

PROPOSAL 194 – 5 AAC 28.650. Closed waters in the Bering Sea-Aleutian Islands Area.

Close all waters of Unalaska Bay to commercial fishing for groundfish with pelagic trawl gear, as follows (*This proposal will be heard at the Alaska Peninsula / Chignik / Aleutian Islands Finfish meeting, and be heard and deliberated on at the Statewide Finfish meeting*):

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...

(b) The waters of Unalaska Bay are closed to groundfish fishing with pelagic trawl gear, [as follows:] **south of a line from Cape Kalekta at 54° 00.50' N. lat., 166° 22.50' W. long. to Cape Cheerful at 54° 01' N. lat., 166° 40' W. long.**

[(1) FROM JUNE 10 THROUGH AUGUST 31, SOUTH OF A LINE FROM CAPE KALEKTA AT 54°, 00.50' N. LAT., 166°, 22.50' W. LONG. TO CAPE CHEERFUL AT 54°, 01' N. LAT., 166°, 40' W. LONG.];]

[(2) BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 1 UNTIL THE CLOSURE OF THE PARALLEL BERING SEA WALLEYE POLLOCK 'B' SEASON, SOUTH OF A LINE FROM CAPE KALEKTA AT 54°, 00.50' N. LAT., 166°, 22.50' W. LONG. TO A POINT NEAR HOG ISLAND AT 53°, 55.42' N. LAT., 166°, 34.25' W. LONG. TO A POINT IN BROAD BAY AT 53°, 55.42' N. LAT., 166°, 38.80' W. LONG.; FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS PARAGRAPH, "PARALLEL BERING SEA WALLEYE POLLOCK 'B' SEASON" MEANS THE PARALLEL SEASON CONDUCTED FROM JUNE 10 THROUGH NOVEMBER 1]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Since 2002 large-scale trawling in tiny Unalaska Bay has unacceptably impacted an area traditionally used by subsistence, sport, and smaller non-trawl commercial fishers and hunters. Trawlers have harvested approximately four million pounds annually of pollock from Unalaska Bay over the past ten plus years. The State of Alaska opens these waters to trawling from September 1 to November 1 as a parallel fishery to the eastern Bering Sea catcher vessel pollock fishery that is managed by NMFS. There is no cap on what amount of the B season pollock trawl quota can come out of Unalaska Bay and in 2004 nearly 12 million pounds was harvested. No research has

been done to understand the local pollock biomass, its abundance or what a sustainable harvest level may be. The huge trawl nets used to prosecute this fishery are putting excessive pressure on a sensitive area already fully utilized by local fishers and hunters. Based on observations made by local residents it appears fish and game are being scattered and or driven from the bay coincidentally as this trawl fishery is happening. It has become nearly impossible for local fishermen and hunters to feed their families and small commercial vessels are increasingly required to leave the safety of Unalaska Bay in order to make a living. The subsistence salmon, halibut, herring and crab fisheries and sea mammal hunting has been very poor in recent years and the local tanner crab fishery has remained closed since 2010. Most of the trawling occurs when other user groups are using the bay during the summer and fall dislocating the smaller boats out of the safety of the bay into the Bering Sea, endangering lives, in order to find fish and game and avoid gear conflicts (loss). Habitat destruction will occur where trawl gear touches the bottom. This proposal will allow fish and game to recover and return to areas closer to our community enabling us to be able to continue harvest and process our local resources. We considered limiting all commercial fishing vessels under 35 feet lengths, but so few of them bother fishing inside the bay and their impacts are not nearly that of the trawl vessels. Trawlers are large vessels that are built to handle the stormy weather of the Bering Sea. They did not historically fish in Unalaska Bay and restricting them from these waters would alleviate many problems.

PROPOSED BY: Unalaska Native Fisherman’s Association (EF-C15-128)

PROPOSAL 195 – 5 AAC 28.640. Aleutian Islands District and Western District of the South Alaska Peninsula Area Sablefish Management Plan. Update logbook requirements for Aleutian Islands state-waters sablefish fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 28.640(g) is amended to read:

(g) An operator of a vessel fishing for sablefish in the Aleutian Islands District and Western District of the South Alaskan Peninsula Area shall maintain an accurate logbook of all fishing operations for each type of gear used [EACH VESSEL OPERATOR SHALL OBTAIN AND COMPLETE A LOGBOOK PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR ALL FISHING ACTIVITY IN THE WATERS OF ALASKA UNDER THIS SECTION. THE LOGBOOK MUST BE ON BOARD THE VESSEL AT ALL TIMES AND COPIES OF EACH LOGBOOK PAGE CORRESPONDING WITH AN ADF&G FISH TICKET FOR SABLEFISH MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT WITHIN SEVEN DAYS OF LANDING].
The following requirements apply to a logbook under this subsection:

(1) a logbook must

(A) include the date, specific locations of harvest by latitude and longitude, type and number of gear, average depth, and hours fished for each set of gear;

(B) include, for the target species, the round weight of fish retained and discarded;

(C) be updated within 24 hours after midnight local time on the day of operation;

(D) be retained, with its original pages, for a period of two years by the owner or operator of the vessel;

(E) be kept on board the vessel while operating gear, during transits to or from a port of landing, and for 14 days after landing sablefish;

(F) be made available to a local representative of the department upon request;

(2) a copy of each logbook page described in this subsection corresponding with an ADF&G fish ticket must be submitted to the department within seven days of the landing;

(3) a person may not make a false entry in the logbook described in this section.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Existing sablefish fishery logbook regulations for the Aleutian Islands District of the Bering Sea-Aleutian Islands Area and Western District of the South Alaska Peninsula Area do not specify logbook entries must be true and accurate or logbook pages must be retained; this has caused enforcement difficulty. The proposed sablefish logbook requirements will improve the department's ability to accurately track fishery harvest.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F15-055)
