

PROPOSAL 124

5 AAC 28.150. Closed waters in Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area and 5 AAC 28.173. Lingcod possession and landing requirements for Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area.

Allow the sale of up to two lingcod taken as bycatch in the commercial salmon troll fishery in Sitka Sound, as follows:

5 AAC 28.150. Closed waters in Eastern Gulf of Alaska.

(b) Notwithstanding (a) of this section, lingcod may be retained as bycatch in the halibut longline fishery and [for a permit holder's personal use] in the commercial salmon troll fishery in the waters described in (a) of this section, as limited by the provisions of 5 AAC 28.173(a) and (e).

AND

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

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

(4) salmon with troll gear in the waters of Sitka Sound described in 5 AAC 28.150(a) may retain and have on board no more than two lingcod only from May 16 through November 30, or until closed by emergency order[, and only if the permit holder

(A) immediately removes the dorsal fin of the lingcod retained; the head of a lingcod retained under this paragraph must remain attached to determine if the lingcod meets the legal size requirement of (e) of this section

(B) weighs and reports the lingcod retained for the permit holder's personal use on an ADF&G fish ticket as required in 5 AAC 39.130; a lingcod retained under this paragraph may not be sold].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Allow sale of up to 2 lingcod as troll bycatch in Sitka LAMP

Current lingcod bycatch regulations in the troll fishery are confusing, particularly in the Sitka LAMP (Sitka Sound Special Use Area). From 1997-2014 all retention or even possession of bycatch lingcod was prohibited for any commercial vessel trolling within the Sitka LAMP. In 2015 the BoF adopted a proposal to allow trollers to retain or possess up to 2 lingcod while in the LAMP, but since the level of harvest that would result was unknown at the time, the original proposal was modified to mandate that these fish only be allowed to be home-packed, thus making the fish easily identifiable in the harvest record. (The Sitka LAMP is not defined as a separate groundfish district or troll sub-district, so it would not otherwise be clear from a fish ticket whether a lingcod had been caught in the LAMP.) The past three years of data shows that the combined regulatory restrictions have been extremely effective at limiting harvest.

Given that the Central SE Outside (CSEO) troll bycatch lingcod quota has historically been underutilized (in part due to the closure of the Sitka LAMP) it is appropriate to slightly loosen

the restrictions in the Sitka LAMP. This proposal would retain the region-wide seasonal closure and the standard CSEO lingcod:salmon bycatch allowance, as well as the 2 fish limit specific to the LAMP, but would allow those two lingcod to be sold.

PROPOSED BY: Tad Fujioka

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