

**PROPOSAL 16**

**5 AAC 28.263 Prince William Sound Walleye Pollock Pelagic Trawl Fishery Management Plan**

Close the Prince William Sound pelagic trawl fishery, as follows:

Closure of the Prince William Sound Walleye Pollock Pelagic Trawl Fishery to preserve PWS.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** It is our belief that the Prince William Sound (PWS) Walleye Pollock Trawl Fishery is causing significant damage to the ecosystem in PWS and should be closed.

There is sufficient evidence of this by looking at the bycatch species they are harvesting. After discussions with local ADFG staff, it's been determined that the rockfish bycatch is predominantly shortraker rockfish. Shortraker rockfish are a deepwater fish living in depths typically greater than 800' and are considered bottomfish. While the PWS Walleye Pollock Trawl Fishery is supposed to be a midwater trawl fishery, evidence suggests they are dragging the bottom based on their bycatch. Repeated years of dragging the bottom causes serious damage by destroying the natural seafloor habitat and disrupting the ecosystem.

PWS holds many resources utilized by several user groups and it is in the best interest of all user groups to preserve the waters for current and future generations.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.** This proposal was developed in conjunction with The Chenega Corporation, Raymond Nix, and information obtained from ADFG.

**PROPOSED BY:** The Chenega IRA Council

(HQ-F24-124)

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