

# SPORT FISHING

## *Emergency Order*

ALASKA DEPARTMENT  
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 1-RF-D-10-17

Issued at: Sitka, Thursday, March 23,  
2017.

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Monday, March 27, 2017

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Sunday, December  
31, 2017, unless superseded by subsequent  
emergency order.

### EXPLANATION:

This emergency order reduces the sport bag limit of pelagic rockfish in the Sitka vicinity from five to three fish per day and 10 fish to six fish in possession in order to reduce the harvest of pelagic rockfish.

### REGULATION:

Under this emergency order the provision 5 AAC 47.021(g)(8) is added. The following provision is effective from 12:01 a.m. Monday, March 27 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, December 31, 2017:

### **5 AAC 47.021. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the salt waters of the Southeast Alaska Area.**

(g) In the Sitka vicinity:

(8) in marine waters west of Baranof and Chichagof Islands, south of 57° 30' N. latitude and north of the latitude of Cape Ommaney (56 ° 9.60' N.) the bag limit for pelagic rockfish is three fish and six in possession.

Sam Cotten  
Commissioner

By delegation to:

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Troy Tydingco  
Sitka Area Management Biologist  
Division of Sport Fish

**JUSTIFICATION:**

The pelagic rockfish harvest in the Sitka Area, as estimated by the statewide harvest survey, has gradually increased from 20,000 fish in 2009 to over 60,000 fish in 2014 and 2015 representing a 266% increase in sport harvest in recent years. Although there is limited stock information, analysis of the sport creel survey harvest data shows a slight, but gradual decline in average weight since 2006 indicating a possible change in the population structure. This may be a result of high harvest. A reduction in bag limit from five to three pelagic rockfish is predicted to reduce harvest to a level similar to that seen in 2011 through 2013. This action was taken in 2016 and preliminary estimates indicate it decreased harvest by approximately 40% from 2016 levels. Bag and possession limit restrictions will be implemented in 2017 in the interest of conservative management until additional stock information is available.

**DISTRIBUTION:**

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 1 office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, P. O. Box 110024, Douglas, AK 99811, (907) 465-4270.