

PROPOSAL 67 - 5 AAC 64.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for the Kodiak Area. Decrease the rockfish sport fishery bag and possession limits in Chiniak Bay and Marmot Bay, as follows:

5 AAC 64.022(b) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

(b)....

(X) in the waters of Chiniak Bay and Marmot Bay, west of a line from Cape Chiniak to Pillar Cape and east of a line from Head Point on Afognak Island (57⁰ 59.67' N. lat., 152⁰ 46.75' W. long.) to Dolphin Point (57⁰ 59.15' N. lat., 152⁰ 43.40' W. long.) on Whale Island and from Bird Point (57⁰ 55.30' N. lat., 152⁰ 47.50' W. long.) on Whale Island to Inner Point (57⁰ 54.05' N. lat., 152⁰ 47.75' W. long.) on Kodiak Island,

(A) the bag limit for rockfish is three fish per day and six in possession, of which only two fish per day and four in possession may be nonpelagic rockfish, and only one fish per day and two in possession may be yelloweye rockfish; no size limit;

(B) charter vessel operators and crewmembers may not retain rockfish while clients are on board the vessel.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Recent saltwater logbook catch statistics for chartered sport fishing vessels and Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) Statewide Harvest Survey estimates of total rockfish harvests show a steady trend of increasing exploitation of pelagic (black, dark, and dusky) rockfish in Kodiak Area waters, particularly near the city of Kodiak in Chiniak and Marmot bays. Between 2008 and 2014 the total rockfish sport harvest approximately doubled from 15,596 to 29,733 fish. A reduction of the rockfish bag limit from 10 fish to 5 fish in 2011 has failed to stabilize the sport harvest of these long lived species. Black rockfish have a known maximum age of 56 years, and may have as many as 40 age classes within a single population. Limited stock assessment tools include charter guide logbooks, the Statewide Harvest Survey and department surveys. These tools are being used to develop an estimate of abundance and productivity of local rockfish populations. While these assessment tools are being developed to provide a biological based total allowable catch for rockfish, a more conservative bag limit will level the current upward harvest trend and help ensure the long term sustainability of the resource, while maintaining angler opportunity to harvest rockfish.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

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