

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



Douglas Vincent-Lang, Acting Commissioner
Forrest R. Bowers, Acting Director



Contact:
Mike Vaughn

Phone: (907) 747-6688
Fax: (907) 747-6239

Sitka Area Office
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Sitka, AK 99835
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GROUNDFISH BYCATCH IN THE 2019 COMMERCIAL SALMON TROLL FISHERY

Sitka . . . The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) announced today the following information regarding groundfish bycatch allowances in the commercial salmon troll fishery in the Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area. Commercial salmon troll permit holders operating hand or power troll gear during an open commercial salmon fishing period may legally retain, possess, and sell incidentally taken groundfish in unlimited amounts, except where it is necessary to manage groundfish bycatch harvest within total catch limits.

Bycatch Provisions for the Salmon Troll Fishery in State Waters

Bycatch allowances in state waters (internal waters and 0-3 nm) are summarized in the following table. State bycatch allowances that apply in adjacent federal waters (3-200 nm) are noted. The bycatch allowance for each species or species group reflects the percentage that may be retained and sold and is based on the round weight of salmon on board.

BYCATCH SPECIES	BYCATCH ALLOWANCE
Lingcod ¹	100%, IBS, CSEO, NSEI, and SSEIW. 10%, EYKT and SSEOC 5%, NSEO. Lingcod bycatch allowances also apply in federal waters.
Demersal Shelf Rockfish (DSR)	10%. DSR bycatch allowance also applies in federal waters, excluding IBS.
Black, Blue, and Dark Rockfish	No limit on incidental harvest. Also applies in federal waters.
Other Rockfish	No limit on incidental harvest in state waters. 5% in aggregate in federal waters. In IBS federal waters, DSR are included as part of this "Other Rockfish" category when computing bycatch allowances.
Spiny Dogfish	35%.
Sablefish	0%, no retention.
Other Groundfish	No limit on incidental harvest.

¹Lingcod Management Areas - Icy Bay Subdistrict (IBS), East Yakutat Section (EYKT), Northern Southeast Outside Section (NSEO), Central Southeast Outside Section (CSEO), Southern Southeast Outer Coast Sector (SSEOC), Northern Southeast Inside Subdistrict (NSEI), Southern Southeast Internal Waters Sector (SSEIW) (Figure 1). Refer to **Lingcod Regulations** section of news release for additional restrictions on lingcod.

Lingcod and black, blue, and dark rockfish are state-managed species and the bycatch allowances for these species in federal waters [exclusive economic zone (EEZ)] are the same as those set for state waters. The DSR bycatch allowance is 10% in all state waters of the Southeast District and in those waters of the EEZ that are east of 140° W. long. The bycatch allowance for other rockfish in the EEZ is 5% in aggregate. In IBS federal waters, DSR are aggregated with other rockfish and limited to 5% bycatch. For information on bycatch limits for groundfish in federal waters, refer to the Gulf of Alaska Retainable Percentages Table 10 at: <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/fisheries-679regs> or contact NOAA Sustainable Fisheries Division at (907) 586-7228 or NOAA Enforcement at (907) 747-6940 (Sitka), (907) 586-7225 (Juneau), (907) 772-2285 (Petersburg), or (907) 247-5804 (Ketchikan).

Vessels trolling for salmon in the EEZ in the Gulf of Alaska that retain groundfish bycatch must have a Federal Fisheries Permit (FFP) endorsed for troll gear. If the vessel catches and retains any groundfish in the EEZ, the vessel is fishing for groundfish and must possess a FFP. For information on FFPs contact NOAA Fisheries at (907) 586-7202 or (800) 304-4846. A FFP is not required for vessels retaining groundfish bycatch in state waters or for lingcod or black, blue, or dark rockfish taken in the EEZ, as these species are exempt from federal permit requirements.

The DSR assemblage includes yelloweye, canary, quillback, copper, tiger, China, and rosethorn rockfish. DSR bycatch in excess of allowable limits shall be reported on an ADF&G fish ticket as bycatch overage. Proceeds from the sale of excess DSR bycatch taken in state waters shall be surrendered to the State of Alaska. All lingcod bycatch overage shall be surrendered to the State of Alaska.

2019 Lingcod Allocations for the Salmon Troll Fishery

Lingcod Management Area	Allocation (round pounds)
Icy Bay Subdistrict (IBS)	8,000
East Yakutat (EYKT)	16,000
Northern Southeast Outside (NSEO)	3,200
Central Southeast Outside (CSEO)	16,800
Southern Southeast Outer Coast (SSEOC)	3,340
Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI)	6,400
Southern Southeast Internal Waters (SSEIW)	2,080

Lingcod Regulations

The retention of lingcod bycatch in the commercial salmon troll fishery is **open May 16-November 30 or until area-specific lingcod troll allocations are harvested**. All lingcod retained must measure at least 27” from tip of snout to tip of the tail or 20.5” from front of dorsal fin to tip of the tail. Lingcod management areas will be closed to lingcod retention as area troll allocations are taken. Vessels with lingcod bycatch on board may not fish in an area closed to troll lingcod retention until those lingcod have been offloaded from the vessel. Fishermen are advised that area closures may occur on short notice. Closures will be announced by ADF&G news release, United States Coast Guard “Notice to Mariners” report, and the National Weather Service broadcast. Updates of area closures will also be recorded on the Groundfish Hotline at (907) 747-4882.

Lingcod in Sitka Sound

During the open lingcod season, a vessel fishing for salmon with troll gear in the waters of Sitka Sound, as described in 5 AAC 28.150(a), may retain and possess on board no more than two lingcod. The dorsal fin of each lingcod taken in this area must be removed immediately and the head must remain attached as evidence of compliance with the minimum size requirement. Having taken no more than two lingcod outside the Sitka Sound area, a vessel may fish for salmon within Sitka Sound only after removing the dorsal fin of those lingcod. Vessels in possession of more than two lingcod may not fish for salmon within this area until those lingcod are offloaded.

Lingcod that have been marked by the removal of the dorsal fin may be utilized for personal use only and may not be sold. Personal use lingcod must be weighed and reported on the ADF&G troll salmon fish ticket and include the proper groundfish statistical area code, delivery code, and the personal use disposition code “95”.

5 AAC 28.150(a) describes Sitka Sound as those waters that are enclosed on the north by lines from Kruzof Island at 57°20.50' N. lat., 135°45.17' W. long., to Chichagof Island at 57°22.05' N. lat., 135°43' W. long., and from Chichagof Island at 57°22.58' N. lat., 135°41.30' W. long., to Baranof Island at 57°22.28' N. lat., 135°40.95' W. long., and on the south and west by a line running from the southernmost tip of Sitka Point at 56°59.38' N. lat., 135°49.57' W. long., to Hanus Point at 56°51.92' N. lat., 135°30.50' W. long., to the green day marker in Dorothy Narrows at 56°49.28' N. lat., 135°22.75' W. long., to Baranof Island at 56°49.28' N. lat., 135°22.60' W. long.

Closed Waters

Groundfish may not be taken in the waters off Cape Edgecumbe (Edgecumbe Pinnacles Marine Reserve) enclosed by a box defined as 56°55.50' N. lat., 56°57.00' N. lat., 135°54.00' W. long., and 135°57.00' W. long.

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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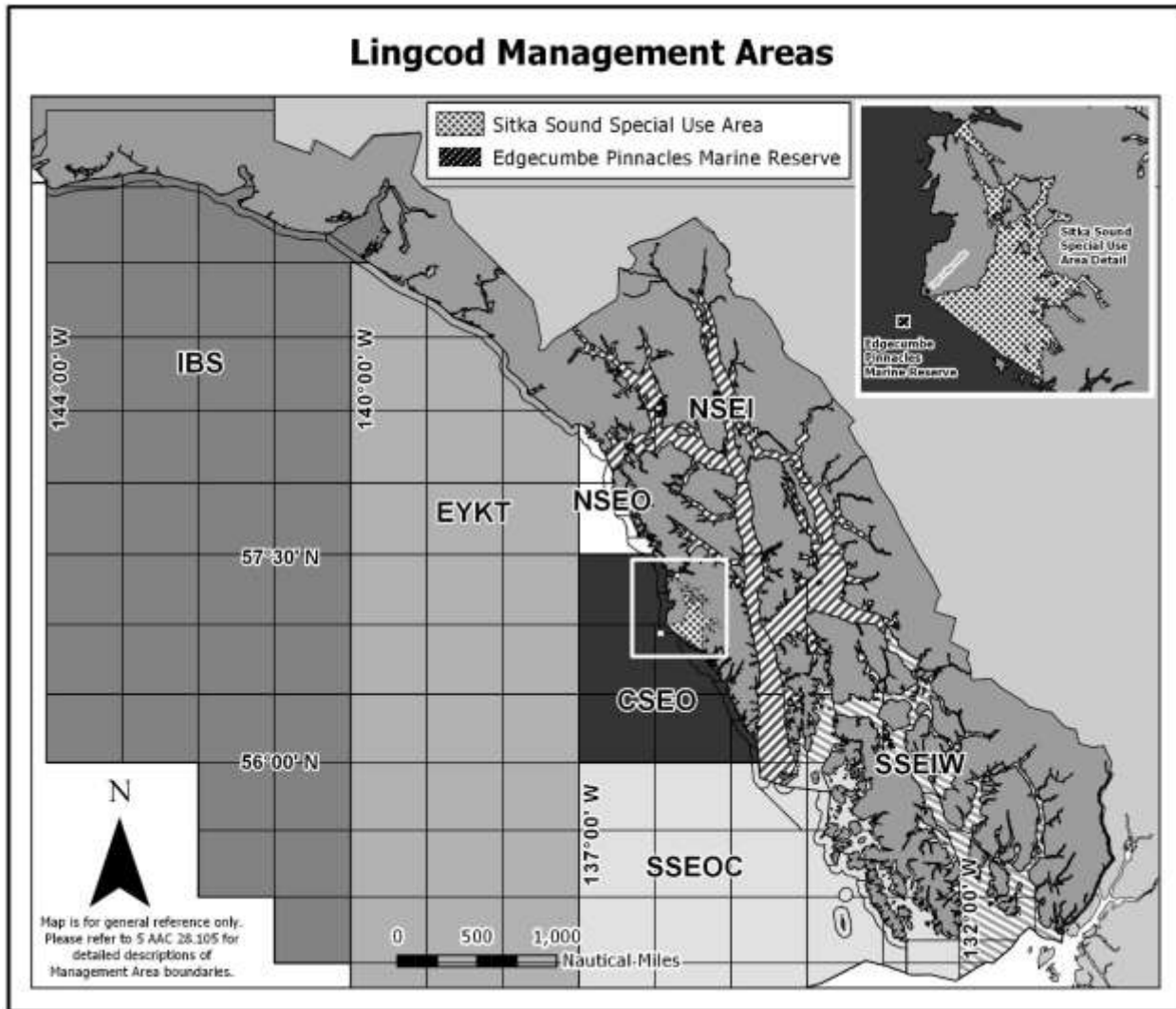


Figure 1. Southeast Alaska Lingcod Management Areas