

SPORT FISHING

Emergency Order

ALASKA DEPARTMENT
OF FISH & GAME

Under Authority of AS 16.05.060

Emergency Order No. 2-RF-7-20-26

Issued at: Anchorage, Wednesday
day, March 4, 2026

Effective Date: 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, April 1, 2026

Expiration Date: 11:59 p.m. Tuesday,
September 15, 2026, unless superseded by
subsequent emergency order.

EXPLANATION:

This emergency order reduces rockfish bag and possession limits in the salt waters of Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay area from 3 per day and 6 in possession of which only 1 per day and 2 in possession may be a nonpelagic rockfish to 3 per day and 6 in possession of which only 2 per day and 4 in possession may be a pelagic rockfish and only 1 per day and 2 in possession may be a nonpelagic rockfish from April 1 – September 15. In addition, yelloweye rockfish may not be retained from April 1 through June 30, 2026.

REGULATION:

The provisions of 5 AAC 58.022(a)(6) are superseded by this emergency order. Under this emergency order, the following provisions are effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, April 1 through 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, September 15, 2026:

5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, annual, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet – Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

(a)(6) rockfish may be taken as follows:

- (A) from April 1 – September 15, bag limit of three fish and six in possession, of which no more than two per day and four in possession may be a pelagic rockfish and one per day and two in possession may be a nonpelagic rockfish as defined in 5 AAC 75.995; no size limit;
- (B) from April 1 – June 30, yelloweye rockfish may not be retained.

Douglas Vincent-Lang
Commissioner

By delegation to: *Brittany Blain-Roth*
Brittany Blain-Roth
North Gulf Coast Sport Fish Area Manager

JUSTIFICATION:

The harvest of rockfish has been increasing in sport fisheries throughout Southcentral Alaska which has prompted ADF&G to take management actions to stabilize harvest levels until additional stock information is available. In the Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay area, restrictive management actions have been implemented since 2023. Despite these management actions, effort towards rockfish continues to increase, likely due to restrictive management actions for charter (guided) anglers in federally managed halibut fisheries and restrictions in king salmon sport fisheries. In 2026, guided halibut regulations are similar to 2025 and the same king salmon restrictions that were issued in 2025 for saltwater sport fisheries throughout the northern Gulf of Alaska, including Cook Inlet were issued in 2026. Similar management actions on the rockfish sport fishery were implemented in the 2025 season and were successful in stabilizing the sport harvest in the Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay area.

It is anticipated there will be additional effort shifted towards rockfish in 2026, which warrants a continued precautionary approach to stabilize the harvest of black and yelloweye rockfish. The seasonal closure for yelloweye rockfish will further protect gravid females and is consistent with sport fish regulations for yelloweye rockfish in the Prince William Sound area. 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 2 Office of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, AK 99518, (907) 267-2218.