



## Advisory Announcement

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# 2024 GROUND FISH BYCATCH REGULATIONS FOR STATE WATERS AND STATE MANAGED GROUND FISH TAKEN IN THE FEDERAL COMMERCIAL HALIBUT FISHERY IN THE EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA

The following information concerns regulations that apply during the 2024 Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) commercial halibut fishery. This advisory announcement details bycatch regulations and allowances for state waters of the Southeast District and for state managed species taken in federal waters of the Eastern Gulf of Alaska (EGOA) Area, east of 144° W longitude.

### State rockfish possession and landing requirements (5 AAC 28.171)

A vessel or Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) permit holder fishing for groundfish or halibut must retain, weigh, and report all rockfish caught including thornyhead rockfish [5 AAC 28.171(a)]. The allowable bycatch percentage by species/species group and by gear type is based on the aggregate round weight of retained IFQ halibut and/or IFQ sablefish on board the vessel [5 AAC 28.130(d)(3) and 5 AAC 28.171(a)].

The demersal shelf rockfish (DSR) assemblage includes yelloweye, quillback, canary, copper, tiger, China, and rosethorn rockfish [5 AAC 39.975(34)]. All rockfish and thornyhead rockfish in excess of allowable bycatch limits shall be reported as bycatch overage on an ADF&G fish ticket. All proceeds from the sale of excess rockfish and thornyhead rockfish bycatch shall be surrendered to the state. Excess rockfish retained due to full retention requirements may be retained for personal use; however, this harvest (lb) must be documented as overage on the fish ticket.

### Federal rockfish landing requirements

Federal regulations require that operators of federally-permitted catcher vessels using hook-and-line, pot, or jig gear in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Gulf of Alaska retain and land all rockfish caught while fishing for groundfish or halibut. The maximum commerce allowance (MCA) for rockfish is 15% in aggregate, of which 5% can be yelloweye rockfish in all areas, except in the Southeast Outside District of the Gulf of Alaska (SEO) where the MCA for DSR species is limited to 10% of the aggregate round weight of retained IFQ halibut, and 1% of the aggregate round weight of retained IFQ sablefish. For more information, refer to: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-50/chapter-VI/part-679#ap50.13.679.0000>.

Rockfish taken in federal waters must be reported on an ADF&G fish ticket, and rockfish in excess of bycatch allowances must be reported as bycatch overage. Rockfish overage from federal waters may be retained for personal use or donated but cannot be sold or enter commerce. For more information, refer to: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/amendment-119-fmp-groundfish-bering-sea-and-aleutian-islands-and-amendment-107-fmp>.

### **Lingcod possession and landing requirements (5 AAC 28.173)**

In the Southeast District, *a vessel fishing for sablefish may not land or have on board lingcod*, except when a vessel is fishing for halibut and sablefish at the same time, during which the vessel may not land or have on board lingcod in excess of the bycatch percentage, by round weight, of all halibut on board the vessel. Lingcod bycatch in the halibut longline fishery is allocated by management area: Icy Bay Subdistrict (IBS), East Yakutat (EYKT) Section, Northern Southeast Outside (NSEO) Section, Central Southeast Outside (CSEO) Section, Southern Southeast Outer Coast (SSEOC) Sector, Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI) Subdistrict, and Southern Southeast Internal Waters (SSEIW) Sector (Figure 1). Lingcod catches will be closely monitored, and fishermen are advised that area closures to the retention of lingcod may occur on short notice. Closures will be announced via ADF&G advisory announcement, United States Coast Guard “Notice to Mariners” report, and National Weather Service broadcast.

For information on lingcod bycatch status and closures, contact the Sitka Area Office at 907-747-6688, the Groundfish Hotline at 907-747-4882, or visit the following webpage for lingcod harvest information by fishery and area: [https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareasoutheast.lingcod\\_fishery\\_update](https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareasoutheast.lingcod_fishery_update).

### **Pacific cod possession and landing requirements (5 AAC 28.070 (e))**

The NSEI and SSEI directed Pacific cod season is open from January 1 through December 31 unless closed by Emergency Order at an earlier date; however, management decisions are based on a seasonal harvest period of July 1 through June 30 to avoid overharvest of Pacific cod during winter spawning aggregations. The directed Pacific cod fishery in state waters on the outer coast is managed in conjunction with the federal fishery, which occurs in the EEZ (3–200 nm offshore). Directed Pacific cod fishery area closures will be announced by ADF&G advisory announcement.

When in waters of NSEI and SSEI open to directed fishing for Pacific cod, a CFEC permit holder operating a vessel fishing for groundfish shall retain all Pacific cod brought on board. Additionally, a Miscellaneous Finfish permit (M-card) holder may retain and sell all Pacific cod taken when fishing with the gear designated on that permit card.

When in waters of NSEI and SSEI closed to directed fishing for Pacific cod, a CFEC permit holder operating a vessel fishing for groundfish shall retain all Pacific cod up to the maximum retainable bycatch (20%); a CFEC permit holder fishing these areas may not sell Pacific cod that exceeds the allowable bycatch amount.

### **Harvest of bait by commercial permit holders in Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area (5 AAC 28.190)**

A CFEC interim use or limited entry permit holder may take groundfish in Alaska waters for use as bait in Alaska waters in the commercial fishery for which the permit is held. 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 the fish ticket prepared for that fishing trip. Groundfish harvested and retained for bait but not sold shall be reported on the fish ticket as delivery code 92. Sablefish, lingcod, thornyhead, shortraker, rougheye, and yelloweye rockfish may not be taken or used for bait, except that the head, tail, fins, and viscera of delivered and processed commercial sablefish, lingcod, and thornyhead, shortraker, rougheye, and yelloweye rockfish may be used for bait.

### **IFQ Halibut fishery allowable bycatch limits for state waters and state managed groundfish taken in federal waters**

In 2020, allowable bycatch limits for rockfish were adjusted to facilitate consistency between state and federal regulations (5 AAC 28.070 (b)). A vessel or CFEC permit holder fishing for IFQ halibut may retain and sell the following bycatch percentages shown in the table on the next page. The amount of bycatch that may be sold is based on the round weight of halibut and bycatch species or species group.

### **For information on the IFQ bycatch allowances in federal waters, refer to:**

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-50/chapter-VI/part-679#Table-10-to-Part-679> and <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-50/part-679/appendix-Table%2011%20to%20Part%20679> or contact NOAA enforcement: 907-747-6940 (Sitka); 907-586-7225 (Juneau); 907-772-2285 (Petersburg); or 907-247-5804 (Ketchikan).

The Emergency Order corresponding with this announcement is EO 1G0224.

**Allowable bycatch limits in the IFQ Halibut fishery:**

<b>BYCATCH SPECIES</b>	<b>STATE OUTSIDE WATERS 0-3 MILES</b>	<b>INTERNAL WATERS NSEI and SSEI</b>
Rockfish, including thornyheads	15% in aggregate, of which up to 10% may be DSR <b>Full retention required for all rockfish, including thornyheads</b>	15% in aggregate, of which up to 10% may be DSR <b>Full retention required for all rockfish, including thornyheads</b>
Lingcod	20% in EYKT, NSEO, CSEO, SSEOC 5% in IBS	20% in NSEI 5% in SSEIW
	Bycatch allowed for <b>longline gear only</b> ; lingcod bycatch permitted until area GHJ taken. Minimum size limit: 27" (tip of snout to tip of tail) or 20.5" (front of dorsal fin to tip of tail)  <i>No lingcod bycatch allowed in the sablefish fishery or caught by pot gear</i>	
Pacific cod	20%	
Spiny Dogfish	35% for longline gear; 20% for jig gear	
Skates	5% in aggregate	
Sablefish	0%, no retention	
Other Groundfish	20% in aggregate	

# Lingcod Management Areas

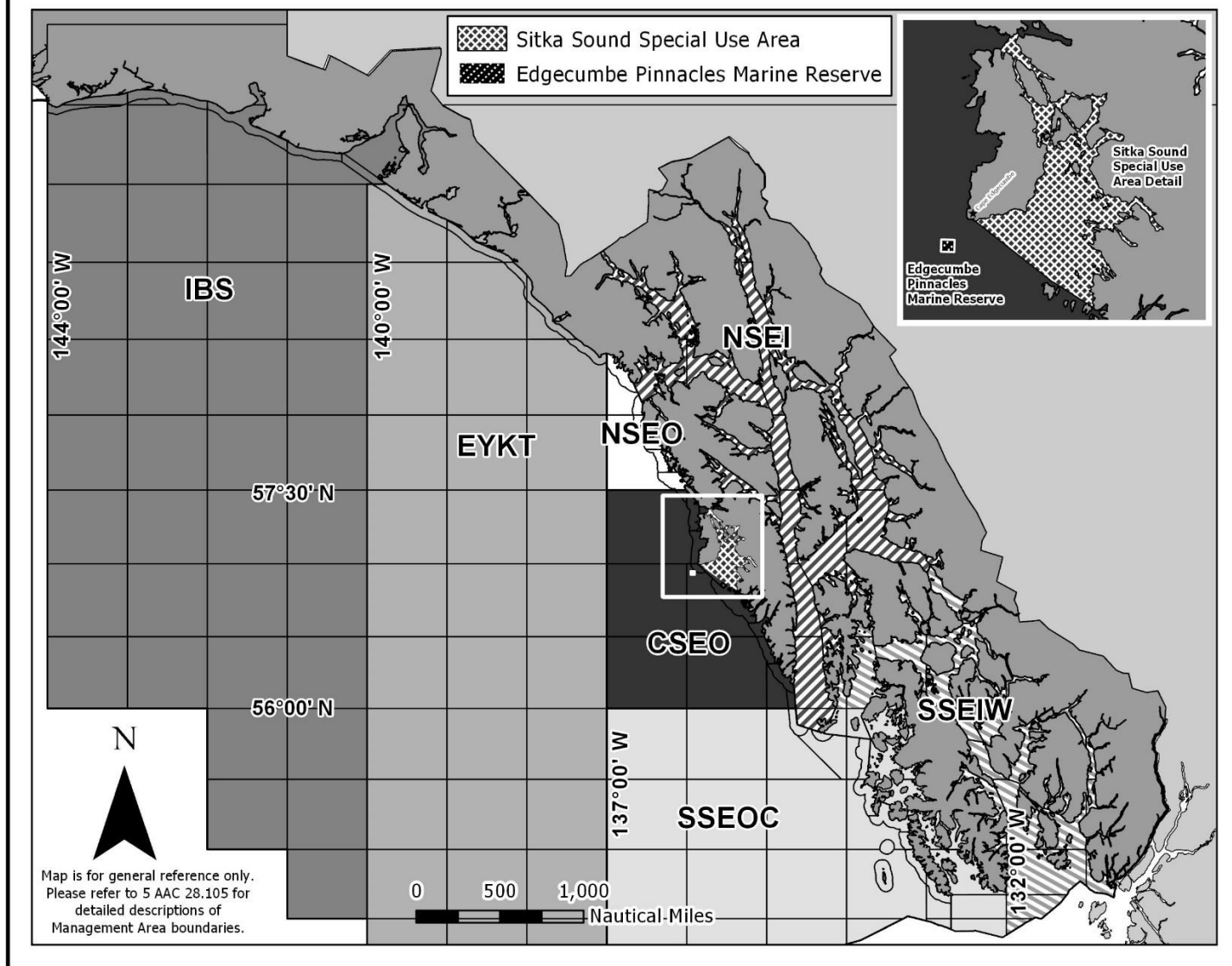


Figure 1.—Southeast Alaska Lingcod Management Areas. For detailed descriptions of Lingcod Management Area boundaries, refer to 5AAC 28.105. This map is for general information purposes only.

Advisory announcement website: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

Office	Ketchikan	Petersburg	Wrangell	Sitka	Juneau	Haines	Yakutat
ADF&G	225-5195	772-3801		747-6688	465-4250	766-2830	784-3255
AWT	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000	766-2533	784-3220
Groundfish Hotline				747-4882			