

PROPOSAL 44 - 5 AAC 28.36X. Cook Inlet Area Pollock Management Plan; 5 AAC 28.46X. Kodiak Area Pollock Management Plan; and 5 AAC 28.53X. Chignik Area Pollock Management Plan. Create state-waters walleye pollock management plans for Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and Chignik management areas. (*This proposal will be considered at the Chignik, Lower Cook Inlet, and Kodiak Finfish meetings.*)

Create a state water Pollock fishery in areas E, H, K, L, and M in the State of Alaska waters of the Gulf of Alaska. Set quota for state water Pollock fishery to equal twenty-five percent (25%) of federal quota annually. Areas of Prince William Sound (E)(Outside District), Cook Inlet (H), Kodiak (K), and Chignik (L) would use a combined quota equal to twenty-five percent (25%) of the total combined quota of areas 620, 630, and 640 federal waters. Area (M) south Peninsula quota would be equal to twenty-five (25%) of area 610 of federal waters. State water Pollock season would open January 20th of each year, close on TAC or December 31st each year. Vessels participating in the state water Pollock fisheries may be no more than fifty-eight feet in length (To include all trawling in state waters). Legal gear shall be pelagic trawl, non-pelagic trawl, seine and jig. All state water Pollock limited to a maximum of 150,000 pounds per landing, with duration of no less than 48 hours between landings. All vessels using trawl gear would be required to have 100% observer coverage with one observer onboard for all trips. Observer cost would be paid by vessel.

ISSUE: Develop a state water Pollock fishery in the Gulf of Alaska State waters.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? There will be very little to no opportunity for Alaskans to harvest Pollock in the Gulf of Alaska. Currently the state waters are open to anyone who chooses to fish Pollock when there is federal quota available. National Marine Fisheries Service and the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council are moving towards a Catch Share Program in the Gulf of Alaska Pollock fishery. With this action, it is time for the State of Alaska to create a separate state water fishery that maintains open access to harvesting Pollock in state waters for Alaska. This type of program is not constitutional within state waters of Alaska. Federal catch share programs have proven to be overly consolidating and cost to buy into catch share fisheries is not viable for small boat fishermen.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? The 150,000 pound trips versus 300,000 pound trips in the federal fishery would reduce harvest rate, along with minimum duration between trips. This could improve processors ability to fully utilize fish with less waste and improved quality.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Anyone who wants to participate in state water Pollock fisheries with small vessels. Alaskan small coastal communities in these areas and the fisherman who live within these areas. Future fisherman who want to enter into fishing. The federal Pollock fishery in the central Gulf of Alaska has 30–50 large vessels participating annually. State water fisheries in the Central Gulf of Alaska have over 10 times the participants that could benefit from increased opportunity within state waters.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? This action would likely reduce the federal quotas.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? With the looming possibility of a federal catch share program, I do not see any other solution to providing continued equal access to participants fishing Pollock in State of Alaska waters of the Gulf of Alaska.

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