



Advisory Announcement
For Immediate Release: March 6, 2020

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**2020 DEMERSAL SHELF ROCKFISH PERSONAL USE FISHERIES
ANNOUNCEMENT**

Sitka. . . The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) announced the following information concerning the personal use demersal shelf rockfish (DSR) bottomfish fishery in Southeast Alaska.

This announcement supersedes the previously issued announcement regarding the personal use bottomfish fishery for nonretention of yelloweye rockfish issued on December 31, 2019:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/applications/dcfnewsrelease/1130983389.pdf>

Effective Saturday March 7, the personal use bottomfish fishery will be closed to the retention of DSR in all personal use waters for the 2020 season and will remain closed until further notice (5 AAC 77.655). The DSR assemblage is comprised of 7 rockfish species including: yelloweye, quillback, copper, rosethorn, canary, China, and tiger rockfish. Personal use fishermen are encouraged to utilize rockfish deepwater release devices to decrease release mortality of DSR while bottomfish fishing for other species.

More information on rockfish conservation and deepwater release devices can be found on the ADF&G website at: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingSportFishingInfo.rockfishconservation>

The subsistence bottomfish fishery remains open for retention of DSR, in areas defined in 5 AAC 01.716, except that bottomfish may not be taken for subsistence purposes in the waters off Cape Edgecumbe enclosed by a box defined as 56°55.5' N, lat., 56°57' N. lat., 135°54' W. long., and 135°57' W. long (5 AAC 01.725 (b)).

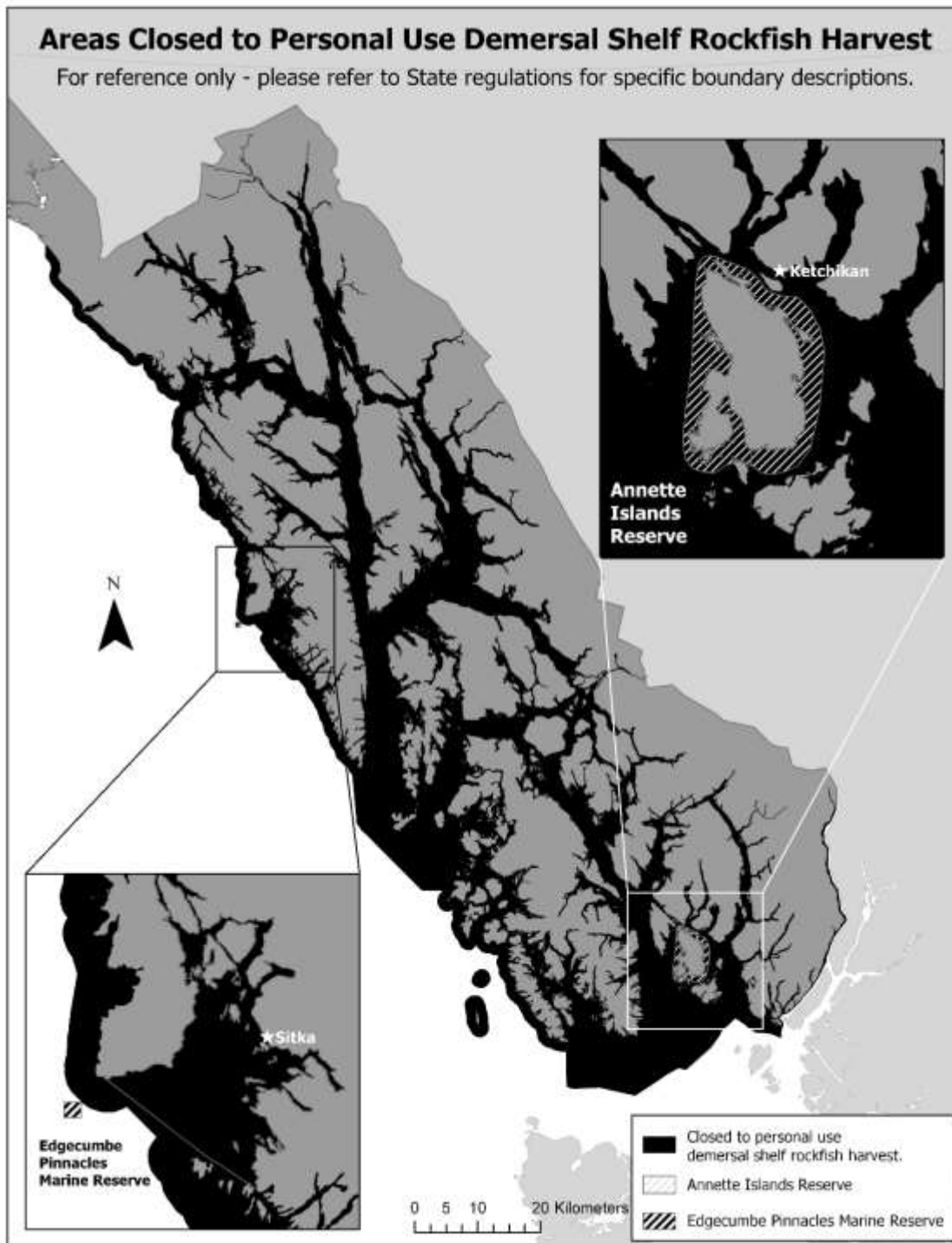
Biomass has declined approximately 60% since assessments began in 1994 for yelloweye rockfish in the Eastern Gulf of Alaska, despite conservative management over the last decade. In addition to the decline in biomass, annual trends in biological data revealed truncation of age classes, thus reducing reproductive potential and increasing uncertainty for future recruitment of juveniles. DSR are particularly vulnerable to overexploitation and are slow to recover once fished below sustainable levels given their longevity, slow growth, late maturation, and high site-fidelity, with yelloweye rockfish reaching an estimated maximum age of 122 years and maturing at 18–22 years and quillback rockfish reaching an estimated maximum age of 95 years and maturing at 11 years.

These concerns warrant further management action to allow for rebuilding of stocks and to ensure sustainable rockfish fisheries in the future. Stock health will continue to be assessed annually through yelloweye rockfish stock assessment surveys, biological sampling of yelloweye bycatch, and monitoring bycatch of all DSR species retained in commercial groundfish and halibut fisheries, as mandated under full-retention requirements (5 AAC 28.171).

Annette Islands Reserve

Fishermen are reminded the Annette Islands Reserve is a federally recognized Indian reservation in Alaska. The waters within 3,000 feet of Annette Island, Ham Island, Hemlock Island, Spire Island, Walker Island, Lewis Island, and adjacent rocks and islets are designated within the fishing reserve. Fisheries within the reserve are managed by the Metlakatla Indian Community for authorized fisheries participants.

Metlakatla residents are also reminded that waters beyond 3,000 feet of Annette Island, Ham Island, Hemlock Island, Spire Island, Walker Island, Lewis Island, and adjacent rocks and islets are managed by the State of Alaska. Proper licensing, permitting, and reporting are required.



This map is for general reference only. For descriptions of management area boundaries, refer to 5 AAC 77.655.

Advisory Announcement website: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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