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# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner*  
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Sitka Area Office  
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#### **2014 SOUTHERN SOUTHEAST INSIDE SUBDISTRICT SABLEFISH FISHERY**

Sitka...The 2014 Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) Subdistrict sablefish commercial annual harvest objective (AHO) is 536,618 round lb, a decrease of 8% from the 2013 AHO of 583,280 round lb. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) evaluates stock status and establishes the SSEI AHO using commercial fishery and survey catch per unit effort (CPUE) data, fishery and survey biological data (age, weight, length, and maturity), and stock status trends of sablefish populations in surrounding geographic areas.

This decrease in the 2014 AHO is prompted by a declining trend in the SSEI longline survey CPUE for the past several years, record high harvest of immature sablefish in SSEI (>60% in the commercial fisheries and >75% in the longline survey) in the past two years, and historic lows in the adjacent federal Gulf of Alaska domestic sablefish longline survey index. The proportion of immature fish first observed in the 2010 SSEI survey has remained high in the survey and fishery despite the fact that these fish should be maturing and contributing to the spawning biomass over time. The concerns about the high proportion of immature sablefish and the available spawning biomass of the SSEI stock were discussed in the 2011 and 2013 news releases and have contributed to the recommendation to reduce the 2014 AHO.

The department will continue to closely monitor sablefish recruitment trends, age, length, weight and maturity data, as well as survey and fishery performance in SSEI.

The SSEI sablefish fishery using longline gear will open at 8:00 a.m., Sunday, June 1, and close at 12:00 noon, Friday, August 15, 2014. The SSEI sablefish fishery using pot gear will open at 8:00 a.m., Monday, September 1, and close at 12:00 noon, Saturday, November 15, 2014.

Equal quota share (EQS) for each of the 23 permit holders will be 23,331 round pounds. There has been no change in the number of permit holders since 2013. SSEI permit holders were mailed a certified letter detailing legal overages or underages incurred during the 2013 fishery. If you did not receive this letter, please contact Aaron Baldwin at 907-465-3896. Each permit holder's 2014 EQS will be adjusted based on any legal overages or underages and a personal quota share (PQS) will be assigned.

#### **Registration and Logbook Requirements**

Fishermen must register prior to fishing and keep a logbook during the fishery. Registration forms and logbooks are available at department offices in Southeast Alaska beginning May 1, 2014. Completed logbook pages must be attached to the department copy of the fish ticket at the time of delivery. Confidential envelopes for logbook pages may be requested when registering.

Permit holders will receive a PQS tracking form at the time of registration. This form is used to record the total round weight landed for each delivery. Each permit holder must, upon request, provide the buyer with the total round weight of sablefish the permit holder has landed to date. The department requests that a copy of the completed PQS tracking form is included with the final fish ticket of the season for that permit.

Logbooks must include, by set, the date and time gear is set and retrieved, specific location of harvest by latitude and longitude in degrees and decimal minutes for start and ending positions, hook spacing, amount of gear (number of hooks or pots), depth of set, estimated weight of the target and bycatch species retained or discarded. Indicate for each set if the target species was sablefish or halibut and if there was any lost gear.

### **Tagged Sablefish**

Fishermen are requested to watch for tagged sablefish. Please record tag number(s) in the logbook next to the appropriate set and attach tag(s) directly in the log next to the specific set information. All ADF&G tags returned will receive a reward. Tag rewards include a shirt or fishermen's knife, and entry into an annual drawing for one \$1,000, two \$500, and four \$250 cash rewards. To qualify for entry in the annual drawing the department requires the following information: the tag, set location (latitude and longitude) and date of capture, and the name and address of the person recovering the tag.

### **Fish Ticket Requirements**

Landed weights must be recorded on a fish ticket at the time of delivery. If a fisherman delivers fish in the round, the total round weight delivered must be recorded on the fish ticket. If a fisherman delivers dressed fish, the fish ticket must include the total landed dressed weight as well as a conversion to the round weight using the standard 0.63 conversion rate. There is a 2% allowance for ice and slime. A fish ticket with landed weight must be completed prior to the resumption of fishing and each permit holder must have onboard the registered copies of all SSEI sablefish tickets from the current season as well as their updated PQS tracking form. A completed fish ticket must be submitted to the department before fish are transported out of Alaska.

### **Sablefish Possession and Landing Requirements**

The holder of a CFEC permit or interim use permit for sablefish may not retain more sablefish in the directed fishery than the annual amount of sablefish EQS specified by the department [5 AAC 28.170 (g)]. However, if a permit holder's harvest exceeds the permit holder's EQS for that year, by not more than five percent, the department shall reduce the permit holder's EQS for the following year by the amount of the overage. If a permit holder's harvest exceeds the permit holder's equal quota share by more than five percent, the proceeds from the sale of the overage in excess of five percent shall be surrendered to the state and the permit holder may be prosecuted under AS 16.05.723. A permit holder may not knowingly exceed a quota share or exceed the EQS in an amount greater than five percent as such actions may be prosecuted under AS 16.05.722 or AS 16.05.723.

If a permit holder's harvest is less than the permit holder's EQS for that year, the department shall increase the permit holder's EQS only for the following year by the amount of the underage that does not exceed five percent of the EQS [5 AAC 28.170 (k)].

For the 2014 SSEI sablefish fishery, five percent of the annual EQS equals 1,167 round pounds.

## Bycatch

Allowable bycatch that may be legally landed on an SSEI sablefish permit is as follows based on round weight of both target and bycatch species:

Species	Longline fishery	Pot fishery
<b>Demersal Shelf Rockfish (DSR)</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Shortraker &amp; Roughey Rockfish</b>	<b>7% in aggregate</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Other rockfish &amp; thornyheads</b>	<b>15% in aggregate</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Lingcod</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Pacific Cod</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Spiny dogfish</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Other groundfish</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>20%</b>

All permit holders must retain, weigh, and report all rockfish taken in SSEI. This regulation does not apply to shortspine thornyhead. All rockfish in excess of allowable bycatch limits shall be reported as bycatch overage on the fish ticket. Any proceeds from the sale of excess rockfish shall be surrendered to the state.

When the directed Pacific cod fishery is open in SSEI, Pacific cod taken in excess of bycatch limits may be landed on the appropriate CFEC miscellaneous finfish permit.

## Prohibitions

A vessel or a person on board a vessel from which commercial, subsistence, or personal use longline fishing gear was used to take fish in the SSEI area during the 72-hour period immediately before the start of the commercial SSEI sablefish fishery, or from which that gear will be used during the 24-hour period immediately after the closure of the SSEI sablefish fishery, may not participate in the taking of sablefish in SSEI during that open sablefish fishing period [5AAC 28.180(a)]. The operator of a fishing vessel may not take sablefish in SSEI while sablefish from another area are onboard the vessel. Also, the operator of a vessel taking sablefish in SSEI shall unload and submit a completed fish ticket to the department before taking sablefish in another area [5AAC 28.170 (a) and (b)].

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

Office	Ketchikan	Petersburg	Wrangell	Sitka	Juneau	Haines	Yakutat
ADF&G	225-5195	772-3801	874-3822	747-6688	465-4250	766-2830	784-3255
AWT	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000	766-2533	784-3220