

PROPOSAL 118

5 AAC 28.110. Sablefish fishing seasons for Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area.

Change the season opening date for the Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict commercial sablefish fishery to coincide with the federal sablefish fishery, as follows:

Opening date for the Southern Southeast Sablefish Fishery to coincide with the opening of the Federal Sablefish IFQ season and closing on November 15th.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Change the opening date for the southeast sablefish fishery to coincide with the Federal sablefish IFQ season.

Currently most of the quota is removed in a month and a half. Depletion of the local stocks are occurring. This could be avoided with a season that is spread out over 9 months. This would allow the local stocks to remain healthy and prevent overfishing at any one time. This would curtail the preemption of invasive species building up and replacing sablefish in their normal habitat.

Currently the last few years have not seen a completed survey. Survey stations have changed, so the quota is really not based on any true numbers. So by extending the season there should be no conflict with the setting of the annual quota.

Currently PWS has a statewater sablefish fishery, and pollock fishery that has their quota based off the federal survey.

Cook Inlet has a statewater sablefish fishery based off the federal survey.

The Aleutians have a statewater sablefish fishery based off the federal survey.

So I believe southern southeast sablefish fishery could also be based off the federal season survey. The additional benefit would be to the state; by saving survey money from the budget.

If this seems to conflict with the state management for any reason and the state needs to do a survey, similar steps could be taken similar to the federal survey and the season could close two weeks prior to the survey or the month of May and the state could perform a survey.

Spreading the season out over nine months is similar to the way many fisheries are managed.

PROPOSED BY: Bill Connor

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