

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



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**COOK INLET AREA FISHERY UPDATE
DIRECTED LINGCOD AND ROCKFISH FISHERIES OPEN JULY 1**

Commercial seasons for the Cook Inlet Area directed lingcod and pelagic shelf rockfish (PSR) jig fisheries will open on July 1 with guideline harvest levels (GHLs) of 52,500 and 150,000 pounds, respectively. Legal gear types for directed lingcod and PSR fisheries are mechanical jig and hand troll and only legal gear types may be aboard a vessel targeting these species.

To participate in the lingcod or PSR directed fisheries, fishermen must possess a gear-appropriate Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permit card for the target species or species group and a Cook Inlet Area fishery-specific nonexclusive groundfish area registration. There is a lingcod-specific CFEC permit for either hand-troll or jig gear (I05B or I26B). For the directed PSR fishery, the appropriate card is miscellaneous saltwater finfish for either gear type (M05 or M26), and either the Gulf of Alaska (G) or Statewide (B) permits may be used in the Cook Inlet Area. If fishing both mechanical jig and hand troll gear simultaneously, then CFEC permit cards for both gear types must be purchased and fish landed on separate fish tickets by gear type. For the directed PSR fishery, log sheets must be completed while fishing (see below). Groundfish registrations and logbook pages may be obtained at ADF&G offices in Homer, Anchorage, Soldotna, and Cordova.

There is a 35-inch minimum legal size for lingcod from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail. Fishermen are requested to deliver lingcod in a head-on condition and with the vent intact to enable ADF&G staff to collect age and sex information.

A reminder to participants that ADF&G requires **6 hours prior notice of landing (PNOL) for the PSR fishery** after each directed rockfish jig trip in the Cook Inlet Area. Contact ADF&G by telephoning (907) 226-2121 at least 6 hours prior to landing and report the following: 1) vessel name/ADF&G#, 2) date and location of landing, 3) estimated time of arrival, 4) buyer or processor, and 5) estimated pounds of rockfish onboard.

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Log sheets are required during the directed rockfish fishery and must be onboard the vessel at all times while participating in the fishery. Log sheets must: 1) include the date, the specific location of harvest by latitude and longitude, the number of hooks fished, the average depth of each set fished, and the time gear is deployed and hauled, for each set; 2) include for the target species, and for each bycatch species, the number of fish retained and discarded, 3) be updated within 24 hours after midnight local time on the day of operation; 4) be made available to a local representative of the department upon request. Also, completed log sheets must be submitted within 7 days of landing, preferably accompanying corresponding fish tickets.

Only pelagic shelf rockfish (PSR) species may be targeted in the directed rockfish fishery: black, dark, dusky, widow, yellowtail, and deacon rockfish. All rockfish caught must be retained, including those considered bycatch species. Five-day trip limits for all rockfish combined are 4,000 pounds in the North Gulf District and 1,000 pounds in the Cook Inlet District.

ADF&G management authority for black and dark rockfishes and lingcod extends into federal waters of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). In addition to state requirements of a gear-appropriate permit card and area registration, fishermen targeting lingcod, black rockfish, or dark rockfish in the EEZ also require a Federal Fisheries Permit (FFP). FFP application forms are available at National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) offices in Homer, Anchorage, or Seward and online at: <https://alaskafisheries.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/ffpapp.pdf>.

Fishermen targeting groundfish or halibut in Cook Inlet Area state waters must retain all rockfish and comply with rockfish trip limits. Allowable bycatch levels are 20% non-pelagic rockfish species to directed pelagic rockfish and 10% rockfish (all species) to other directed groundfish and halibut fisheries. Rockfish in excess of allowable bycatch levels must be reported as an overage on the fish ticket and any proceeds surrendered to the State of Alaska.

Fishermen targeting groundfish or halibut in Cook Inlet Area waters may retain lingcod as bycatch up to 20 percent of the round weight of directed harvest aboard the vessel. After the directed lingcod season is closed, lingcod may not be retained.

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