

PROPOSAL 220

5 AAC 38.140. Southeastern Alaska Sea Cucumber Management Plan.

Allow crew members to be in possession of sea cucumbers harvested by the sea cucumber permit holder.

Draft language: **Crew member of a registered dive vessel may be in possession of legally harvested product even when the permit holder (diver) is neither on nor attached to nor in the immediate vicinity of the vessel. This would apply during or after an opener until the vessel has departed the specific open fishing area.**

Adding this clarification of possession will better fit the operation of the commercial dive fisheries and reduce ticketing due to application of general possession regulations.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? General regulations regarding possession of harvested product are not aligned with practices related to commercial dive harvesting of sea cucumbers. In sea cucumber harvesting several different methods are employed. In some cases, divers are attached via their breathing line to a surface skiff that follows the diver along the surface. As the dive harvester fills their cucumber bags, they attach flotation to the line and send the line to the surface for later retrieval by the larger dive boat. In other instances, divers do not have breathing lines but use free tanks. In these instances, the dive vessel may drop a diver off in one bay and then drop the other diver in another bay. The vessel would then travel back and forth between divers to collect cucumber harvest bags and provide fresh scuba tanks.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. SARDFA sea cucumber committee, SARDFA Board of Directors and Ketchikan ADFG biologists.

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