

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



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#### PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND COMMERCIAL SABLEFISH FISHERY UPDATE SEASON OPENING AND QUOTA ALLOCATIONS

The 2015 Prince William Sound (PWS) sablefish season will open April 15 with a 122,000 lb guideline harvest level (GHL). This is a reduction of approximately 50% from the 2014 GHL, and is in response to declining trends in fishery catch per unit effort (CPUE) and harvest; harvest in 2014 was 96,726 lb. In addition, tagging studies conducted by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and ADF&G indicate that sablefish populations throughout the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) including the PWS area are likely mixed. Therefore, the GHL was adjusted by applying the relative change each year in the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Gulf of Alaska sablefish acceptable biological catch (ABC), which is derived from NMFS stock assessment surveys.

Fishing may occur in **Inside District waters only** and season dates are **April 15 - August 31**. The fishery is managed by quota allocations among vessel size permit classes as specified in regulation 5 AAC 28.272. The table below indicates the number of registered permits, and quota allocations in round weight and dressed (eastern cut) weight by permit category.

Permit Category	Registered Permits	Quota Round (lb)	Quota Dressed (lb)
A & B	5	3,434	2,163
C	37	2,333	1,470
D	10	1,853	1,167

**Each permit holder's harvest total will be verified based on the sablefish weight as delivered.** To avoid any misunderstanding, processors are required to report round weight pounds for all deliveries of whole fish. Deliveries of dressed fish shall be reported on the fish ticket in both dressed weight and as a round weight conversion.

**Fishermen are reminded that a sablefish quota overage is an illegal harvest and may be subject to prosecution.** All sablefish in excess of an individual's quota allocation must be noted on the fish ticket as a "sablefish overage" and a check to the State of Alaska for the value of the overage must accompany the fish ticket.

**Reporting requirements:** Logbook sheets must be completed and returned within 10 days after each landing. Logbook sheets may be submitted in person, by mail (ADF&G P.O. Box 669, Cordova, AK 99574), by fax (907) 424-3235, or accompanying the fish ticket. Six-hour prior notice of landing for sablefish is required by calling (907) 424-7225 and reporting:

- 1) permit holder name and landing location;
- 2) name of the buyer or processor;
- 3) estimated time of arrival; and
- 4) estimated number of pounds of sablefish on board, and whether the fish is dressed or in the round.

**Additional fishery regulations:**

- 1) A vessel operator shall unload all sablefish taken in the PWS management area, and a copy of the completed fish ticket must be submitted to ADF&G before taking sablefish in another area (5 AAC 28.272.(a)).
- 2) A vessel operator with sablefish on board that were taken in another management area may not take sablefish in the PWS management area (5 AAC 28.272.(b)).
- 3) When targeting sablefish in PWS, **copies of all completed PWS sablefish fish tickets issued to a sablefish permit holder for the current season must be retained on board** (5 AAC 28.272.(d)).

**Bycatch limits:** Bycatch limits by species or species aggregate for the PWS Management Area state-waters sablefish fishery are set as follows by Emergency Order 2-GF-E-06-14 as round weight of bycatch as a percentage of the round weight of the target species:

- (1) may retain 20 percent Pacific cod;
- (2) may retain 15 percent skate species in aggregate except that;  
(A) big skate (*Raja binoculata*) may not be retained after noon February 11, 2015;
- (3) may retain 15 percent shark species in aggregate (includes spiny dogfish);
- (4) may not retain lingcod prior to July 1; after July 1 may retain 20 percent lingcod;
- (5) may retain 20 percent pollock;
- (6) must retain all rockfish (and thornyhead) as required by 5 AAC 28.265 and any rockfish in excess of 20 percent in aggregate must be weighed and reported as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket;

(A) no rockfish landing or combination of landings may exceed the 5-day trip limit of 3,000 pounds

(7) may retain 20 percent other groundfish in aggregate.

For additional information, contact ADF&G in Cordova, at 907-424-3212.

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