

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES  
NEWS RELEASE**



*Sam Cotten, Commissioner  
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**FISHERY UPDATE  
PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND SABLEFISH FISHERY  
REGISTRATION DEADLINE AND GUIDELINE HARVEST LEVEL**

The registration deadline date for the 2016 PWS sablefish fishery is **5:00 p.m. Friday, April 1** and the season will open April 15 with a guideline harvest level (GHL) of 110,823 lb. Any permit holder failing to register by the April 1 deadline will not be allotted a share of the quota.

Only a PWS sablefish limited entry (LE) permit holder or their authorized agent possessing a 2016 permit card may register. Registrations and log sheets are available at ADF&G offices in Homer, Anchorage, Kodiak and Cordova, and by appointment with the Alaska Wildlife Troopers in Seward and Valdez. Individuals can register by fax but must contact the ADF&G office in Cordova.

The 2015 harvest of 16,910 lb was the lowest harvest in the history of the fishery. Catch per unit effort (CPUE) in 2015 was also at its lowest level and has been in a general decline since 2000. Although the GHL was constant between 1993 and 2014, the decreasing trends in harvest and CPUE indicated a need for reevaluation. Therefore in 2015, the department began adjusting the PWS GHL by applying the relative change each year in the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Gulf of Alaska (GOA) sablefish acceptable biological catch (ABC), which is derived from NMFS stock assessment surveys. This method has been used to adjust the Cook Inlet GHL since 1997.

To gather more inseason information from the 2016 fishery, the department will conduct more extensive participant interviews. The goal is to get additional information about sablefish recruitment and smaller age classes, CPUE, and about the occurrence of targeted sablefish trips and mixed trips for other groundfish species. These may include post fishing trip phone calls or more thorough interviews at the dock. Fishermen are asked to cooperate with interviewers to help the department get a broader view of the fishery this season.

After the registration deadline, the department will determine the quota allocations as specified in regulation (5 AAC 28.272) and will announce those allocations in a news release no later than April 8, 2016.

PWS sablefish permit holders are advised that recipients of a permanent or emergency transfer must re-register with the department prior to fishing.

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