvested during the “A” Season divided by the number of permit holders registered to fish in the commercial sablefish “B” Season fishery and one-half of the annual harvest objective multiplied by the average percentage of the harvest taken by the vessel category for which the CFEC permit was issued, as specified in 20 AAC 05.779, and divided by the number of permit holders registered to fish sablefish with the permits of that vessel category;

(3)[(2)] the average percentages of harvest for the vessel categories described in (1) and (2) of this subsection are as follows:

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Sablefish in PWS are managed under an individual quota system with each registered permit holder given a share of the GHL each year. In recent years, this system has resulted in much of the GHL being unharvested due to either registered permits not actually participating in the fishery, or not catching their allocated share. In 2023 only 50% of the GHL was harvested.

We propose creating a fall "B" season that occurs every year after the close of the traditional fishery. Any share of the GHL unharvested during the traditional "A" Season would be redistributed and could be harvested by active permit holders during the "B" season. This change will not take anything away from existing permit holders, or change the existing allocation between permit types; it is simply giving more opportunity to fully utilize the resource. During the most recent 10 year period from 2014-2023, only 55% of the total GHL was harvested.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.

PROPOSED BY: Cordova District Fishermen United (CDFU)

(EF-F24-130)
