

PROPOSAL 24

5 AAC 28.210. Fishing Seasons for Prince William Sound Area

Lengthen the commercial fishing season for sablefish in Prince William Sound, as follows:

5 AAC 28.210. Fishing seasons for Prince William Sound Area

(b) Sablefish may be taken in the Inside District from **April 1 through October 31**. There is no open season for commercial sablefish fishing in the Outside District.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Changes to the PWS Sablefish season dates. The Season dates were originally kept short in an effort to avoid whale depredation during spring and fall time when salmon were not running, however this regulation is now outdated with the invention of slinky pots and their effective reduction in the whale depredation. Adopting an expanded season will allow for fisherman to harvest earlier and later and participate in both the black cod and salmon fisheries. Further encouraging slinky pot adoption will reduce bycatch in the hook and line harvest methods. This idea came to the board in 2014 however that proposal only extended dates for pot fisherman, it was rejected at that time only because it did not include all gear types. While an expanded season will certainly incentivize pot fishing, this proposal if adopted would not prohibit somebody from fishing one gear type or another. During the COVID years ADFG expanded the season with little or no negative effects on the resource or participants.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. I have worked with multiple other permit holders on this idea, these dates represent a compromise between multiple viewpoints.

PROPOSED BY: Kenneth B Jones

(HQ-F24-007)
