

PROPOSAL 205

5 AAC 77.674. Personal use bottomfish fishery.

Allow personal use retention of Pacific cod and rockfishes, including thornyhead rockfish, in pot gear, as follows:

5 AAC 77.674 (2) is amended to read:

In the personal use taking of bottomfish,

(2) [EXCEPT SABLEFISH] bottomfish may be taken for personal use only by longline or hand held line, **except sablefish, Pacific cod, rockfish, and thornyhead rockfish may be taken for personal use only by longline, hand held line, or pot gear**; for all bottomfish, unattended gear must be marked as described in 5 AAC 77.010(d);

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? With the recent increase in pot gear use in the personal use sablefish fisheries, Pacific cod and rockfishes caught as bycatch in pot gear must be released. Pacific cod and most rockfish species have a closed swim bladder and suffer embolism mortality when brought to the surface. Current regulations do not allow retention of Pacific cod or rockfishes in personal use pot gear; therefore, these bycatch species are discarded at sea. Allowing retention of Pacific cod and rockfishes will reduce waste and mirror subsistence and commercial pot gear retention regulations for these species.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F24-147)
