

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 1-RF-D-09-16

Issued at: Sitka, Monday, April 25, 2016.

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Monday,
May 2, 2016

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Saturday,
December 31, 2016, unless superseded by
subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order reduces the sport bag limit of pelagic rockfish in the Sitka vicinity from five to three fish per day and 10 fish to six fish in possession in order to reduce the harvest of pelagic rockfish.

REGULATION:

Under this emergency order the provision 5 AAC 47.022.(g)(8) is added. The following provision is effective from 12:01 a.m. Monday, May 2 through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, December 31, 2016:

5 AAC 47.021. Special provisions for seasons, bag, possession, annual, and size limits, and methods and means for the salt waters of the Southeast Alaska Area.

(g) In the Sitka vicinity:

(8) in marine waters west of Baranof and Chichagof Islands, south of 57° 30' N. latitude and north of the latitude of Cape Ommaney (56 ° 9.6' N.) the bag limit for pelagic rockfish is three fish and six in possession.

Sam Cotten
Commissioner

By delegation to:

Troy Tydingco
Sitka Area Management Biologist
Division of Sport Fish

JUSTIFICATION:

The pelagic rockfish harvest in the Sitka Area, as estimated by the statewide harvest survey, has gradually increased from 20,000 fish in 2009 to over 60,000 fish in 2014 and 2015 representing a 266% increase in sport harvest in recent years. Although there is limited stock information, analysis of the length composition of the sport harvest shows a slight, but gradual decline in average weight since 2006 indicating a possible change in the population structure. This may be a result of high harvest. A reduction in bag limit from five to three pelagic rockfish is predicted to reduce harvest to a level similar to that seen in 2011 through 2013. This action is being taken in the interest of conservative management until better stock information is available.

DISTRIBUTION:

The distribution list for this emergency order is on file at the Region 1 office of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, P. O. Box 110024, Douglas, AK 99811, (907) 465-4270.