

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND COMMERCIAL

LINGCOD SEASON OPENING

EO 2-GF-E-11-14

The directed commercial fishing season for lingcod *Ophiodon elongatus* in the Prince William Sound (PWS) Management Area will open July 1, 2014, and will close December 31 or earlier by emergency order. Guideline harvest levels (GHL) are 7,300 pounds for the Inside District and 25,300 pounds for the Outside District, including adjacent federal Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) waters.

To help meet biological sampling objectives, Emergency Order 2-GF-E-11-14 requires lingcod be delivered with the head attached and with the vent and one-inch area forward of the vent intact as evidence of gender. Retained lingcod must measure at least 35 inches from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail.

To participate in the directed lingcod fishery, fishermen must possess a gear-appropriate Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission lingcod permit card and a PWS nonexclusive groundfish area registration. Groundfish registrations can be obtained at department offices in Anchorage, Homer, Soldotna, and Cordova or via Cordova office fax (907-424-3235). Fisherman targeting lingcod in the EEZ should obtain a Federal Fisheries Permit (FFP). FFP application forms are available at National Marine Fisheries (NMFS) offices in Homer, Anchorage, or Seward and online at: <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/ram/FFPAPP.pdf>.

Regulations close directed fishing for groundfish, including lingcod, within three nautical miles of two PWS area Steller sea lion rookeries, Seal Rocks and Wooded Island (Fish Island). For specific descriptions of these closure areas, contact NMFS in Kodiak at (907) 481-1711 or reference <http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/rr/tables/tab12.pdf>. These closures do not affect halibut fishing within these areas.

Big skate closed to retention as bycatch in PWS waters on February 6 by Emergency Order 2-GF-E-06-14. Other bycatch limits by species or species aggregate for the Prince William Sound Management Area are set by Emergency Order 2-GF-E-01-14. After July 1, lingcod may be retained as bycatch up to 20 percent of the directed harvest aboard a vessel, including lingcod taken incidentally by drift gillnet gear operated for salmon.

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