

***Sea cucumber***

**PROPOSAL 217**

**5 AAC 38.140. Southeastern Alaska Sea Cucumber Management Plan.**

Allow weekly fishing periods to begin on Sundays, as follows:

Allowing weekly openers to include Sundays from 8 to 3 would allow flexibility in the event of seasonal storms, limitations of smaller vessels in relation to weather events, and the aging of the dive personnel, many over 60 years of age. The quota per opener would remain at 2000 pounds.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** A change to the days each weekly opener would include. This would consolidate the season to the benefit of the fleet, canneries, and enforcement personnel. An informal survey of divers, particularly in the high sea otter populated areas, indicate an inability to reach the weekly quota in the time allotted. This would drive a completion of the fishery prior to the short winter days and closure of the canneries/buyers.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.** This proposal was discussed with multiple dive fishery permit holders.

**PROPOSED BY:** Brian Cloose

(EF-F24-041)

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**PROPOSAL 218**

**.5 AAC 38.140 Southeast Alaska Sea Cucumber Management Plan.**

Extend sea cucumber fishing season beyond March 31.

5 AAC 38.140

(b) Sea cucumbers may be taken from the first Monday in October through March 31 during the weekly fishing period established by emergency order. The weekly fishing period will occur on Mondays from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. and on Tuesdays from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon, except that (1) during the week of Thanksgiving, the weekly fishing period will occur on Sunday from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. and on Monday from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon; (2) beginning in November, the commissioner may, by emergency order, extend or shorten a weekly fishing period in an area in order to obtain the guideline harvest level in that area; (3) during the week of Christmas and New Year's Day, the department may modify the days of the weekly fishing period by emergency order so that the fishing period does not fall on the holiday and does not add additional days to the weekly fishing period.

**(4)regional ADFG managers may allow weekly fishing extentions past March 31st to finish GHL.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Address:

(b) of the Southeastern Alaska Sea Cucumber Management Plan

(b) Sea cucumbers may be taken from the first Monday in October through March 31

Why?

Allow regional ADFG mangers the ability to allow weekly extentions in areas with remaining guideline harvest levels(GHLs) past March 31st in order to reach the seasons GHL.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.** There has been some discussion about extensions. This proposal is submitted as an individual.

**PROPOSED BY:** Tom Carruth (EF-F24-009)

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**PROPOSAL 219**

**5 AAC 38.140. Southeastern Alaska Sea Cucumber Management Plan.**

Clarify when a sea cucumber permit holder is in possession of the product they harvested.

Draft language: **Divers engaged in commercial dive harvest fisheries do not have to be in immediate possession of the harvested product during or after an opener until the vessel has departed the specific open fishing area.**

Adding this clarification of possession will better fit the operation of the commercial dive fisheries and reduce ticketing due to application of general possession regulations.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** General regulations of possession of harvested product are not aligned with practices related to commercial dive harvesting of sea cucumbers. In sea cucumber harvesting several different methods are employed. In some cases, divers are attached via their breathing line to a surface skiff that follows the diver along the surface. As the dive harvester fills their cucumber bags, they attach flotation to the line and send the line to the surface for later retrieval by the larger dive boat. In other instances, divers do not have breathing lines but use free tanks. In these instances, the dive vessel may drop a diver off in one bay and then drop the other diver in another bay. The vessel would then travel back and forth between divers to collect cucumber harvest bags and provide fresh scuba tanks.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.** SARDFA sea cucumber committee, SARDFA Board of Directors and Ketchikan ADFG biologists.

**PROPOSED BY:** Seth Rockwell (HQ-F24-078)

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**PROPOSAL 220**

**5 AAC 38.140. Southeastern Alaska Sea Cucumber Management Plan.**

Allow crew members to be in possession of sea cucumbers harvested by the sea cucumber permit holder.

Draft language: **Crew member of a registered dive vessel may be in possession of legally harvested product even when the permit holder (diver) is neither on nor attached to nor in the immediate vicinity of the vessel. This would apply during or after an opener until the vessel has departed the specific open fishing area.**

Adding this clarification of possession will better fit the operation of the commercial dive fisheries and reduce ticketing due to application of general possession regulations.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** General regulations regarding possession of harvested product are not aligned with practices related to commercial dive harvesting of sea cucumbers. In sea cucumber harvesting several different methods are employed. In some cases, divers are attached via their breathing line to a surface skiff that follows the diver along the surface. As the dive harvester fills their cucumber bags, they attach flotation to the line and send the line to the surface for later retrieval by the larger dive boat. In other instances, divers do not have breathing lines but use free tanks. In these instances, the dive vessel may drop a diver off in one bay and then drop the other diver in another bay. The vessel would then travel back and forth between divers to collect cucumber harvest bags and provide fresh scuba tanks.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.** SARDFa sea cucumber committee, SARDFa Board of Directors and Ketchikan ADFG biologists.

**PROPOSED BY:** Seth Rockwell (HQ-F24-079)

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**PROPOSAL 221**

**5 AAC 41.285 Aquatic stock acquisition on an aquatic farm site and 5 AAC 41.235 Determination of insignificant population.**

Prohibit harvest of naturally occurring sea cucumbers on aquatic farm sites by farm operator in areas where there are commercial sea cucumber fisheries.

**In areas where there are limited entry CFEC Q11A fisheries that are subject to fisheries management plan, sea cucumbers cannot be added as a species of culture and must be allowed to escape into benthos.**

[5AAC 41.285. AQUATIC STOCK ACQUISITION ON AN AQUATIC FARM SITE. WILD STOCK OF THE SPECIES IDENTIFIED FOR CULTURE IN THE OPERATION PERMIT THAT SETTLE ON AN AQUATIC FARM, HATCHERY SITE OR CULTURE GEAR BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE AQUATIC FARM OR HATCHERY OPERATION PERMIT HOLDER AS A CONDITION OF THE OPERATION PERMIT.]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Aquatic farms that are permitted to operate in areas where the limited entry CFEC commercial sea cucumber fishery (Q11A) occurs have added sea cucumber to their permitted species culture using 5AAC 41.285. A very specific instance occurred with a farm permitted in a commercial sea cucumber fishing area that began as an oyster farm and then added sea cucumbers to its cultured species list. This farm is only using naturally settling sea cucumbers directly removing those sea cucumbers from settling to the bottom and becoming part of the common property resource.

Very little is known about sea cucumber settlement patterns in SE Alaska so it is unclear how this practice could affect the commercial fishery over time. We believe allowing a farm to add sea cucumbers as a cultivation species in an area known to already support a commercial fishery is allocating sea cucumbers to a private farm and away from a CFEC limited entry fishery.

Further under 5AAC 41.235 the commissioner must determine that the wild stock is not of a nature significant enough to attract or support a commercial fishery. In this case the wild stock is already supporting a commercial fishery. Further the sale of the shellfish will not result in the alteration in traditional fisheries or other uses of fish and wildlife resources if the population is included within

the aquatic farm. How can privatizing sea cucumbers out of the common property not alter the commercial fishery in that area.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. SARDFa has geoduck, sea cucumber and sea urchin committees. This idea was discussed with ADFG Ketchikan biologists.**

**PROPOSED BY:** Dale Stanley

(EF-F24-017)

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