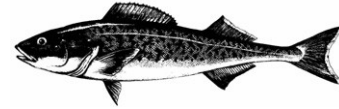

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE



Denby S. Lloyd, Commissioner
John Hilsinger, Director



Contact:
Deidra Holum

Phone: (907) 465-4250
Fax: (907) 465-4944

Douglas Area Office
P.O.Box 110024
Juneau, AK 99811
Date: March 24, 2009
Time: 2:00 p.m.

**2009 SSEI (CLARENCE STRAIT AND DIXON ENTRANCE) SABLEFISH QUOTA
ANNOUNCED**

Juneau...The Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced today that the Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) sablefish annual harvest objective will be 634,000 round pounds for the 2009 season, a 9% decrease from the 2008 quota of 696,000 round pounds. This decrease is in response to a decline in survey and fishery catch per unit effort (CPUE) in SSEI over the last two and three years respectively. Stock assessments in areas adjacent to SSEI have indicated declines in fish abundance and there has been no evidence of a strong incoming year class in this or the surrounding areas.

The 2009 equal quota share (EQS) for each of the 28 permit holders will be 22,650 round pounds. The 4% increase in the EQS this year is due to a decrease of four permits for this fishery. SSEI permit holders should have received a certified letter detailing legal overages or underages incurred during the 2008 fishery. Each permit holder's 2009 EQS will be adjusted accordingly and a personal quota share (PQS) will be assigned.

The SSEI sablefish longline fishery will open 8:00 a.m., Monday, June 1 and close at 12:00 noon, Saturday, August 15, 2009. The SSEI sablefish pot gear fishery will open at 8:00 am, Tuesday, September 1 and close at 12:00 noon, Sunday, November 15, 2009.

Registration and Logbook Requirements

Fishermen are reminded that they must register prior to fishing and they are required to keep a logbook during the fishery. Registration forms and logbooks are available at Fish and Game offices in Southeast Alaska beginning May 1, 2009. Completed logbook pages must be attached to the ADF&G copy of the fish ticket at the time of delivery. Confidential ADF&G envelopes for logbook pages may be requested when registering.

When registering for the fishery, fishermen will be given a PQS tracking form with their 2009 personal quota share. This form is to be used to record the total round landed weight of each delivery. Each permit holder must, upon request, provide the buyer with the total round weight of sablefish the permit holder has landed to date. A copy of the completed PQS tracking form must be returned to the department along with the final fish ticket of the season for that permit.

Logbooks for longline and pot gear must include, by set, the date and time, the specific location of harvest by latitude and longitude for start and ending positions, hook spacing, the amount of gear (number of hooks or pots) used, the average depth of each set, the estimated weight of the target species, and the estimated weight by species of all bycatch retained or discarded at sea. Please indicate for each set if the target species was sablefish or halibut or if there was any lost gear.

Tags

Fishermen are requested to watch for tagged sablefish. Please record the tag number(s) in the logbook next to the appropriate set and attach the tag(s) directly in the log next to the specific set information. All tags returned will receive a reward. Tag rewards this year include a hat or shirt, and entry into an annual drawing for one \$1,000, two \$500, and three \$250 cash rewards. To qualify for entry in the annual drawing the department requires the following information: the tag, exact location (latitude and longitude) and date of capture, and the name and address of the person recovering the tag. Additional useful information is the size of fish (fork length) and the recovery depth of the tagged fish.

Fish Ticket Requirements

Landed weights must be recorded on the fish ticket at the time of delivery. If a fisherman delivers fish in the round, the total round weight delivered must be recorded on the fish ticket. If a fisherman delivers dressed fish, the fish ticket must include the total landed dressed weight as well as a conversion to the round weight using the standard 0.63 conversion rate. There is a 2% allowance for ice and slime. A fish ticket with landed weight must be completed prior to the resumption of fishing and each permit holder must have on board copies of all SSEI fish tickets from the current season as well as their updated PQS tracking form. A copy of the completed PQS tracking form must be turned in to the Department with the final fish ticket and logbook of the season.

Delivering Fish Out of State: Fishermen are reminded that a completed fish ticket must be submitted to the department before fish are transported out of state. This requires a valid Alaska processor code be assigned to the ticket. If fishermen are not already licensed as catcher/exporters, they must either work in conjunction with a licensed Alaskan processor or they must obtain an Alaskan Fisheries Business License and pre-pay the estimated raw fish tax. For further information on this requirement contact Shellene Hutter at (907) 465-6131.

Sablefish Possession and Landing Requirements

In the Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict (SSEI), the holder of a CFEC permit or interim use permit for sablefish may not retain more sablefish in the directed fishery than the annual amount of sablefish EQS specified by the department [5 AAC 28.170 (g)]. However if a permit holder's harvest exceeds the permit holder's EQS for that year, by not more than five percent, the department shall reduce the permit holder's EQS for the following year by the amount of the overage. If a permit holder's harvest exceeds the permit holder's equal quota share by more than five percent, the proceeds from the sale of the overage in excess of five percent shall be surrendered to the state and the permit holder may be prosecuted under AS 16.05.723. A permit holder may not knowingly exceed a quota share or exceed the equal quota share in an amount greater than five percent as such actions may be prosecuted under AS 16.05.722 or AS 16.05.723.

If a permit holder's harvest is less than the permit holder's EQS established under and of this section for that year, the department shall increase the permit holder's EQS only for the following year by the amount of the underage that does not exceed five percent of the EQS [5 AAC 28.170 (k)].

For the 2009 SSEI sablefish fishery, five percent of the annual EQS will be 1,133 round pounds.

Prohibitions

A vessel or a person on board a vessel from which commercial, subsistence, or personal use longline fishing gear was used to take fish in the SSEI area during the 72-hour period immediately before, or from which that gear will be used during the 24-hour period immediately after an open sablefish fishing period, may not participate in the taking of sablefish in SSEI during that open sablefish fishing period [5AAC 28.180(a)]. The operator of a fishing vessel may not take sablefish in the SSEI with sablefish from another area on board. Also, the operator of a vessel taking sablefish in SSEI shall unload and complete a fish ticket before taking sablefish in another area [5AAC 28.170 (a) and (b)].

Bycatch

The allowable bycatch that can be legally landed on the SSEI sablefish permit card is as follows:

Bycatch Species	Longline fishery	Pot fishery
Demersal Shelf Rockfish (DSR)	1%	0%
Other rockfish & thornyheads	15% in aggregate	0%
Shortraker & Rougheye Rockfish	7% in aggregate	0%
Lingcod	0%	0%
Pacific Cod	20%	20%
Spiny dogfish	35%	20%
Other groundfish	20%	20%

All bycatch limits are based on the round weight of the bycatch species to the round weight of the target species. (For example, other rockfish and thornyheads landed as bycatch on a sablefish card cannot exceed 15% of the sablefish round weight).

Full retention of All Rockfish in Internal Waters of Southeast District Required

All permit holders must retain, weigh, and report all rockfish taken in SSEI. This regulation does not apply to shortspine thornyheads (idiots). Directed longline or pot gear fishing for shortraker, rougheye, and redbanded rockfish and thornyheads in inside state waters is **prohibited**. Therefore bycatch of these species in excess of bycatch limits may not be placed on a miscellaneous finfish (M) permit. All rockfish in excess of allowable bycatch limits shall be reported as bycatch overage on the fish ticket. Any proceeds from the sale of excess rockfish shall be surrendered to the state.

The Pacific cod fishery is open in SSEI and therefore bycatch in excess of bycatch limits may be landed on a miscellaneous finfish (M) card. Fishermen with halibut IFQs and an Alaska state halibut permit card may retain all halibut, greater than 32 inches in length, up to their IFQ.

Harvest of Bait

The holder of a valid CFEC interim use or limited entry permit may take groundfish in the waters of Alaska in the Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area for use as bait in the commercial fishery for which the permit is held however **sablefish, lingcod, thornyhead, shortraker, rougheye and yelloweye rockfish may not be taken for bait or used for bait**. A person who takes groundfish for bait during a fishing trip and uses the bait during that trip, **must report the bait taken by species and estimated weight on a fish ticket** prepared for that fishing trip; a person who makes a separate set to harvest groundfish for bait must report that harvest to the department on a fish ticket using the gear card for the species for which the bait was intended and must submit the fish ticket within seven days after landing that species [5 AAC 28.190 (1) and (5)].

Additional information on Southeast Regional Groundfish Fisheries—including Seabird Avoidance requirements for the SSEI Directed Sablefish Fishery—can be found on the ADF&G Commercial Fisheries' web site at:

<http://www.cf.adfg.state.ak.us/region1/finfish/grndfish/grndhom1.php>

News releases web site: <http://documents.cfl.adfg.state.ak.us/TopicContents.po>.

<i>Office</i>	<i>Ketchikan</i>	<i>Petersburg</i>	<i>Wrangell</i>	<i>Sitka</i>	<i>Juneau</i>	<i>Haines</i>	<i>Yakutat</i>
ADFG	225-5195	772-3801	874-3822	747-6688	465-4250	766-2830	784-3255
ABWE	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000	766-2533	784-3220