

PROPOSAL 186

5 AAC 47.035. Methods, means, and general provisions – Shellfish.

Allow the take of squid with hook and line gear with an unlimited number of hooks, as follows:

Adopt a new subsection of 5 AAC 47.035 Methods, means and general provisions – Finfish, to wit: (b) **(7) Squid may be taken by hook and line with up to unlimited number of hooks or jigs.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In recent years, market squid (Doryteutis Opalescens) have established a presence in Southeast Alaska and they have become a desirable species to catch for both human consumption and for use as bait. There are currently no regulations that cover the taking of market squid, (i.e. no closed seasons and no bag limits) with the exception of 5 AAC 75.020 Sport fishing gear (a)(5) which limits anglers to the use of 2 hooks. Squid jigs & Sabiki rigs are commonly available in strings of 5-6 jigs/hooks. Local Wildlife Troopers, when encountering squid anglers, with no alternative law available to them have been enforcing the 2 hook law.

Since market squid are forage fish versus game species, I believe the law on number of hooks should be expanded. This has already been done for two other forage fish (herring and smelt) in 5 AAC 75.030 which allows use of 15 or less hooks. I do not believe this change to regulations would hurt the market squid resource. To support this opinion, in October of 2019, Mr. Ben Burford (doctoral candidate at Stanford University) gave a lecture at UAS Sitka Campus on the new market squid presence in Southeast Alaska. He has been studying the migration of these squid to our waters for the last several years. During the Q/A portion of his lecture, I specifically asked him if there was any level of rod and reel take of market squid that would harm their numbers in SE Alaska. He didn't hesitate in saying that there was no way that such a fishery could harm the market squid resource here. Allowing the use of more than 2 hooks would increase the opportunity for anglers to take advantage of this resource.

PROPOSED BY: Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F20-090)
