
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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Sitka Area Office
304 Lake Street
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2013 SOUTHERN SOUTHEAST INSIDE SUBDISTRICT SABLEFISH FISHERY

The 2013 Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) Subdistrict commercial sablefish annual harvest objective (AHO) is 583,280 round pounds, unchanged from the 2012 AHO. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) evaluates stock status and establishes the SSEI AHO using commercial fishery and survey catch per unit effort (CPUE) data, fishery and survey biological data (age, weight, length, and maturity), and stock status trends of sablefish populations in surrounding geographic areas.

Longline survey and fishery CPUE indices declined slightly from 2011 to 2012. Despite the decline in survey CPUE round lb/hook, survey CPUE trended up in fish per hook, indicative of a greater abundance of small fish in 2012 than in 2011. The 2013 AHO was maintained at the 2012 level because stock status information indicates that the sablefish population in SSEI is stable. There has been an increase in the proportion of immature female fish caught in the survey and fishery since 2008; the proportion of immature females caught in the commercial fisheries reached record levels in 2012. The department will continue to collect sablefish biological data in SSEI to monitor this trend.

The SSEI longline sablefish fishery will open 8:00 a.m., Saturday, June 1 and close at 12:00 noon, Thursday, August 15, 2013. The SSEI pot sablefish fishery will open at 8:00 a.m., Sunday, September 1 and close at 12:00 noon, Friday, November 15, 2013.

Equal quota share (EQS) for each of the 23 permit holders will be 25,360 round pounds. There has been no change in the number of permit holders since 2012. SSEI permit holders were mailed a certified letter detailing legal overages or underages incurred during the 2012 fishery. If you did not receive this letter, please contact Aaron Baldwin at 907-465-3896. Each permit holder's 2013 EQS will be adjusted based on any legal overages or underages and a personal quota share (PQS) will be assigned.

Registration and Logbook Requirements

Fishermen must register prior to fishing and keep a logbook during the fishery. Registration forms and logbooks are available at department offices in Southeast Alaska beginning May 1, 2013. Completed logbook pages must be attached to the department copy of the fish ticket at the time of delivery. Confidential envelopes for logbook pages may be requested when registering.

When registering for the fishery, fishermen will be given a PQS tracking form. This form is used to record the total round landed weight of each delivery. Each permit holder must, upon request, provide the buyer with the total round weight of sablefish the permit holder has landed to date. The department requests a copy of the completed PQS tracking form and the final fish ticket of the season for that permit.

Logbooks must include, by set, the date and time gear is set and retrieved, specific location of harvest by latitude and longitude for start and ending positions, hook spacing, amount of gear (number of hooks or pots), depth of set, and estimated weight of the target or bycatch species. Indicate for each set if the target species was sablefish or halibut and if there was any lost gear.

Tagged Sablefish

Fishermen are requested to watch for tagged sablefish. Please record tag number(s) in the logbook next to the appropriate set and attach tag(s) directly in the log next to the specific set information. All tags returned will receive a reward. Tag rewards include a hat or shirt, and entry into an annual drawing for one \$1,000, two \$500, and four \$250 cash rewards. To qualify for entry in the annual drawing, the department requires the following information: the tag, set location (latitude and longitude) and date of capture, and the name and address of the person recovering the tag.

Fish Ticket Requirements

Landed weights must be recorded on a fish ticket at the time of delivery. If a fisherman delivers fish in the round, the total round weight delivered must be recorded on the fish ticket. If a fisherman delivers dressed fish, the fish ticket must include the total landed dressed weight as well as a conversion to the round weight using the standard 0.63 conversion rate. There is a 2% allowance for ice and slime. A fish ticket with landed weight must be completed prior to the resumption of fishing and each permit holder must have onboard the registered copies of all SSEI fish tickets from the current season as well as their updated PQS tracking form. A completed fish ticket must be submitted to the department before fish are transported out of Alaska.

Sablefish Possession and Landing Requirements

The holder of a Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permit or interim use permit for sablefish may not retain more sablefish in the directed fishery than the annual amount of sablefish EQS specified by the department [5 AAC 28.170 (g)]. However, if a permit holder's harvest exceeds the permit holder's EQS for that year, by not more than five percent, the department shall reduce the permit holder's EQS for the following year by the amount of the overage. If a permit holder's harvest exceeds the permit holder's equal quota share by more than five percent, the proceeds from the sale of the overage in excess of five percent shall be surrendered to the state and the permit holder may be prosecuted under AS 16.05.723. A permit holder may not knowingly exceed a quota share or exceed the equal quota share in an amount greater than five percent as such actions may be prosecuted under AS 16.05.722 or AS 16.05.723.

If a permit holder's harvest is less than the permit holder's EQS for that year, the department shall increase the permit holder's EQS only for the following year by the amount of the underage that does not exceed five percent of the EQS [5 AAC 28.170 (k)].

For the 2013 SSEI sablefish fishery, five percent of the annual EQS equals 1,268 round pounds.

Bycatch

Allowable bycatch that may be legally landed on an SSEI sablefish permit is as follows based on round weight of both target and bycatch species:

Species	Longline fishery	Pot fishery
Demersal Shelf Rockfish (DSR)	1%	0%
Shortraker & Roughey Rockfish	7% in aggregate	0%
Other rockfish & thornyheads	15% in aggregate	0%
Lingcod	0%	0%
Pacific Cod	20%	20%
Spiny dogfish	35%	20%
Other groundfish	20%	20%

CFEC permit holders fishing for groundfish and halibut in SSEI must retain, weigh, and report all rockfish taken; however full-retention regulations do not apply to thornyheads. All rockfish in excess of allowable bycatch limits shall be reported as bycatch overage on the fish ticket. Proceeds from the sale of excess rockfish shall be surrendered to the state.

Pacific cod taken in excess of the bycatch limit described above may be landed on a CFEC interim miscellaneous finfish (M) permit if taken in waters open to directed Pacific cod fishing. Directed fishing for rockfish is prohibited during the SSEI sablefish fishery and rockfish may only be sold as bycatch on the directed sablefish and Pacific cod permits, based on the weight of the target species.

Prohibitions

The operator of a fishing vessel may not take sablefish in the SSEI area with sablefish from another area on board. Also, the operator of a vessel taking sablefish in the SSEI area shall offload and complete a fish ticket before taking sablefish in another area [5AAC 28.170 (a) and (b)].

A vessel, or person onboard a vessel, from which commercial, subsistence, or personal use longline fishing gear was used to take fish in the SSEI Subdistrict during the 72-hour period immediately before the start of the commercial sablefish fishery in that subdistrict, or from which that gear will be used during the 24-hour period immediately after the closure of the commercial sablefish fishery in that subdistrict, may not participate in the taking of sablefish in that subdistrict during that open sablefish fishing period. A vessel, or a person onboard a vessel, who has harvested and sold their PQS prior to the final day of the sablefish season in that subdistrict is exempt from the prohibition on fishing longline gear during the 24-hour period immediately following the closure of the sablefish fishery in that subdistrict.

A vessel or a person onboard a vessel, commercial fishing for sablefish in the SSEI Subdistrict may not operate subsistence or personal use longline gear for groundfish from that vessel until all sablefish harvested in the commercial fishery are offloaded from the vessel.

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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