

BOARD OF FISHERIES
ALASKA PENINSULA / CHIGNIK / ALEUTIAN ISLANDS- BERING SEA PACIFIC
COD
NOVEMBER 30 – DECEMBER 1, 2015

PROPOSAL 1 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan. Add purse seine gear as an additional gear type to share the 10 percent mechanical jigging machine and hand troll (jig) gear allocation in the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 28.537 is amended to read:

Seine gear is approved under the Pacific Cod Management Plan (5AAC 28.537) subject to the following:

1. A valid CFEC interim-use permit card for statewide miscellaneous saltwater finfish using purse seine gear is required;
2. For the three years, 2016–2018, purse seine gear as defined under 5 AAC 15.332 may be used to harvest Pacific cod annually in Area L beginning on 1 May and ending on June 1 and limited to the harvest of not more than 75% of the Pacific cod Area L jig quota or whatever remains of the Area L 10% jig quota, whichever is lowest;
3. Fishing shall occur only in state-waters listed in 5 AAC 28.500 excluding Chignik Lagoon;
4. An approved ADF&G logbook is required and shall be submitted with each fish ticket at time of delivery.
5. A salmon dip net shall be onboard and used for the live release of all incidental caught salmon. No salmon shall be retained for any purpose.
6. The Department may deploy ADF&G personnel as an onboard observer while fishing. The vessel shall have a current USCC safety decal and an inspected life raft that can accommodate all persons onboard the vessel. Costs associated with accommodating an observer will be the responsibility of the vessel owner while the observer is onboard.
7. The vessel operator must have five years of commercial fishing experience in the Chignik Management Area (L) and an established market for any harvested Pacific cod.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The jig quota (10% of the annual GHL) assigned to the state-water Pacific cod (*Gadus macrocephalus*) fishery for the Chignik Management Area (L) is underutilized. Requested is for the BOF to include a new gear type, purse seine gear (5 AAC 15.332) in the Pacific Cod Management Plan (5 AAC 28.537) and that the new gear be permitted to harvest a portion of the 10% jig quota limited to the May 1–June 1 period exclusively provided the jig quota has not already been reached.

There is evidence that Pacific cod can be successfully harvested in early spring (May 1–June 1) Area L waters with standard purse seine gear (5 AAC 15.332) before the local salmon season begins and that it can be accomplished absent of any discernable impact on other finfish resources, namely salmon. For evaluation purposes the BOF may wish to limit the use of purse seine gear (from May 1 through June 1 annually) to a three year period beginning in 2016. Also suggested is that the BOF consider authorizing seine gear as experimental for Pacific cod, not via

a "commissioner's permit," but through direct action subject to specifically tailored conditions that would include making it optional for an onboard observer due to Chignik's remoteness, practicality, budget limitations, and scale.

PROPOSED BY: Chignik Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F15-032)

PROPOSAL 2 – 5 AAC 28.540. Possession limits for Chignik Area. Allow bycatch retention of Pacific cod in the Chignik Area salmon seine fishery, as follows (*This proposal will be heard at the Pacific cod meeting and heard and deliberated on at the Alaska Peninsula / Chignik / Aleutian Islands Finfish meeting.*):

5 AAC 28.540 is amended to:

Allow the taking of Pacific cod as a bycatch under a Chignik Area L salmon permit only during the salmon seining operations.

Cod must not be the targets species and no more than XX% would be allowed of each delivery.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Bycatch of Pacific cod during the salmon seining season by seiners. The resource is being wasted and has lost potential revenue.

PROPOSED BY: Al Anderson (HQ-F15-073)

PROPOSAL 3 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan. Apportion the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod allocation for pot vessels by vessel length, as follows:

Quota for large boats 85% 58'

Quota for smaller boats, 15% 46' and under

Chignik Area shallow draft boats are used to fish salmon, but when used for cod fishing are unsuitable for heavy weather and windy conditions.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Quota for boats under 58'. Smaller boats cannot fish in weather that Super 58's can and are forced to fish in weather, risking lives and/or injury. In order to catch fish before quota is caught. Larger boats fish without stopping in most weather conditions when small boats can't fish.

PROPOSED BY: Tony Gregorio (HQ-F15-098)

PROPOSAL 4 - 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan. Establish daily pot gear fishing periods for the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery, as follows:

The state Pacific cod season in Chignik, will be open for fishing from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily until the quota is reached.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? As more large non-local pot Pacific cod vessels participate in the Chignik state water Pacific cod fishery, the smaller local fleet becomes disadvantaged because the smaller vessels have a tough time fishing bad weather during the night. The problem will be exacerbated if the board increases the Chignik state water quota because even more large non-local boats will be attracted to the Chignik fishery. As local Chignik vessels are disadvantaged this also translates into negative impacts on the fragile and fishing dependent local communities.

Justification: Daylight hours would make a more even playing field for everyone and slow the fishery down. This past season, for example, poor weather made it difficult for the local boats to participate in the fishery at night and a daylight only fishery would have helped to spread the benefits of the fishery more equitably over the entire fleet.

The fishery would also be easier to manage if it were slowed down. When the 2015 state-waters season closed on March 23 nearly 400,000 pounds of cod remained unharvested because of the legitimate difficulty management faced timing the season closure because of having to deal with predicting how the weather would impact fishing. At the speed of the current fishery even the truly unpredictable breakdown of one high producing vessel can cause a mistake in the timing of the closure.

PROPOSED BY: Donald Bumpus (EF-C15-089)

PROPOSAL 5 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan. Change date that gear limits may be removed in the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 28.537 is amended to:

Give the department the ability to remove gear limits on or after August 14 for all gear types.

(j) If at any time after **August 14** [OCTOBER 30] the commissioner determines that the guideline harvest level for Pacific cod will not be achieved by December 31, the commissioner may close, by emergency order, the fishing season and immediately reopen a state-waters season during which the following shall be implemented to increase the harvest rate in an attempt to achieve the guideline harvest level;

(1) removal of the limits on the number of groundfish pots and mechanical jigging machines that may be operated from a vessel.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The issue is unharvested rollover fish in the State Water Pacific cod fishery (opening August 14th) which results in lost revenue to the state, harvesters, processors and local boroughs. The fall rollover fish has gone unharvested with limited participation. We would like to see the department given more effective tools to fully harvest this remaining fish. Removing gear limits earlier would increase the chances of harvesting this fish in an economical manner. Cod are normally more dispersed and harder to catch in the fall, resulting in a much lower CPU. With more gear it would possibly be a viable fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Ron Kavanaugh, F/V Sylvia Star, Chris Arndt, F/V Isle Dominator, and Todd Hoppe F/V Deliverance (EF-C15-038)

PROPOSAL 6 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan. Include a change in designation of Chignik Area from a superexclusive registration area to a nonexclusive registration area after October 30 in the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan is amended to read:

...

(j) If at any time after October 30 the commissioner determines that the guideline harvest level for Pacific cod will not be achieved by December 31, the commissioner may close, by emergency order, the fishing season and immediately reopen a state-waters season during which the following shall be implemented to increase the harvest rate in an attempt to achieve the guideline harvest level:

(1) removal of the limits on the number of ground fish pots and mechanical jigging machines that may be operated by a vessel;

(2) if needed, allow a vessel of any size to register and fish for Pacific cod in the Chignik Area.

(3) if needed, designation of the Chignik Area as a non superexclusive registration area for Pacific cod.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The unharvested fall/rollover Pacific cod in the Chignik state-water fishery. Unharvested Pacific cod results in a loss of revenue to all stakeholders (harvesters, processors, local communities and State of Alaska). Removal of super exclusive registration in the Chignik Area for Pacific cod after October 30. This would be best placed under 5 AAC 28.537 sub paragraph (j) with a new sub paragraph (3).

PROPOSED BY: Ron Kavanaugh (EF-C15-059)

PROPOSAL 7 – 5 AAC 28.532. Groundfish pot storage requirements for Chignik Area; and 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan. Change pot gear storage regulations for the Chignik Area state-waters Pacific cod fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 28.532. Groundfish pot storage requirements for Chignik Area.

(a) ...rectangular groundfish pots with all bait and bait containers removed and with all doors secured fully open, and cone or pyramid groundfish pots with all bait and bait containers removed and all doors not secured closed may be stored in water not more than 25 fathoms deep.

5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan.

(h) During a state-waters season,

...

(2) Pacific cod may be taken only with groundfish pots, mechanical jigging machines, and hand troll gear, as follows:

...

(E) during the seven days following the opening of the state-waters season, an operator of a vessel registered to fish for Pacific cod may store or transport groundfish pots in excess of the pot limit established in (A) of this paragraph if the pots are

(i) stored in waters not more than 25 fathoms deep as described in 5 AAC 28.532(a); or

(ii) being transported on board the vessel and are not marked with identification tags.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Chignik state-waters Pacific cod fishery has a 60-pot limit.

Two Chignik Area groundfish regulations guide shallow water pot storage. The Chignik Area pot storage regulation, 5 AAC 28.532, allows shallow-water storage of groundfish pots during the entire season. The state-waters Pacific cod fishery management plan does not allow shallow-water storage for pots in excess of the pot limit except for the first seven days of the season.

This proposal provides the board and fishery stakeholders opportunity to resolve storage provisions for pots in excess of the pot limit during the Chignik state-waters Pacific cod pot gear fishery. The current provisions are listed above.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-057)

PROPOSAL 8 – 5 AAC 28.537. Chignik Area Pacific Cod Management Plan. Limit the number of pots in the parallel Pacific cod fishery in the Chignik Area to 60 per vessel, as follows:

In the Chignik Area, limit number of pots inside state-waters to 60, during the parallel fishery.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Since 120 pots can be used during this fishery inside three miles, the cod are fished out before the state fishery starts. In the Chignik Area the larger boats start within three miles in the federal season then move out in state season. The federal regulations use 120 pots in the fishery in or outside of three miles. Since the three mile limit is state-waters, state regulations should apply.

PROPOSED BY: Tony Gregorio (HQ-F15-099)

PROPOSAL 9 – 5 AAC 28.087. Management measures in parallel groundfish fisheries for protection of Steller sea lions. Reduce waters closed for the protection of Steller sea lions during the parallel Pacific cod fishery in the Chignik Area, as follows:

5 AAC 28.087(b) is amended to read:

...

(b)

...

(4) In the Chignik Area, all state-waters, with the exception of state-waters within 20 nautical miles of sea lion rookeries, shall be opened to pot and mechanical jigging gear

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Lack of fishing opportunity for local Chignik residents during the parallel season. I would like to see the sea lion restrictions reduced during the State parallel season in the Chignik area. There is very little area to fish inside state-waters during the parallel season due to the sea lion restrictions. Most residents of Chignik do not have an LLP to fish outside of State-waters.

PROPOSED BY: Aaron Anderson (EF-C15-077)
