

Lingcod

PROPOSAL 199

5 AAC 28.111. Demersal shelf rockfish fishing seasons for Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area. and 5 AAC 28.113. Lingcod fishing seasons for Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area.

Add a weather delay provision that would postpone the opening date of the directed demersal shelf rockfish and directed lingcod fisheries if weather forecast meets gale warning or higher criteria in management areas in the Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area, as follows:

5 AAC 28.111 (c) is added to read:

(c) For all Eastern Gulf of Alaska demersal shelf rockfish fishing periods, the season opening shall be delayed if the National Weather Service forecast for the management area(s) eligible to be opened contains gale force winds of 35 knots or higher in the forecast 24 hours preceding the season opening or 24 hours after the season opening, in which case, the season opening shall be delayed 24 hours and announcement of this delay will be issued at least 24 hours before the start of the fishery. If after the initial delay gale force winds of 35 knots or higher continue, the season opening shall be delayed an additional 24 hours and may continue on a rolling 24-hour basis as necessary. For the purposes of this paragraph, the corresponding National Weather Service forecast areas for the sections of the Eastern Gulf of Alaska are as follows:

(1) East Yakutat (EYKT) Section: Cape Fairweather to Icy Cape;

(2) Northern Southeast Outside (NSEO) Section: Cape Edgecumbe to Cape Spencer and Cape Spencer to Cape Fairweather;

(3) Central Southeast Outside (CSEO) Section: Cape Decision to Cape Edgecumbe and Cape Edgecumbe to Cape Spencer;

(4) Southern Southeast Outside (SSEO) Section: Dixon Entrance to Cape Decision;

(5) Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI) Subdistrict: Cross Sound, Glacier Bay, Icy Strait, Northern Lynn Canal, Southern Lynn Canal, Northern Chatham Strait, Southern Chatham Strait, Stephens Passage, and Frederick Sound;

(6) Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) Subdistrict: Dixon Entrance to Cape Decision, Clarence Strait, and Sumner Strait.

5 AAC 28.113 (b) (1) is added to read:

(1) For all Eastern Gulf of Alaska directed lingcod fishing periods, the season opening shall be delayed if the National Weather Service forecast for the management area(s) eligible to be opened contains gale force winds of 35 knots or higher in the forecast for May 15 or May 16, in which case the season opening shall be delayed 24 hours and announcement of this delay will be issued at least 24 hours before the start of the fishery. If after the initial delay gale force winds of 35 knots or higher continue, the season opening shall be delayed an additional 24 hours and may continue on a rolling 24-hour basis as necessary. For the purposes of this paragraph, the corresponding National Weather Service forecast areas for the sections of the Eastern Gulf of Alaska are as follows:

(A) Icy Bay Subdistrict (IBS): Icy Cape to Cape Suckling;

(B) East Yakutat (EYKT) Section: Cape Fairweather to Icy Cape;

(C) Northern Southeast Outside (NSEO) Section: Cape Edgecumbe to Cape Spencer and Cape Spencer to Cape Fairweather;

(D) Central Southeast Outside (CSEO) Section: Cape Decision to Cape Edgecumbe and Cape Edgecumbe to Cape Spencer;

(E) Southern Southeast Outer Coast (SSEOC) Sector: Dixon Entrance to Cape Decision.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? If the season opening for the directed demersal shelf rockfish (DSR) or directed lingcod fishery occurs during a period of poor weather (i.e., a gale warning), larger, more sea-worthy vessels are at an advantage to travel to the fishing grounds and begin fishing first. Opening the fishery during poor weather conditions puts vessels and permit holders at risk because of the pressure to fish as soon as the fishery opens. Adding a weather delay provision provides for a safe and fair start to the directed DSR and lingcod fisheries that have had diverse participation in terms of vessel size and port of departure. Additionally, a weather delay may aid management by reducing the likelihood of effort being concentrated in a single area due to weather conditions. Similar weather delay provisions are in place for many other fisheries across the state.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-140)

PROPOSAL 200

5 AAC 28.173. Lingcod possession and landing requirements for Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area.

Adopt a catch reporting requirement for directed lingcod fisheries, as follows:

5 AAC 28.173 (h) is added to read:

(h) In a directed lingcod fishery, CFEC permit holders shall contact the department at a telephone number or other means specified by the department at the time of registration and provide the following information to the department as required :

- (1) the CFEC permit holder's name;**
- (2) the name of the vessel;**
- (3) the groundfish management area(s) in which they are fishing;**
- (4) the number of lingcod retained in each management area;**
- (5) the number of hours fished in each management area; and**
- (6) other information requested by the department for the purpose of managing and conserving lingcod resources.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The directed fishery for lingcod is fast paced. The East Yakutat Section directed lingcod fishery has the largest allocation (111,000 round lb) and this has been harvested in three days or less on average. The department must make quick decisions on closures based on the approximate catch from each fishing vessel, typically within the first 24 hours of fishing. The department currently asks permit holders to report their catch every 12 to 24 hours for most management areas but compliance is inconsistent and sometimes low. This has resulted in underharvest and overharvest in the directed fisheries. This proposal seeks to implement a catch reporting requirement to assist with lingcod management and promote lingcod conservation by preventing overharvesting.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-144)

PROPOSAL 201

5 AAC 28.173. Lingcod possession and landing requirements for Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area.

Clarify lingcod bycatch overage requirements in the Southeast District fisheries for longline halibut and salmon troll fisheries, as follows:

5 AAC 28.173 (a) (1) is amended to read:

(a) In the Southeast District, a vessel fishing for

(1) halibut with longline gear may not land or have on board lingcod in excess of the **allowable bycatch limit** [BYCATCH PERCENTAGE] , specified in the first emergency order of the season, based on the round weight of all halibut on board the vessel[;]. **Lingcod caught in excess of this allowable bycatch limit, based on the weight of halibut on board, must be immediately released at sea. At the time of landing, all lingcod in excess of the allowable bycatch limit must be weighed and reported as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket. Lingcod bycatch taken in excess of the allowable bycatch limit must be forfeited to the State of Alaska and is subject to law enforcement action.** B[b]ased on harvest, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the bycatch season and immediately reopen a bycatch season during which a different lingcod bycatch level is allowed;

5 AAC 28.173 (a) (3) is amended to read:

(a) In the Southeast District, a vessel fishing for

(3) halibut and sablefish at the same time **must immediately release at sea lingcod bycatch caught** [MAY NOT LAND OR HAVE ON BOARD LINGCOD] in excess of the **allowable bycatch limit** [BYCATCH PERCENTAGE] [,] specified in the first emergency order of the season, by round weight of all halibut on board the vessel. [;] **Vessels must weigh and report all lingcod in excess of the allowable bycatch limit as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket. Lingcod bycatch taken in excess of the allowable bycatch limit must be forfeited to the State of Alaska and is subject to law enforcement action.** B[b]ased on harvest, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the bycatch season and immediately reopen a bycatch season during which a different lingcod bycatch level is allowed;

5 AAC 28.173 (a) (5) is added to read:

(a) In the Southeast District, a vessel fishing for

(5) salmon with troll gear must immediately release at sea lingcod bycatch caught in excess of the allowable bycatch limit specified in the first emergency order of the season, by round weight of all salmon on board the vessel. Vessels must weigh and report all lingcod in excess of the allowable bycatch limit as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket. Lingcod bycatch taken in excess of the allowable bycatch limit must be forfeited to the State of Alaska and is subject to law enforcement action. Based on harvest data, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the bycatch fishing season and immediately reopen a bycatch season during which a different lingcod bycatch level is allowed.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This would provide clarity regarding lingcod bycatch in excess of the allowable bycatch limit. Also, these regulations would clarify that all lingcod caught above the bycatch limit must be immediately released at sea. There is no mandatory retention requirement for lingcod because unlike rockfish, lingcod do not have a closed swim bladder which allows a higher chance of survival when released immediately at sea. If the allowable bycatch limit for lingcod is exceeded and landed, proceeds from the overage must be forfeited to the State of Alaska and permit holders may be subject to law enforcement action.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-145)

PROPOSAL 202

5 AAC 28.130. Lawful gear for Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area.

Clarify that only one line can be used for dinglebar gear in the lingcod fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 28.130 (h)(1) is amended to read:

(h) In the Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area,

(1) **an operational unit of** dinglebar troll gear [IS GEAR THAT] consists of a single line, **referred to hereafter as a “train,” to which one or more leaders, lures, or baited hooks are attached,** that is **fastened to a single troll wire, and is deployed and** retrieved [AND SET] with a **single power** troll gurdy or **single** hand troll gurdy with a terminally attached weight [FROM WHICH ONE OR MORE LEADERS WITH ONE OR MORE LURES OR BAITED HOOKS] pulled through the water while a vessel is making way; only one **operational unit of dinglebar troll gear** [TROLL GURDY LINE OR HAND TROLL GURDY LINE] may be **onboard a vessel or** deployed **from the vessel at or below the surface of the sea** [IN THE WATER] at any time; **all weights, including dinglebars, cannon balls, and other fishing weights must be disconnected from the troll wires of all other gurdies that are mounted on the vessel, and additional trains may not be trailed behind the vessel at any time.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Vessels participating in the directed lingcod fishery with dinglebar gear are operating multiple lines at the same time leading to increased harvest rates; because of this, permit holders are exceeding guideline harvest levels. There is confusion within the fleet over what constitutes operation of a single line as well as what dinglebar gear is, and reports have suggested that some vessels may be deploying a second line once retrieval of the first line has begun. Vessels fishing in this manner have an advantage over vessels exclusively operating a single line because it takes time to haul gear to the surface, pull the train in, bring lingcod aboard, and then redeploy the gear back to depth. The intent of the original regulation was for fishers to have only one troll wire with one train on board and available to fish, establishing a pace for the fishery as fishers must remove fish from hooks and get the train ready to be deployed again. The amended language serves to clarify the intention of this regulation.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F24-148)

PROPOSAL 203

5 AAC 47.020. General provisions for seasons and bag, possession, annual, and size limits for the salt waters of the Southeast Alaska Area and 5 AAC 47.060. Lingcod delegation of authority and provisions for management.

Establish unguided nonresident lingcod regulations, as follows:

SOUTHERN SOUTHEAST AREA: Alaska Residents: 1 per day, 2 in possession, no size limit. Nonresidents: **Unguided anglers: 1 per day, 2 in possession, no size limit. There is an annual limit of 4 fish. Harvest record is required. Guided anglers: 1 per day, 1 in possession; 30-35 inches or 55 inches and longer. There is an annual limit of 2 fish, 1 of which is 30-35 inches in length, and 1 that is 55 inches or greater in length, harvest record is required**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would like the Board to look at the nonresident ling cod regulations. I would like to see the size restrictions removed for unguided anglers on ling cod and to be more in line with resident regulations. I would like to see unguided anglers have more fishing opportunities.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. I came up with my idea talking with others about limits and opportunity to retain certain types of fish as an unguided angler that goes to Southeast Alaska every year.

PROPOSED BY: Justin Orr

(EF-F24-023)
