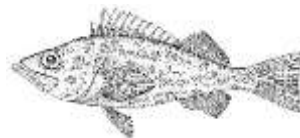

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



Sam Cotten, Commissioner
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Sitka Area Office
304 Lake St. Room 103
Sitka, AK 99835
Date: January 29, 2016
Time: 11:45 a.m.

2016 WINTER DEMERSAL SHELF ROCKFISH FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENT

Sitka...The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) announced today the following information regarding the 2016 Southeast Outside (SEO) Subdistrict directed Demersal Shelf Rockfish (DSR) commercial fishery. The seven species in the DSR assemblage are yelloweye, quillback, canary, copper, china, tiger, and rosethorn rockfish.

The directed fishery will open in the East Yakutat (EYKT) Section at 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, February 3, 2016. This area will remain open until the harvest allocation is taken or 4:00 p.m., March 18, 2016, whichever occurs first. The directed fishery will remain closed in the Northern Southeast Outside (NSEO), Central Southeast Outside (CSEO), and Southern Southeast Outside (SSEO) Sections (see attached map). For information regarding the 2016 directed DSR fishery in the Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI) and Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) Subdistricts, refer to the ADF&G news release issued on December 17, 2015.

Harvest Quotas for the Directed DSR Fishery

Area	Round lb
EYKT	63,964

The 2016 acceptable biological catch (ABC) for DSR in the SEO Subdistrict is 509,355 round lb. After deduction of the 2016 DSR subsistence harvest estimate (15,435 round lb), 5 AAC 28.160 (c)(1)(A) allocates the DSR total allowable catch as follows: 84% (414,540 round lb) to commercial fisheries and 16% (79,558 round lb) to recreational fisheries. This commercial quota is then apportioned by management area based on the contribution of that area to the overall biomass. The quota remaining for the directed commercial DSR fishery is set after deductions for DSR bycatch mortality in other fisheries are made. Areas are opened to directed fishing if there is sufficient resource to conduct an orderly fishery and if there are no area-specific conservation concerns. Results from the 2013 SSEO DSR survey indicated a significant decline in yelloweye rockfish biomass from that surveyed in 2005. The most recent assessment of CSEO in 2012 produced the lowest density estimate on record and the continuation of a declining trend seen since 2003. Based on recent survey information CSEO and SSEO will remain closed for the 2016 season. NSEO does not have sufficient quota available for 2016 to conduct an orderly directed fishery. The department anticipates that CSEO and NSEO areas will be surveyed in 2016; this information will be used in the 2017 stock assessment.

General Provisions

Fishermen are required to register their vessel with the department prior to participating in the winter directed DSR fishery. Vessels that previously registered to fish in NSEI or SSEI in 2016 must re-register if they plan to fish in the EYKT fishery. Logbooks are required and a copy of the logbook pages detailing the landing must be attached to the fish ticket at the time of that landing. Fishermen are required to report on logbooks the latitude and longitude (degrees and decimal minutes) for start and end positions of each set, amount of gear (skates and hooks), depth of each set, and amount of catch per set by species. Logbooks are available at ADF&G area offices.

In the Southeast District, DSR may be taken in the directed fishery by longline, hand troll, dinglebar troll, and mechanical jig gear. A Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) "Y" interim use permit is required for the directed fishery. Permit holders or vessels fishing in EYKT may not sell more than 12,000 pounds (bled weight) of DSR in any five-day period. Full retention and reporting of all DSR is required. All DSR taken in excess of trip limits by a vessel or CFEC permit holder in any five-day period must be landed, weighed, and reported as overage on an ADF&G fish ticket. DSR trip limit overage is forfeited and all proceeds from the sale of excess DSR shall be surrendered to the state.

Vessels fishing for groundfish in federal waters must have a Federal Fisheries Permit. For information on federal permits contact NOAA Fisheries at 800-304-4846 or 907-586-7202. Vessels greater than 26 feet fishing for groundfish with longline gear must comply with seabird avoidance requirements specified in 50 C.F.R. 679.24. Fishermen are reminded that there are four federal Coral Habitat Protection Areas (HAPC) on the Fairweather Grounds that are closed to all fishing with bottom contact gear. Locations of the GOA Coral Habitat Protection Areas are detailed in Table 26 to Part 679 at: <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/tabl26.pdf>. For additional information on HAPC areas, contact NOAA Fisheries at 907-586-7228. For questions regarding federal regulations or bycatch allowances, contact NOAA enforcement at 907-586-7225.

Bycatch Provisions

State waters (0-3 miles) bycatch provisions for DSR longline and jig permits are listed in the following table. All bycatch is calculated round weight, based on the round weight of the DSR sold. Bycatch allowances in state waters match federal waters allowances unless otherwise noted.

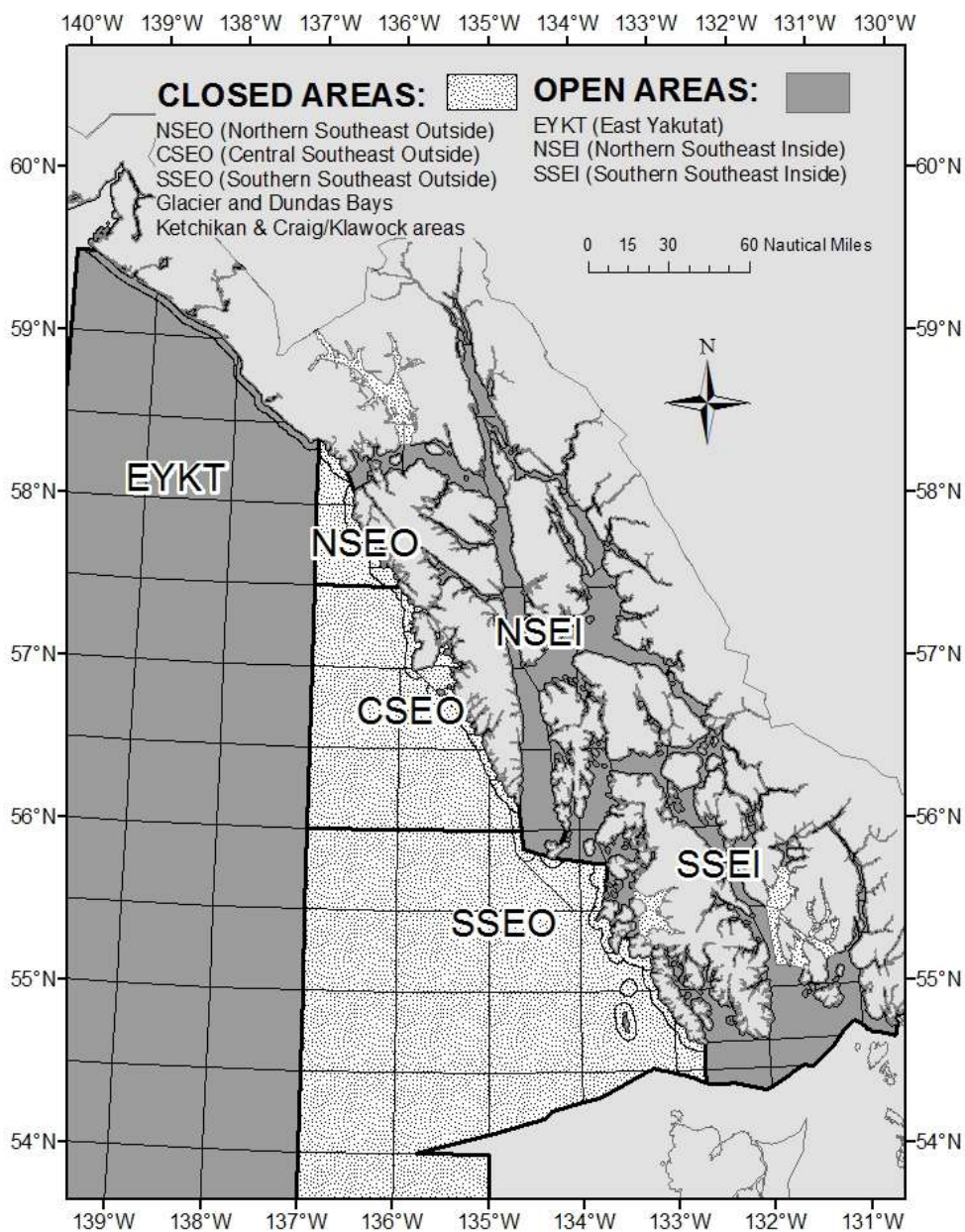
Bycatch Species	EYKT
Lingcod*	Longline fishery- 35%. Jig fishery- 0%.
Shortraker and Rougheye Rockfish	7% in aggregate.
Black, Blue, and Dark Rockfish	15% in aggregate. Full retention required for black rockfish.
Other Rockfish and Thornyhead	15% in aggregate.
Pacific cod	20%.
Dogfish	Longline fishery- State waters- 35%. Jig fishery- State waters- 20%. **Federal waters- 20% in aggregate with "Other Species".
Sablefish	0%.
Other Groundfish	State waters- 20%. **Federal waters- see Table 10 for Retainable Percentages.

*minimum size limit- 27" from tip of snout to tip of tail or 20.5" from front of dorsal fin to tip of tail.

**view Federal Bycatch Percentages at: <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/tabl10.pdf>

Catch and effort will be closely monitored and 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. Closure updates will also be available on the Groundfish Telephone Hotline at 907-747-4882.

The Emergency Order corresponding with this announcement is EO 1G0416.



**This map is for general reference only.
EYKT is open to directed fishing for DSR at 9:00 a.m. on February 3, 2016.**

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