

5 Alaska Admin. Code § 39.212

Section 5 AAC 39.212 - Forage Fish Management Plan

- (a) This management plan governs the commercial harvesting of forage fish species in the waters of Alaska.
- (b) The board finds that forage fish perform a critical role in the complex marine ecosystem by providing the transfer of energy from the primary and secondary producers to higher trophic levels. The higher trophic levels include many commercially important fish and shellfish species. Forage fish also serve as important prey species for marine mammals and seabirds.
- (c) The board finds that abundant populations of forage fish are necessary to sustain healthy populations of commercially important species of salmon, groundfish, halibut, and shellfish.
- (d) Except as otherwise provided in 5 AAC 03 - 5 AAC 39, forage fish may not be commercially taken.
- (e) A vessel fishing in a directed groundfish fishery may retain a maximum allowable bycatch of forage fish equal to no more than two percent of the round weight or round weight equivalent of the groundfish on board the vessel.
- (f) For the purposes of this section, "forage fish" means the following species of fish:
- (1) Family Osmeridae (capelin, eulachon, and other smelts);
 - (2) Family Myctophidae (laternfishes);
 - (3) Family Bathylagidae (deep-sea smelt);
 - (4) Family Ammodtidea (Pacific sand lance);
 - (5) Family Trichodontidae (Pacific sandfish);
 - (6) Family Pholidae (gunnels);
 - (7) Family Stichaeidae (pricklebacks, warbonnets, eelblennys, cockscombs, and shannys);
 - (8) Family Gonostomatidae (bristlemouths, lightfishes, and anglemouths);
 - (9) species of the Order Euphausiacea (krill).

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Eff. 7/21/99, Register 151

Authority: AS 16.05.251