

**PROPOSAL 28**

**5 AAC 55.023. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Prince William Sound Area.**

Modify the rockfish area, bag and possession limit, as follows:

Bag and possession limits for inside PWS waters should follow what the Department has recommended by emergency order in 2023 and 2024. However, outside waters should be 4 per daily bag limit and 8 in possession. In addition, outside waters nonpelagic possession should be the same as North Gulf Coast and allow for a double bag limit of 2.

(9) rockfish:

**(A) Inside PWS Waters** may be taken from January 1-December 31; bag limit of [FOUR] **three** fish; possession limit of [EIGHT] **six** fish, of which only one per day and in possession may be nonpelagic rockfish; no size limit**(B) Outside PWS Waters:** may be taken from January 1-December 31; bag limit of four fish; possession limit of eight fish, of which only one per day and **two** in possession may be nonpelagic rockfish; no size limit; **only one nonpelagic in possession may be a yelloweye rockfish**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Current PWS rockfish regulation:

(9) rockfish:

(A) may be taken from January 1 - December 31; bag limit of four fish; possession limit of eight fish, of which only one per day and in possession may be nonpelagic rockfish; no size limit; -In 2023 and 2024, ADFG has reduced the bag and possession limit by one fish and also closed the retention of yelloweye for 2-3 months.

My previous proposal was to break out the Prince William Sound sport fish management area. This proposal is to allow different bag limits for the inside and outside PWS areas for rockfish. As stated in the previous proposal, the area is so vast that regulatory and management requirements could be different in these different waters. The Department is already examining some rockfish species by inside and outside waters. I believe this will allow more effective management of PWS inside waters and relaxed management of PWS outside waters. I believe it to be necessary to further regulate PWS inside rockfish regulations however PWS outside waters have far less effort and I believe populations are stronger outside therefore bag and possession limits could be higher without causing further damage to the inside waters.

In my experience as a charter operator for 13 years, I have noticed a decline in size and number of rockfish on inside waters and a more constant number and size on outside waters.

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

**PROPOSED BY:** Raymond Nix

(HQ-F24-083)

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