

PROPOSAL 230

5 AAC 47.065. Demersal shelf rockfish delegation of authority and provisions for management.

Amend the *Demersal shelf rockfish delegation of authority and provisions for management* to provide a resident priority, as follows:

5 AAC 47.065 - Demersal shelf rockfish delegation.

The most recent year that the resident sport Demersal Shelf Rockfish (DSR) limits were not overridden by emergency order was 2005. The all-gear TAC in 2000-2005 was 330-450 tons per year. In recent years the all-gear TAC has been down about 40% since that time period. I propose that (unless the resident sport harvest exceeds 10% of the all-gear TAC), residents be assured a bag and possession limit of at least 1 yelloweye and 3 total DSR year-round throughout the region. This is approximately a 50% reduction from the 2 yelloweye and 5 total DSR of the 2005 era. To that accomplish this, I suggest adoption of the following language:

Section 5 AAC 47.065 - Demersal shelf rockfish delegation of authority and provisions for management

Under 5 AAC 28.160, the Board of Fisheries has allocated 16 percent of the annual allowable catch of the demersal shelf rockfish in the Southeast Outside Subdistrict, described in 5 AAC 28.105(a) (4), to the sport fishery. If the commissioner determines that the demersal shelf rockfish sport fishing regulations must be modified to keep the sport fishery within its allocation, the commissioner may, by emergency order, require one or more of the following management measures:

- (1) reduced bag and possession limits for nonresident anglers;
- (2) repealed 6/17/2018;
- (3) charter operators and crewmembers may not retain demersal shelf rockfish while clients are on board the vessel;
- (4) annual limits for demersal shelf rockfish for nonresident anglers;
- (5) reduce the bag and possession limits for resident anglers;
- (6) repealed 6/17/2018;
- (7) annual limits for demersal shelf rockfish for resident anglers;
- (8) time and area closures.

Except that unless resident sport anglers would otherwise be expected to account for more than 10% of the total all-gear demersal shelf rockfish allowable catch, provision (5) shall not be used to reduce the bag and possession limits for resident anglers to less than 3 demersal shelf rockfish including 1 yelloweye daily and in possession, nor shall provision (7) be invoked, nor provision (8) be applied to resident anglers.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Over the past fifteen years, resident sport anglers have faced increasingly severe restrictions on DSR--specifically for yelloweye which is the most highly-prized species. The general provision resident bag limit found in 5 AAC 47.020 (8)(B) of 5 DSR --including up to 2 yelloweye, has been overridden by ever-more restrictive Emergency Orders every year since 2006. In 2020 the resident sport DSR season was closed throughout all of Southeast. While in times of lowered abundance all non-subsistence user groups should reduce their harvest to some degree, as a quasi-subsistence fishery that provides

locals with fresh fish for the table, the resident sportfishery should be among the last to see severe restrictions. DSR abundance estimates did drop significantly 10-25 years ago, and resident sport bag limits were significantly reduced at that time, but the estimated abundance has remained basically flat since 2016 indicating that recent harvest levels are sustainable.

Unlike the non-resident sport effort, the number of resident anglers in Southeast has been stable for decades and shows no indication of increasing. Hence, under a fixed bag limit the total resident harvest should also be stable except as the result of changes in DSR abundance.

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