



Advisory Announcement

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2020 GROUND FISH BYCATCH REGULATIONS FOR STATE WATERS AND STATE MANAGED GROUND FISH TAKEN IN THE FEDERAL COMMERCIAL HALIBUT AND SABLEFISH FISHERIES IN THE EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA

Sitka . . . The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) announced today the following information concerning regulations that apply during the 2020 Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) commercial halibut and sablefish fisheries. This advisory announcement details bycatch regulations and allowances for state waters of the Southeast District and for state managed species taken in federal waters of the Eastern Gulf of Alaska (EGOA) Area, east of 144° W. longitude.

Rockfish possession and landing requirements (5 AAC 28.171)

In the Southeast District, a vessel or Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permit holder fishing for groundfish or halibut must retain, weigh, and report all demersal shelf rockfish (DSR) taken. The DSR assemblage includes yelloweye, quillback, canary, copper, tiger, China, and rosethorn rockfish (5 AAC 39.975 (34)).

In the EGOA, a vessel or CFEC permit holder fishing for groundfish or halibut must retain, weigh, and report all black rockfish taken.

In the Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI) and Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) Subdistricts, a vessel or CFEC permit holder fishing for groundfish or halibut must retain, weigh, and report all rockfish taken.

All rockfish retained in excess of allowable bycatch limits shall be reported as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket. All proceeds from the sale of excess rockfish bycatch shall be surrendered to the state. Excess rockfish retained due to full retention requirements may be retained for personal use; however, the pounds must be documented as overage on the fish ticket.

Federal rockfish landing requirements

Effective March 23, 2020, federal regulations require that the operator of a federally-permitted catcher vessel using hook-and-line, pot, or jig gear in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Gulf of Alaska **retain and land all rockfish caught while fishing for groundfish or halibut**. The maximum commerce allowance (MCA) for rockfish is 15% in aggregate, of which 5% can be yelloweye rockfish in all areas, except in the Southeast Outside District of the Gulf of Alaska (SEO) where the MCA for DSR species is limited to 10% of the aggregate round weight of retained IFQ halibut, and 1% of the aggregate round weight of retained IFQ sablefish. Rockfish taken in federal waters must be reported on an ADF&G fish ticket, and rockfish in excess of bycatch allowances must be reported as bycatch overage. Rockfish overage from federal waters may be retained for personal use or donated but cannot be sold or enter commerce.

For more information, refer to: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/amendment-119-fmp-groundfish-bering-sea-and-aleutian-islands-and-amendment-107-fmp>.

Lingcod possession and landing requirements (5 AAC 28.173)

In the Southeast District, a vessel fishing for sablefish may not land or have on board lingcod, except when a vessel is fishing for halibut and sablefish at the same time, during which the vessel may not land or have on board lingcod in excess of the bycatch percentage, by round weight, of all halibut on board the vessel. Lingcod bycatch in the halibut longline fishery is allocated by management area: Icy Bay Subdistrict (IBS), East Yakutat (EYKT) Section, Northern Southeast Outside (NSEO) Section, Central Southeast Outside (CSEO) Section, Southern Southeast Outer Coast (SSEOC) Sector, Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI) Subdistrict, and Southern Southeast Internal Waters (SSEIW) Sector (Figure 1). Lingcod catches will be closely monitored, and fishermen are advised that area closures may occur on short notice. Closures will be announced via ADF&G advisory announcement, United States Coast Guard “Notice to Mariners” report, and National Weather Service broadcast. For information on lingcod bycatch status and closures, contact the Sitka Area Office at 907-747-6688 or the Groundfish Hotline at 907-747-4882.

Pacific cod possession and landing requirements (5 AAC 28.070 (e))

A CFEC permit holder operating a vessel fishing for groundfish shall retain all Pacific cod brought on board a vessel when a directed fishery for Pacific cod is open, and all Pacific cod brought on board a vessel up to the maximum retainable bycatch (20%) of Pacific cod when the directed fishery for Pacific cod is closed. The directed Pacific cod season in NSEI and SSEI is open from January 1 through December 31, 2020, unless closed by Emergency Order at an earlier date; however, management decisions are based on a seasonal harvest period of July 1 through June 30 to avoid overharvest of Pacific cod during winter spawning aggregations. Area closures in the directed Pacific cod fishery are announced via ADF&G advisory announcement. The directed Pacific cod fishery in state waters on the outer coast is managed in conjunction with the federal fishery, which occurs in the EEZ (3–200 nm offshore). Due to the federal fishery being closed for the 2020 season in the Gulf of Alaska, state outside waters (0–3 nm) are also closed.

Harvest of bait by commercial permit holders in Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area (5 AAC 28.190)

A CFEC interim use or limited entry permit holder may take groundfish in waters of Alaska, for use as bait in waters of Alaska, in the commercial fishery for which the permit is held. **A person who takes groundfish for bait during a fishing trip and uses the bait during that trip, must report the bait taken by species and estimated weight on the fish ticket prepared for that fishing trip.** Groundfish harvested for bait shall be reported on the fish ticket as delivery code 92. Sablefish, lingcod, thornyhead, shortraker, rougheye, and yelloweye rockfish may not be taken for bait or used for bait, except that the head, tail, fins, and viscera of delivered and processed commercial sablefish, lingcod, and thornyhead, shortraker, rougheye, and yelloweye rockfish may be used for bait.

IFQ Sablefish fishing prohibited in state waters of the Eastern Gulf of Alaska (5 AAC 28.170)

The federal IFQ harvest of sablefish is prohibited in all state waters of the Southeast District. This includes internal state waters, waters of the outer coast within the three nautical mile line (0-3 nm), and waters east of the Fishery Limit Line between Cape Ommaney and 55°30.00' N. latitude (Figure 2).

IFQ Halibut fishery allowable bycatch limits for state waters and state managed groundfish taken in federal waters

Allowable bycatch limits for rockfish have been adjusted to facilitate consistency between state and federal regulations and are **effective for state waters and state managed groundfish taken in federal waters on March 14, 2020** (5 AAC 28.070 (b)). A vessel or CFEC permit holder fishing for IFQ halibut may retain and sell the following bycatch percentages shown in the table on the next page. The amount of bycatch that may be sold is based on the round weight of halibut and bycatch species or species group.

Allowable bycatch limits, effective March 14, 2020

IFQ Halibut fishery:

BYCATCH SPECIES	STATE OUTSIDE WATERS 0-3 MILES	INTERNAL WATERS NSEI and SSEI
Rockfish, including thornyheads	15% in aggregate, of which up to 10% may be DSR Full retention required for DSR¹ and black rockfish²	15% in aggregate, of which up to 10% may be DSR Full retention required for all rockfish, excluding thornyheads
Lingcod ²	20% in EYKT, NSEO, CSEO and SSEOC 5% in IBS Bycatch allowed for longline gear only ; lingcod bycatch permitted until area GHl taken Minimum size limit: 27" (tip of snout to tip of tail) or 20.5" (front of dorsal fin to tip of tail)	20% in NSEI 5% in SSEIW
Pacific cod	20%	
Spiny Dogfish	35% for longline gear; 20% for jig gear	
Skates	5% in aggregate	
Sablefish	0%, no retention	
Other Groundfish	20% in aggregate	

¹Regulations also apply in Federal waters of Southeast Outside Subdistrict

²State and Federal waters

For information on bycatch allowances in federal waters contact NOAA enforcement at 907-747-6940 (Sitka), 907-586-7225 (Juneau), 907-772-2285 (Petersburg), or 907- 247-5804 (Ketchikan).

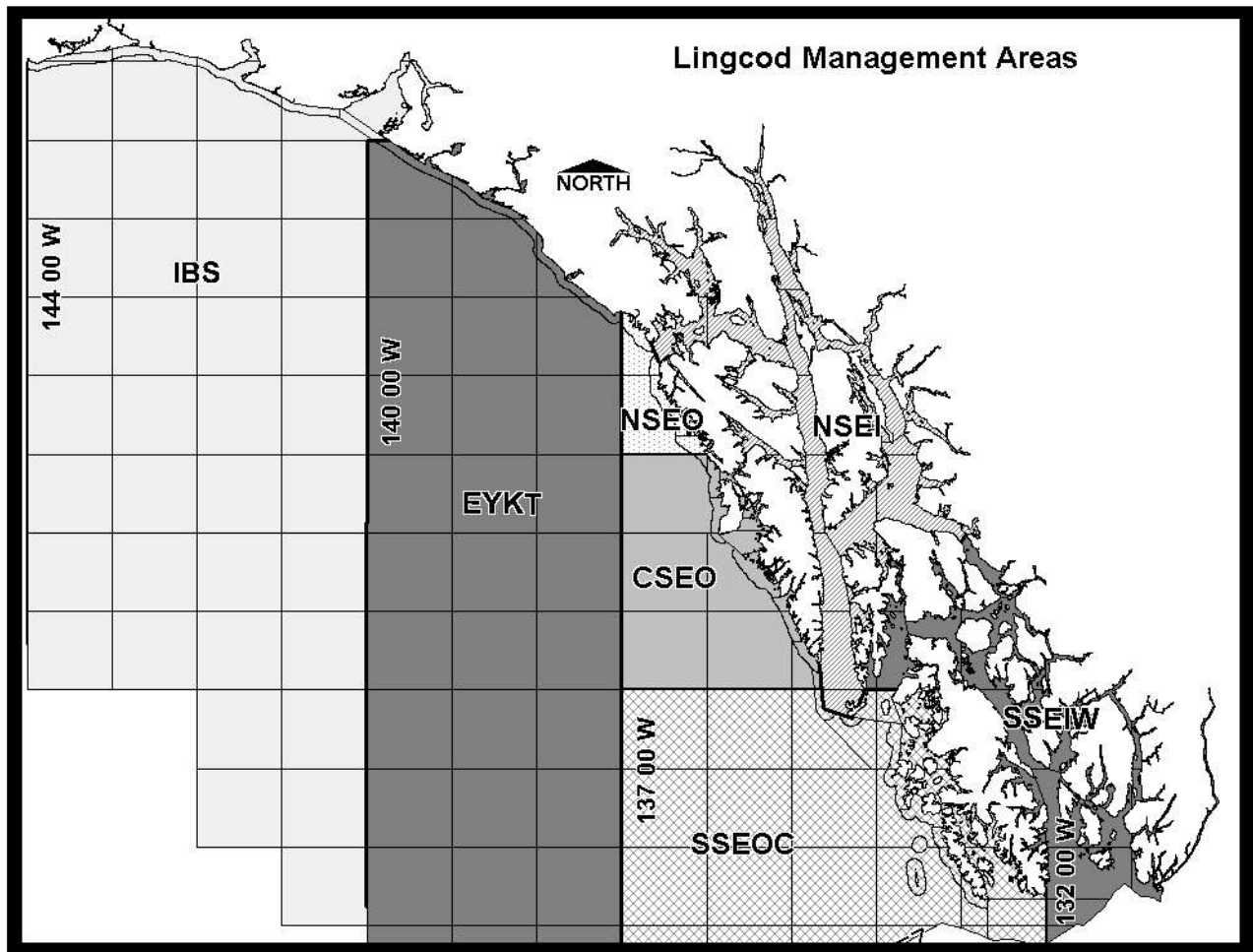


Figure 1. Southeast Alaska Lingcod Management Areas. For detailed descriptions of Lingcod Management Area boundaries, refer to 5AAC 28.105. This map is for general information purposes only.

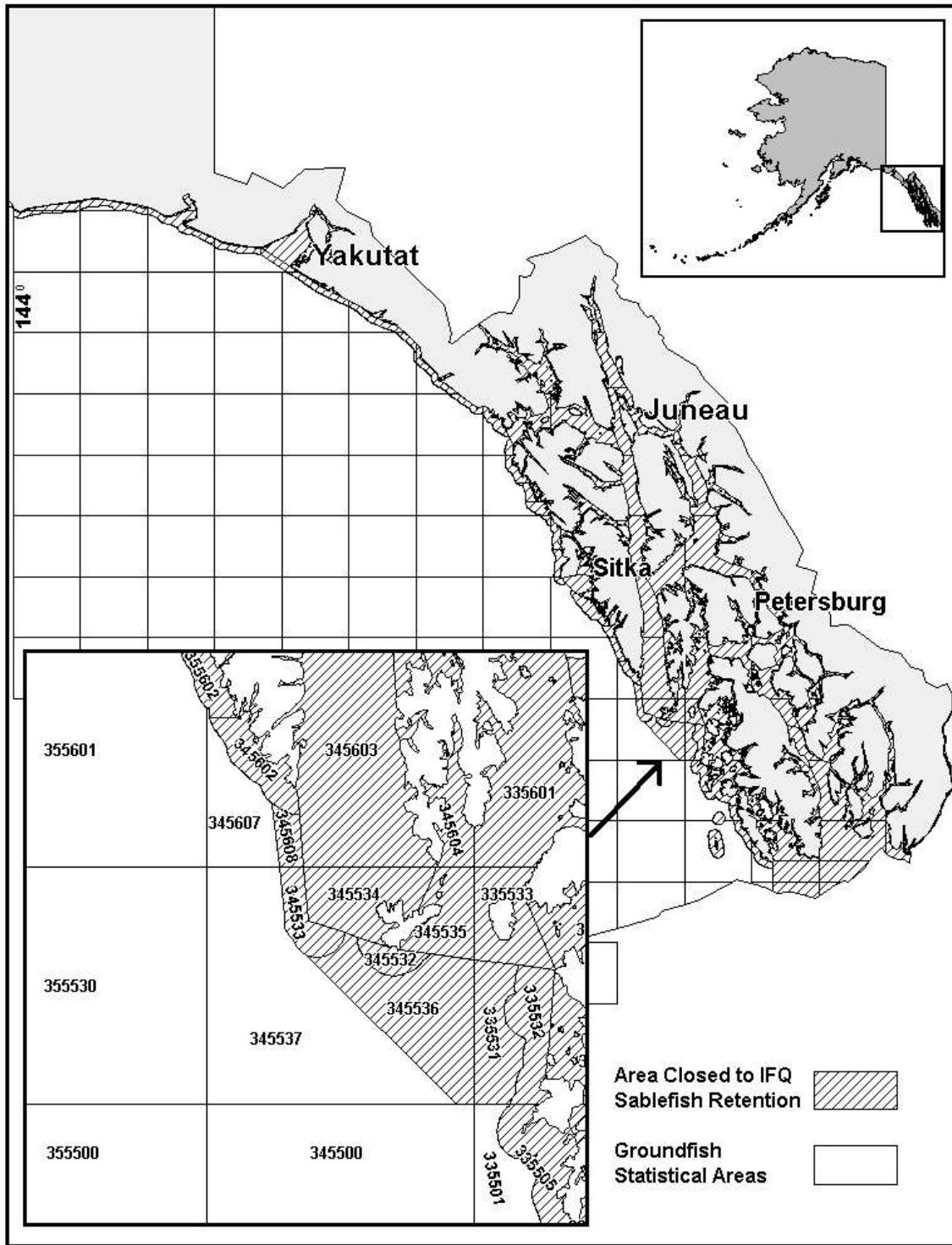


Figure 2. Waters of Alaska closed to IFQ sablefish fishing. This map is for general information purposes only.

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

<i>Office</i>	<i>Ketchikan</i>	<i>Petersburg</i>	<i>Wrangell</i>	<i>Sitka</i>	<i>Juneau</i>	<i>Haines</i>	<i>Yakutat</i>
ADF&G	225-5195	772-3801	874-3822	747-6688	465-4250	766-2830	784-3255
AWT	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000	766-2533	784-3220
<i>Groundfish Hotline</i>				747-4882			