

Fishery Management Report No. 08-44

**The Southeast Alaska Southern Southeast Inside
Sablefish Fishery Information Report with Outlook
to the 2008 Fishery**

by

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and

Deidra Holum

September 2008

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Divisions of Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries



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SABLEFISH FISHERY INFORMATION REPORT WITH OUTLOOK TO
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the state managed Southern Southeast Inside sablefish fishery. This report is designed to be used in conjunction with the 2007–2008 Commercial Groundfish Fishing Regulations and active News Releases and Emergency Orders, as these inseason actions will supersede information provided in this document.

Key words: Clarence Strait, Dixon Entrance, Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict, SSEI, sablefish, blackcod, *Anoplopoma fimbria*, commercial fishery, management, outlook, regulations, quotas, CPUE, longline, pots.

INTRODUCTION

Sablefish (*Anoplopoma fimbria*), also known as blackcod, is a commercially important species throughout its range, typically harvested using longline or pot gear. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game Southeast Region (ADF&G, Region 1) manages two sablefish fisheries. One in the Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) Subdistrict is known as the Clarence Strait sablefish fishery; one in the Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI) Subdistrict is known as the Chatham Strait sablefish fishery (Figure 1). Sablefish harvest is not allowed in the state managed outside coastal waters: the SSEO, CSEO, and EYKT subdistricts (Figure 1). This report reviews the management of sablefish in the SSEI Subdistrict (Figures 1, 2) from 1945 through the present and details the overall harvest, biological data, catch per unit effort (CPUE), longline fishing patterns and fishery bycatch from the commercial fishery from 2005 through 2007.

SABLEFISH LIFE HISTORY

Sablefish are members of the Anoplopomatidae family that includes sablefish and skillfish. They occur only in the North Pacific Ocean, the Bering Sea, and adjacent waters from Hokkaido, Japan to Baja California. Their greatest abundance is in the Gulf of Alaska (Wolotira et al. 1993). Adult sablefish inhabit the deeper water areas of the continental shelf, the slope, and the deepwater coastal fjords. Most adults live at depths of 366 m to 914 m (200 to 500 fm), although they have been found at depths ranging from 183 m (100 fm) to over 1,829 m (1,000 fm) (Allen and Smith 1988).

Sablefish are divided into two populations. The northern population extends from northern British Columbia through the Gulf of Alaska and west to Japan. The southern population extends from southern British Columbia to the Baja peninsula. The population subdivision is based on differences in size at maturity, growth, and movement (McDevitt 1990).

Sablefish are long-lived. Fish over age 40 are commonly found in commercial samples, and reported ages have exceeded 100 years (King et al. 2000). The maximum reported age in Alaska is 94 years (Kimura et al. 1998), and in SSEI commercial samples is 43 years (ADF&G fishery data, 1998–2007). Due to inherent difficulty aging sablefish (Pearson and Shaw 2004), these ages are approximate.

Sablefish spawn in pelagic waters near the edge of the continental slope (300–500 m depth) in spring (McFarlane and Nagata 1988). Eggs develop at depth and larvae develop near surface waters. Juveniles exhibit rapid growth and often reside in bays and near shore waters, before they begin moving to the continental shelf at around age two. (Sigler et al. 2001).

In the Gulf of Alaska, adult male sablefish reach an average length and weight of 69 cm and 3.4 kg and females reach an average length and weight of 83 cm and 6.2 kg (Sigler et al. 2001). Fifty

percent of females are sexually mature at 69 cm (6.5 years) and fifty percent of males are mature at 57 cm (5 years) (Sigler et al. 2001). The maximum recorded sablefish length in the SSEI commercial fishery is 103 cm for females and 88 cm for males (ADF&G fishery data, 1998–2007). Male sablefish caught in the SSEI commercial fishery reach an average length and weight of 60 cm and 2.3 kg and females reach an average length and weight of 64 cm and 2.8 kg (ADF&G fishery data, 1998–2007).

Adult sablefish are opportunistic feeders. They prey on fish (including pollock (*Theragra chalcogramma*), eulachon (*Thaleichthys pacificus*), capelin (*Mallotus villosus*), herring (*Clupea pallasii*), sand lance (family Ammodytidae), and Pacific cod (*Gadus macrocephalus*)), squid (order Teuthida), euphasids (order Euphausiacea) and jellyfish (class Scyphozoa) (Yang and Nelson 2000). Yearling sablefish primarily feed on euphasids (Sigler et al. 2001). Juvenile sablefish are eaten by adult coho (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) and Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) and were the fourth most commonly reported prey species in the Alaska Trollers Association logbook program from 1977 through 1984 (Wing 1985). Pacific halibut (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*) have been documented as eating adult sablefish (Yang and Nelson 2000) and cod (*Gadus spp.*), lingcod (*Ophiodon elongatus*), hagfishes (class Myxini), sharks (superorder Selachimorpha), and killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) have also been reported to eat adults (Kruse et al. 2000).

Natural mortality for sablefish in the Gulf of Alaska is estimated at 0.10 (Sigler et al. 2001; Funk and Bracken 1984; Johnson and Quinn 1988), although there is one earlier estimate of 0.22 (Low et al. 1976).

Tagging studies were conducted by ADF&G in the SSEI Subdistrict from 1979 to 1989. This historical tag data suggests sablefish frequently move in and out of the Clarence Strait and Dixon Entrance area. Movement direction is typically dependent on sablefish length at the time of tagging. A 1983 analysis of the tag data showed fish shorter than 60 cm were more likely to move north and fish longer than 60 cm were more likely to move south (Bracken 1983b).

SOUTHEAST SABLEFISH FISHERY

HISTORY OF THE FISHERY

Commercial fishermen began harvesting small quantities of sablefish from Southeast Alaska internal waters in the early 1900s, primarily as bycatch in the halibut fishery. Directed harvest levels fluctuated widely until the 1970s, with the highest levels occurring during World War I and World War II. From the 1970s through the present, there has been a substantial sablefish harvest due to high prices.

Please see Holum and Coonradt (2005) for a detailed history of the SSEI sablefish fishery, or refer to Table 1 in this report for a brief overview. Holum and Coonradt (2005) is available online at: <http://www.cf.adfg.state.ak.us/region1/pdfs/groundfish/fmr05-26.pdf>.

Regulation History

The first regulation limiting season length was a closure imposed for all areas from December 1 until March 15 in the mid 1940s due to a noticeable decline in catch per unit effort (CPUE) and average weight of sablefish landed. Until then, the sablefish season in all areas had been open year round. The justification for shortening the season was to provide protection of the stocks

during the winter spawning period and to reduce impacts on halibut incidentally taken during the early spring sablefish fishery (Holum and Coonradt 2005).

The closed period was extended from December 1 to May 1 in 1947. Although that action called for a four month closure, the effective closure was longer. Since the May 1 sablefish opening was concurrent with halibut openings and the same fleet was involved in both fisheries, the directed sablefish fishery did not start until after the Area II halibut closure. This restricted the sablefish fishery to the summer and fall seasons (Bracken 1983a). The December 1 to May 1 closure remained in effect for the southern Southeastern districts through 1972, when the season was changed back to April 1 through December 30. In 1976, the season in the southern Southeastern districts was shortened to June 15 through November 15. In 1989, it was changed again to June 1 through November 15 (Holum and Coonradt 2005).

In 1992, a concerted effort was made by some SSEI sablefish permit holders to change the traditional opening of the fishery from June to September to take advantage of potentially larger fish in SSEI at that time of year. The possibility of obtaining a better price in the fall fishery was also given as a reason. The existing regulation stipulating sablefish could be taken in SSEI from June 1 through November 15 was consistent with the department's guidelines for fishing seasons, requiring the season to coincide with favorable tides, avoid conflicts between fishing periods and halibut openings in Area 2-C, and to schedule all opening and closing times at 12:00 pm (Holum and Coonradt 2005).

There were thirty-two SSEI permit holders at that time. Forms were sent to all permit holders, asking whether they preferred a June 23 or October 18 opening date for the fishery. Forms had to be signed and returned by April 1, 1992 to be considered. Twenty-two forms were returned, one arrived after the deadline and was not included in the vote. Eleven permit holders voted in favor of keeping the traditional June opening date for the SSEI fishery. Nine permit holders voted to change the opening date to October. One permit holder was neutral. Based on the outcome of this vote, the decision was made to retain the June opening date for the SSEI sablefish fishery (Holum and Coonradt 2005).

In 1980, a guideline harvest range (GHR) was established for the SSEI fishery. Additional regulations were imposed on the fishery, primarily in the form of season limitations, as effort escalated in the 1980s. Season limitations were placed on the SSEI fishery in 1984, decreasing the number of fishery days to 48 days, compared to 112 days in 1983 (Table 2). Fleet effort and efficiency continued to increase. By 1985, the fishing time was reduced to seven days and a limited entry program was implemented. In 1991, the number of days fished in SSEI was further reduced, to 2.4 days, and finally to 2.0 days in 1995, where it remained until 1997 (Table 3, 4; Holum and Coonradt 2005).

In 1997, several management actions were implemented including the EQS system, management based on round fish, and separate seasons for longline and pot gear fishermen: summer and fall, respectively. The amount of the EQS varies annually based on the number of legal participants and the sablefish quota for SSEI. The pot gear season was set at 2.5 months and the longline season was extended from 2.0 days to 1.5 months (Table 2). The Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) also passed a regulation requiring all vessels participating in state managed groundfish fisheries to maintain an official state logbook (Appendix A2; Pritchett 1998).

Pot fishermen and longliners experienced difficulties operating fishing gear in the same area at the same time. Longliners could turn over gear at a faster rate because an effective pot set

requires a 24 to 36 hour soak, while a typical longline soak is less than 12 hours long. There were also entanglement issues between the two gear types. This effectively denied pot permit holders access to the fishery. No pot gear vessel fished for several years due to this problem. Pot gear permit holders petitioned the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) for a solution. The BOF resolved the entanglement issue between the two gear types by creating a split season (Holum and Coonradt 2005).

In 2000, the BOF extended the SSEI longline season from 45 days to 76 days. This made the length of the SSEI longline sablefish fishery equal to both the SSEI pot sablefish fishery and the NSEI longline sablefish fishery. Another regulation introduced in 2000 required full retention and reporting of all *Sebastes* rockfish caught in the NSEI and SSEI Subdistricts (Table 2; ADF&G 2000).

Several new regulations were adopted by the BOF during their 2003 meeting in Sitka. These new regulations included allowing for a 5% sablefish overage/underage that could be carried over to the following season. Another regulation permitted sablefish to be taken outside of established fishing seasons, in order to provide information on stock conditions or other research questions under the terms of a Commissioners Permit. The GHR was repealed, the criteria for setting the AHO was revised, and the logbook requirements were strengthened (Table 2). Legal overages could also be transferred from one permit holder to another (BOF 2003).

In 2006, the BOF ruled that permit holders could no longer transfer inseason overages to another permit holder who had not harvested their EQS (Table 2). Permit holders may still exceed their (EQS) by up to 5% and the following year's EQS will be adjusted accordingly (ADF&G 2006). Overage transfer from one permit holder to another was problematic for several reasons. The details of the transfer requirements, such as whether the overage recipient must be at the processor to receive the overage or whether transfer agreements must be reached before fishing, were not enumerated in the provision. It was also noted some permit holders began fishing trips after finishing their annual EQS, then transferring the overage to other users. This was not the intent of the regulation. Finally, while the majority of permit holders did not utilize the provision, the few transfers which were made were difficult to track in the fish ticket system (BOF 2006).

Participation

In 1985, CFEC imposed a license limitation in the SSEI sablefish fishery. After limited entry was implemented, the longline and pot fisheries included 43 participants. Successive years showed some fluctuation in the number of permit holders actually fishing SSEI between 23 and 34 permits. In 1997, there were 30 longline permits and five pot permits authorized to fish SSEI. In 1998, one pot and one longline interim use permit were eliminated. Three longline interim use permits were also eliminated in 1999 and an additional one was eliminated in 2000. This brought the total number of participants eligible to fish SSEI sablefish to 25 longline permits and four pot permits. These permit numbers remained the same for the 2001 and 2002 fisheries. In 2003, one longline permit was eliminated, bringing the total numbers to 24 longline and four pot permits. The number of permits remained the same for the 2004 and 2005 seasons. Four longline permits were added in 2006, bringing the total to 28 longline permits and four pot permits. This remained the same for the 2007 season. The goal of CFEC in the SSEI fishery is 18 longline permits and three pot permits. To date eight longline permits and one pot permit have been granted as permanent. Twelve longline permits are interim use and eight are under review. Two pot permits are interim use and one is under review. More information regarding permit status or recent

CFEC decisions can be obtained at the following website: <http://www.cfec.state.ak.us> or by calling (907)789-6150.

In 2005, 2006, and 2007, the SSEI sablefish longline fishery closed by regulation on August 15. Twenty-three out of 24 commercial longline permit holders fished in 2005, 26 out of 28 permit holders fished in 2006, and 25 out of 28 permit holders fished in 2007. The SSEI pot gear fishery closed by regulation on November 15 in 2005, 2006 and 2007. All four eligible permit holders fished during those years.

QUOTAS AND CATCH

In 1980, the SSEI sablefish guideline harvest limit (GHL) was set based on historical catches at 790,000 round pounds, where it remained until 1998 (Table 5). In 1998, the SSEI longline sablefish survey showed an 18% decrease in CPUE compared to 1997. As a result, the area harvest objective (AHO) for the longline and pot fishery combined was reduced to 632,000 round pounds for 1998. In 1999, the AHO was increased to 720,000 round pounds after an increase in survey CPUE and due to a CFEC error calculating the number of permits. In 2000, the AHO was set at 696,000 round pounds where it has remained through the 2007 season.

In the years between 1986 and 1997, the AHO was exceeded on 4 occasions: 1989, 1992, 1993, and 1994, despite attempts to prevent overharvest through season restrictions (Table 5; Figure 3). The AHO has not been exceeded since the inception of the EQS system in 1997.

Sablefish landings from the longline and pot SSEI sablefish fishery combined totaled 639,720 round pounds in 2005, 624,833 round pounds in 2006, and 620,167 round pounds in 2007. The estimated ex-vessel values of the 2005, 2006, and 2007 longline and pot fisheries were \$1,351,000, \$1,435,000, and \$1,409,000, respectively. In 2005, the state of Alaska received a \$464 overage payment from one vessel that caught 214 round pounds of sablefish in excess of the 5% allowable overage. No fish were caught in excess of the 5% allowable overage in 2006. One vessel caught 771 round pounds in excess of the allowable overage in 2007 and forfeited \$2020 to the state.

MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Southeast sablefish management regulations include fishing seasons and gear restrictions, which are defined separately for the NSEI and SSEI Subdistricts. Since 1997, the fishery has been regulated using an Equal Quota Share (EQS) system. In the EQS system, each eligible permit holder is given an equal portion of the total quota for the season.

The fishery may also be regulated using inseason management tools called Emergency Orders, which authorize ADF&G to supersede or add to published regulations to prevent overharvest of a target or bycatch species. They also authorize the department to change fishery boundaries and modify fishery seasons. Appendix A contains all current regulations used to manage the SSEI sablefish fishery.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND EQUATIONS

Port samplers located in Ketchikan collect biological data specific to the SSEI commercial longline sablefish fishery. Data gathered includes length, weight, sex and maturity. Otoliths are also collected. Port sampling in the SSEI longline fishery began on a regular basis in 2001. Prior to 2001, samples were taken primarily during the SSEI longline survey. Until 2007, sampling in

the SSEI pot fishery was limited by staff availability. Regular port sampling in the SSEI pot fishery began in 2007 with the hire of a dedicated sampler.

Logbooks are mandatory for this fishery (Appendix A2). Information collected includes set date, haul date, and location (in latitude and longitude) of each set, description and amount of gear set, and estimation of target catch and bycatch by species for each set. The State requires a copy of this logbook to be turned in with the fish ticket documenting the landing.

Fishery catch per unit of effort (CPUE) information was collected through skipper interview and voluntary logbook programs prior to 1997, and through the mandatory logbook program from 1997 forward. Older fishery CPUE data shown has been adjusted for hook type (from j-hook to circle hook). All CPUE is expressed as the total number of round pounds divided by the total number of standardized hooks for the fleet overall.

CPUE is affected by hook spacing. CPUE data in this report has been calculated using the following National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) formula to standardize hook spacing to 42” (Sigler et al. 2001):

$$n_s = 2.2n_u(1-\exp(-0.57h))$$

Where:

n_s is the number of standardized hooks,

n_u is the actual number of hooks fished,

and h is the hook spacing in meters.

In 2005, a length-weight regression modeling the parameters $W = aL^b$, was created for sablefish sampled from the SSEI longline fishery from 2001 through 2004 (Holum and Coonradt 2005). The lengths and weights from current years were plotted against the predicted weights derived in 2005 for this report. The 2005 regression indicated that,

$$W = (5.54 \times 10^{-6})L^{3.147482} \text{ for males,}$$

and,

$$W = (5.78 \times 10^{-6})L^{3.13711073} \text{ for females.}$$

Bycatch figures in this report are the sum of ticket pounds for rockfish (which are required by law to be retained), and lingcod (for which reporting is mandatory). All rockfish listed on a sablefish ticket were included in the total. Other fish, such as pacific cod, arrowtooth flounder, and dogfish, are not consistently reported and are excluded from the estimated total. Currently halibut reporting is only connected with sablefish by the data management system if rockfish are listed on the same ticket. Therefore, current estimates of halibut bycatch are not accurate, and not included in this report.

BIOLOGICAL DATA

The mean lengths of sablefish sampled in port from the longline fishery in 2005, 2006, and 2007 were 63, 66 and 63 cm, respectively (Figure 4). The decline in average length between 2006 and 2007 was the first decline seen since a decline between 2001 and 2002. The pattern in the longline survey was similar to the commercial fishery port samples. In the longline survey, there was a decline in average length from 58 to 57 cm between 2001 and 2002, followed by a steady increase to 61 cm in 2006. Average survey lengths declined from 61 to 60 cm between 2006 and

2007 (ADF&G data, 2001–2007). There was no SSEI survey in 2005. A logical explanation for the difference in size between fishery and survey average lengths is high grading for larger fish in the commercial fishing industry.

The mean length of sablefish sampled in port from the pot fishery was 61 cm in both 2006 and 2007. There is no biological data from the pot fishery for 2001–2005. Sample sizes from the pot port sampling effort were 174 in 2006 and 458 in 2007. Sablefish caught in the pot fishery are expected to be smaller than sablefish caught in the longline fishery.

The mode length in the commercial longline fishery in 2005 was 60 cm with another peak in frequency at 64 cm (Figure 5). The mode length in 2006 was 61 cm. There was another peak in frequency at 70 cm, and frequencies between 61 and 70 were similar. The mode lengths in 2007 were 60 and 61 cm. The sea survey length distributions for 2006 and 2007 were similar to the port sample length distributions, except there were small peaks in frequency of fish 49–50 cm long in the sea survey data which did not appear in the port sample data (ADF&G data, 2006–2007). The modes in the sea survey data were also not as strong as those in the port sample data. It is difficult to track distinct cohorts in the SSEI Subdistrict, because of sablefish movement into and out of the area.

2005 through 2007 fishery sample weights were predicted from the sample lengths using the equations derived by Holum and Coonradt (2005; Figure 6). The actual weights were plotted with the predicted weights, and the predicted line runs through the center of the current data. This indicates the length to weight ratios of the fish remained constant between 2001 and 2007.

In 2005, 49% of the fish sampled in port ($n = 515$) from the longline fishery were female (Figure 7). No pot fish were sampled in 2005. In 2006, 53% of longline fish ($n = 453$) and 66% of pot fish ($n = 173$) sampled were female. In 2007, 42% of longline fish ($n = 507$) and 62% of pot fish ($n = 458$) sampled were female.

Otoliths are collected by port samplers during the SSEI longline fishery and aged by ADF&G lab personnel in Juneau using the break-and-burn technique (Williams and Bedford 1974). SSEI sablefish ages are only available for fish sampled in 2002 due to otolith processing backlog and inconsistent port sampling prior to 2002. Age frequency graphs, used to track strong age cohorts through time, are not yet available for this fishery.

CATCH PER UNIT EFFORT (CPUE)

Commercial longline CPUE (fleet overall) remained relatively stable from 1985 through 1995 and dropped in 1996 to 0.171 (Figure 8). In 1997, the first EQS year, CPUE more than doubled to 0.36. This is not unexpected as fishermen under the EQS system can choose to fish during good tide and weather conditions (Sigler and Lunsford 2001). Since 1997, fishery CPUE has fluctuated. There was a decline in 2004 to 0.40 from 0.45 in 2003. CPUE increased in 2005 to 0.52, then declined slightly to 0.50 in 2006 and 0.49 in 2007 (Figure 8). Overall, 2005, 2006, and 2007 showed the three highest recorded years of commercial fishery fleet CPUE. There was also a decline in longline survey CPUE from 1.12 in 2006 to 0.98 in 2007 (Figure 9). There was little change in survey CPUE between 2003 and 2006. The 10 year average fishery CPUE (1998–2007) was 0.42 and the 5-year average was 0.47 (2003–2007).

LONGLINE FISHING PATTERNS

The overall trend in longline fishing patterns since 1997 has been an increase in the proportion of fish caught in Dixon Entrance or near the mouth of Clarence Strait, and a decrease in the proportion of fish caught deep in the main channel of Clarence Strait and in the smaller sounds and canals (Figures 2, 10). In 2006 and 2007, about two thirds of the total sablefish catch were caught in Dixon Entrance. The EQS system, which permits fishermen to choose good weather days for fishing, is a likely contributor to this change in fishing patterns (Sigler and Lunsford 2001).

LONGLINE FISHERY BYCATCH

The highest recorded amount of rockfish bycatch over the past ten years was 98,276 round pounds in 2001 (Figure 11); 50,165 round pounds of the 2001 total was shortraker rockfish. Bycatch landed in association SSEI sablefish longline fishery declined steadily and substantially between 2001 and 2004, when the reported total was 45,373 round pounds (Holum and Coonradt 2005). This could be attributed in part to a 2003 regulation that made several rockfish species bycatch-only species. This new regulation essentially closed the directed slope-rockfish fishery in the inside waters of Southeast Alaska, and prevented fishermen from profiting from these species in excess of bycatch limits. Since 2000, longline fishermen have been legally required to land and retain all rockfish caught in inside waters. It is illegal for sablefish pot fishermen to catch rockfish.

In 2005, bycatch declined again to 41,330 round pounds (Figure 11). However, bycatch rose to 46,403 round pounds in 2006 and again to 57,770 round pounds in 2007. These totals do not include halibut caught in association with the longline fishery.

During 2005, 2006, and 2007, over 99% of the reported bycatch was comprised of shortspine thornyhead (*Sebastolobus alascanus*), shortraker rockfish (*Sebastes borealis*), rougheyeye rockfish (*Sebastes aleutianus*), and redbanded rockfish (*Sebastes babcocki*). The two most abundant bycatch species for all years were thornyhead and shortraker rockfish. Small quantities (<400 lbs.) of yelloweye rockfish (*Sebastes ruberrimus*) were landed in 2005 and 2007. Some quillback rockfish (*Sebastes maliger*) were landed in 2006 and 2007 and a few silvergrey rockfish were landed in 2006.

Skates (family Rajidae), Dover sole (*Microstomus pacificus*), dogfish (*Squalus acanthias*), and Pacific sleeper sharks (*Somniosus pacificus*) are other bycatch species associated with the sablefish fishery but they are not typically landed. Pacific cod is another bycatch species, and is often landed for use as bait. Only rockfish and lingcod are included in the bycatch totals above because the most reliable data are available for those species. No lingcod bycatch was reported during 2005, 2006, or 2007, and during no year since 1997 was the total reported lingcod bycatch greater than 50 round pounds.

STOCK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

The SSEI sablefish stock assessment consists of an annual longline survey which yields weight, length, gender, maturity and CPUE data. Otoliths are also collected during the longline survey, although the age data are not yet available.

SSEI SABLEFISH LONGLINE SURVEY

Sablefish stock assessment surveys in the SSEI Subdistrict began in 1979, but they were not standardized surveys. In 1988, the ADF&G began conducting a standardized annual longline research survey in the SSEI area a few weeks prior to the fishery to assess relative abundance of sablefish over time. To maintain consistency with historic survey data, surveys are conducted a few weeks prior to the season opening. Complete information regarding the survey and results will be published in a separate report.

2008 SEASON OUTLOOK

2005, 2006, and 2007 showed the three highest recorded years of commercial longline fleet CPUE in SSEI. Of the past three years, commercial fishery CPUE was highest in 2005 and lowest in 2007. The SSEI longline survey is not designed to assess recruitment and SSEI sablefish age data remain unavailable. However, a shallow water shrimp survey conducted in 2007 off the west coast of Vancouver Island in adjoining British Columbia waters did not observe significant sablefish recruitment as a result of 2005 or 2006 year classes relative to the strong year classes observed in 1999/2000 (Haist et al. 2005, A.R. Kronlund, Pacific Biological Station, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), pers. comm.).

The Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) sablefish annual harvest objective will be 696,000 round pounds for 2008, unchanged from 2007. There are 28 longline and four pot permits eligible to fish during the 2008 season.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Debra Meusel for help port sampling. We also thank Kamala Carroll and Cleo Brylinsky for their support and help in producing this report. This work is supported through grants from the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission IJF and AKFIN.

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1.–Development overview of the Clarence Strait/Dixon Entrance sablefish fishery.

Year	Development
1867	U.S. purchases Alaska.
1871	U.S. Commission of Fish and Fisheries established.
1903	U.S. Bureau of Fisheries established.
1906	The Act for the Preservation and Regulation of the Fisheries of Alaska is adopted.
Pre-1913	All sablefish landings are incidental to the halibut fishery
1917	Earliest recorded sablefish landings by the U.S. fleet from the “Ketchikan area”
Late 1920’s	Canadian longline fishery reports sablefish landings off Southeast Alaska.
1933	Earliest recorded sablefish landings by the U.S. fleet from Dixon Entrance.
1935	Clarence Strait/Dixon Entrance fishery becomes a regular feature of annual reports.
1945	2.5 month closed period from December 1–March 15 imposed on all sablefish districts.
1945	Dixon Entrance managed as part of a larger outside district (Area 150) and subject to a set annual season. Landings from Area 150 and southern inside area are not clearly differentiated in reports.
1947	Season closure for all sablefish districts extended; closed December 1–May 1.
1948	Modified halibut gear first used in Chatham Strait to target sablefish.
1959	Pre-statehood fishery regulations are continued by the Alaska Board of Fisheries
1966	U.S. three mile territorial limit expanded to a twelve mile fishery zone.
1967	Sablefish allowed as incidental catch in longline and trawl fisheries for other species. Up to 10% by weight of each landing permitted.
1968	Japanese sablefish longline fishery of Southeast Alaska lands over 6,349 metric tons.
Late 1960’s	Southeast Alaska separated into 16 management districts from south to north. The southern inside area includes districts 1–8 excluding district 4. (A-B Line marks southern boundary).
1969	Canadian longline fishery in Southeastern Alaska declines.
1970	Pot gear first allowed for sablefish.
1972	Southern inside area open for sablefish April 1–December 30.
1972	Sablefish incidental catch in longline and trawl for other species increased up to 20% by each landing weight.
1972	Japanese longline harvest of Southeastern Alaska peaks at 9,301 metric tons, then begins to decline.
1973–1975	Sablefish landings increase dramatically in Clarence Strait/Dixon Entrance.
1976	Southern inside area open for sablefish June 15–November 15.
1976	April 13, Magnuson Fisheries Conservation and Management Act signed; the 200 mile fisheries conservation zone is established off Alaska’s coast.
1977	March 1, Magnuson Fisheries Conservation and Management Act takes effect.
1978	Voluntary agreement by Japanese North Pacific Longline-Gillnet Association to withdraw from the area east of Yakutat Bay
1978	Sablefish becomes prohibited species in U.S. fisheries for other species.
1980	Guideline harvest range of 125,000 to 500,000 dressed pounds established for southern inside waters.
1981	Sablefish landings from the southern inside waters tallied separately from Area 150.
1982	Dixon Entrance District first closed by the state of Alaska on August 2 to prevent overharvest of the quota. Southern Southeast inside waters first closed by emergency order September 30.
1983	State of Alaska formally recognizes the Dixon Entrance District. It includes all U.S. fishery conservation zone waters east of 132°40’W and south of district 1, 2, and 3’s southern boundaries.
1984	Reports for SSEI sablefish landings include the newly incorporated Dixon Entrance District.
1985	Current six digit statistical area designations adopted. Previously five digit salmon area designations were used.

Table 2.–Management overview for the SSEI sablefish fishery since 1980.

Year	Management action
1980	A guideline harvest range was set at 125,000 to 500,000 dressed pounds.
1984	Season limitations were placed on the fishery, from 112 days to 48 days.
1985	Season limitations were placed on the fishery, from 48 days to 7 days. Fishery went limited entry.
1987	Season limitations were placed on the fishery, from 7 days to 5 days.
1990	Season limitations were placed on the fishery, from 5 days to 3 days.
1991	Season limitations were placed on the fishery, from 3 days to 2.4 days.
1994	A guideline harvest range was set at 250,000 to 500,000 dressed pounds.
1995	Season limitations were placed on the fishery, from 2.4 days to 2 days.
1997	A guideline harvest range was set at 400,000 to 790,000 round pounds. A shared quota system was implemented. Registration requirement became mandatory. Longline and pot seasons were split into summer and fall, respectively. Pot gear permit holders re-enter the fishery. Longline season was extended to 1.5 months. Pot season was set at 2.5 months.
1998	The annual harvest objective was set at 632,000 round pounds.
1999	The annual harvest objective was set at 720,000 round pounds.
2000	The annual harvest objective was set at 696,000 round pounds. Longline season was extended to 2.5 months. Full retention of all <i>Sebastes</i> rockfish (not including thornyheads) takes effect July 5.
2003	Sablefish prohibited for catch or use as bait in the NSEI and SSEI Subdistricts. A 5% sablefish overage/underage could be carried over to the following season or transferred from one permit holder to another. Sablefish may be taken outside of established seasons in order to provide information on stock conditions or other research questions. Bycatch of shortraker rockfish, rougheye rockfish and thornyhead in excess of bycatch limits can no longer be placed on a CFEC M-card.
2006	Allowable overage no longer transferable to other permit holders.

Table 3.–SSEI sablefish longline fishery opening dates, closing dates, and number of landings.

Year	Opening Date	Closing date	Landings
1985	06/15	06/22	Unknown
1986	06/15	06/22	32
1987	06/18	06/23	28
1988	06/05	06/10	33
1989	06/22	06/27	41
1990	06/15	06/18	31
1991	06/21	06/23	30
1992	06/23	06/25	32
1993	06/25	06/27	28
1994	06/15	06/17	31
1995	06/20	06/22	29
1996	06/08	06/10	28
1997	06/15	07/30	70
1998	06/01	07/15	65
1999	06/01	07/15	58
2000	06/01	08/15	63
2001	06/01	08/15	74
2002	06/01	08/15	67
2003	06/01	08/15	68
2004	06/01	08/15	68
2005	06/01	08/15	51
2006	06/01	08/15	57
2007	06/01	08/15	47

Table 4.–SSEI sablefish pot fishery opening dates, closing dates, and number of landings.

Year	Opening Date	Closing date	Landings
1985	06/15	06/22	0
1986	06/15	06/22	Confidential
1987	06/18	06/23	Confidential
1988	06/05	06/10	Confidential
1989	06/22	06/27	Confidential
1990	06/15	06/18	0
1991	06/21	06/23	Confidential
1992	06/23	06/25	Confidential
1993	06/25	06/27	0
1994	06/15	06/17	0
1995	06/20	06/22	0
1996	06/08	06/10	0
1997	09/01	11/15	26
1998	09/01	11/15	13
1999	09/01	11/15	12
2000	09/01	11/15	22
2001	09/01	11/15	18
2002	09/01	11/15	14
2003	09/01	11/15	13
2004	09/01	11/15	13
2005	09/01	11/15	17
2006	09/01	11/15	12
2007	09/01	11/15	16

Table 5.–SSEI Sablefish Fisheries Annual Harvest Objective (AHO), Equal Quota Share (EQS), and reported harvest, value, and effort for 1985 through 2007.

Year	Longline Fishery							Pot Fishery			
	AHO (Round lbs.)	EQS (Round lbs.)	Round lbs. reported	Exvessel value (\$)	No. of permits fished	CPUE (Round lbs./ hook)	No. of days	Round lbs reported*	Exvessel value (\$)	No. of permits fished	No. of days
1985	790,000	NA	511,617	322,319	43	0.232	7.0				
1986	790,000	NA	588,307	260,436	22	0.280	7.0	Confidential	Confidential	2	7.0
1987	790,000	NA	432,335	291,785	22	0.185	5.0	Confidential	Confidential	1	5.0
1988	790,000	NA	712,788	719,914	26	0.228	5.0	Confidential	Confidential	1	5.0
1989	790,000	NA	953,695	714,173	31	0.242	5.0	Confidential	Confidential	1	5.0
1990	790,000	NA	758,659	553,823	29	0.248	3.0	0	0	0	3.0
1991	790,000	NA	679,624	625,253	30	0.211	2.4	Confidential	Confidential	1	2.4
1992	790,000	NA	936,808	936,811	29	0.269	2.4	Confidential	Confidential	1	2.4
1993	790,000	NA	824,010	815,770	27	0.219	2.4	0	0	0	2.4
1994	790,000	NA	866,792	1,066,149	30	0.210	2.4	0	0	0	2.4
1995	790,000	NA	678,752	1,323,585	28	0.227	2.0	0	0	0	2.0
1996	790,000	NA	502,464	899,401	28	0.171	2.0	0	0	0	2.0
1997	790,000	23,200	608,787	1,344,829	29	0.361	45.0	116,280	257,237	5	76.0
1998	632,000	20,400	496,210	696,329	27	0.343	45.0	81,846	113,610	4	76.0
1999	720,000	24,000	565,191	1,014,675	25	0.434	45.0	96,234	185,521	4	76.0
2000	696,000	24,000	495,392	983,168	24	0.379	76.0	96,287	187,703	4	76.0
2001	696,000	24,000	554,495	1,064,541	25	0.309	76.0	96,188	184,419	4	76.0
2002	696,000	24,000	554,079	1,074,780	24	0.412	76.0	96,265	203,983	4	76.0
2003	696,000	24,860	557,103	1,252,119	23	0.452	76.0	99,834	216,521	4	76.0
2004	696,000	24,860	552,272	872,612	23	0.398	76.0	98,373	158,986	4	76.0
2005	696,000	24,860	539,252	1,127,483	23	0.521	76.0	100,468	223,957	4	76.0
2006	696,000	21,750	537,813	1,224,134	26	0.500	76.0	87,020	210,605	4	76.0
2007	696,000	21,750	533,129	1,201,004	25	0.487	76.0	87,038	207,782	4	76.0

* The number of round lbs. reported includes only data from the directed commercial fishery and does not include fish taken during the testfish fishery, illegally as bycatch in other fisheries, or reported used as bait.

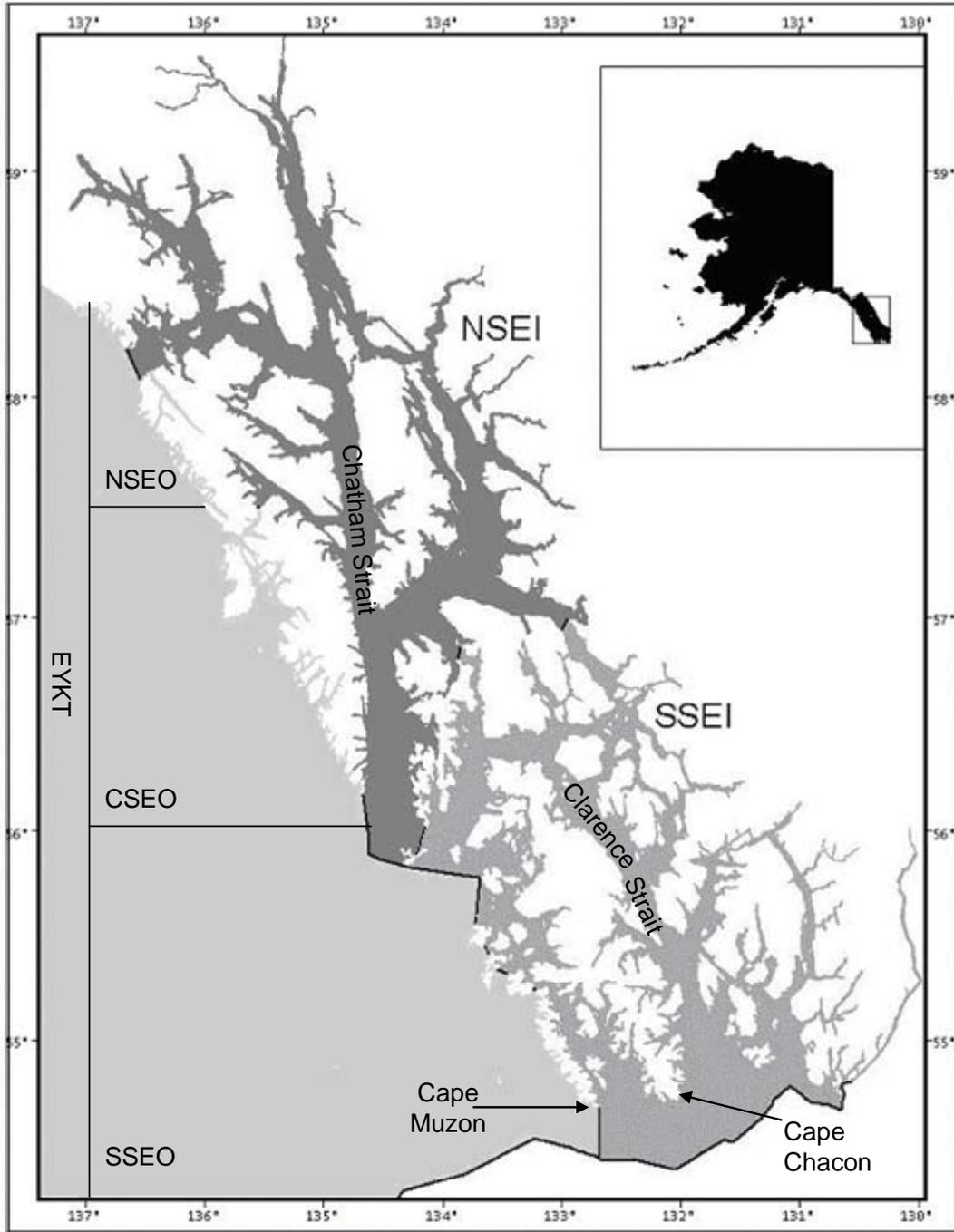


Figure 1.—Management Subdistricts for the state sablefish fisheries in Southeast Alaska.

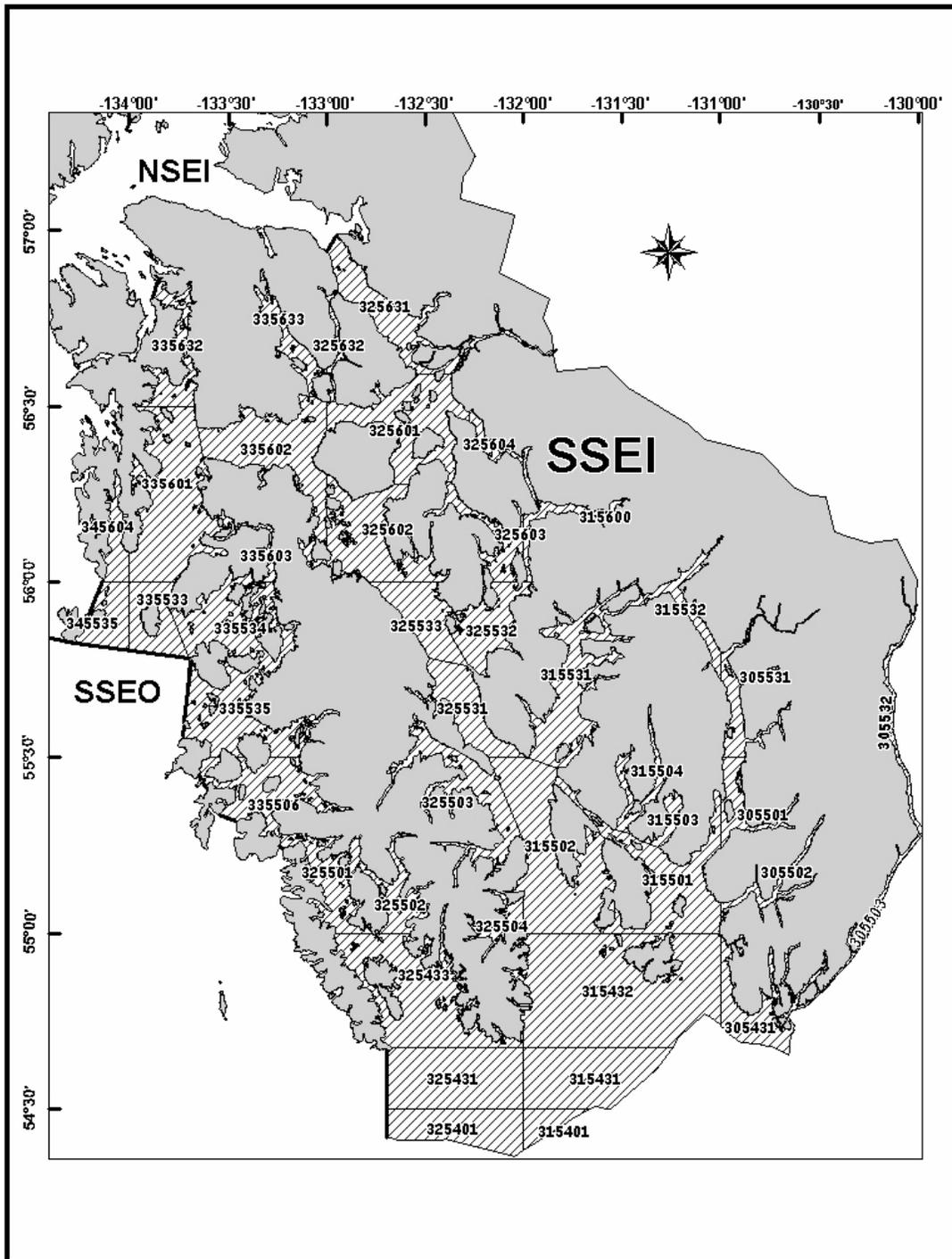


Figure 2.—The SSEI Subdistrict with Groundfish statistical areas.

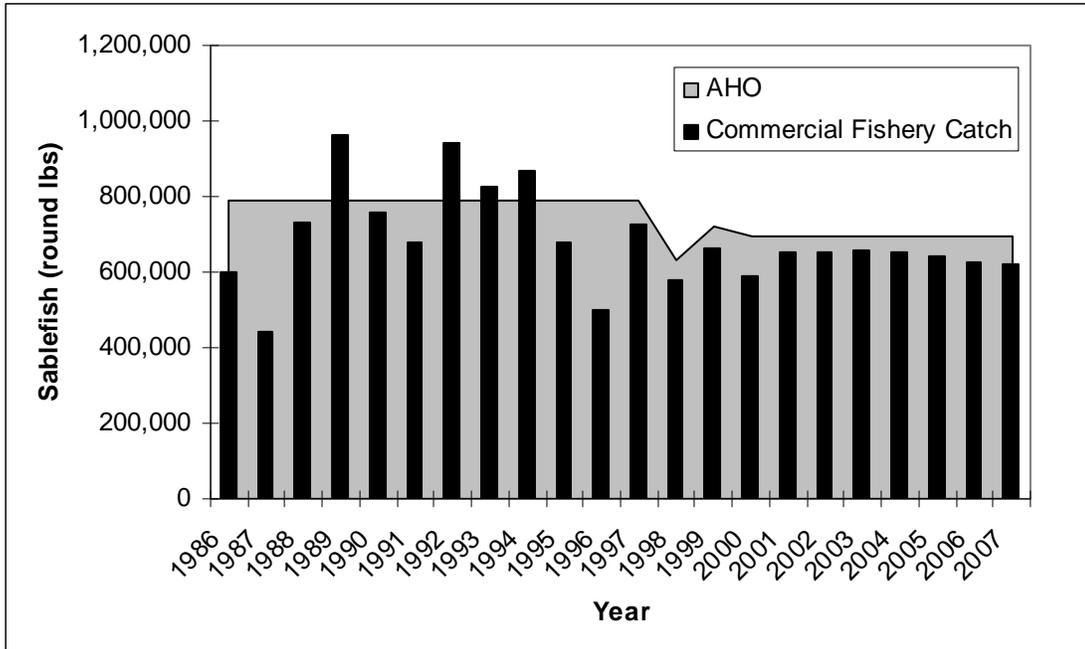


Figure 3.—Annual Harvest Objective (AHO) vs. commercial catch in the SSEI sablefish fishery, 1998–2007.

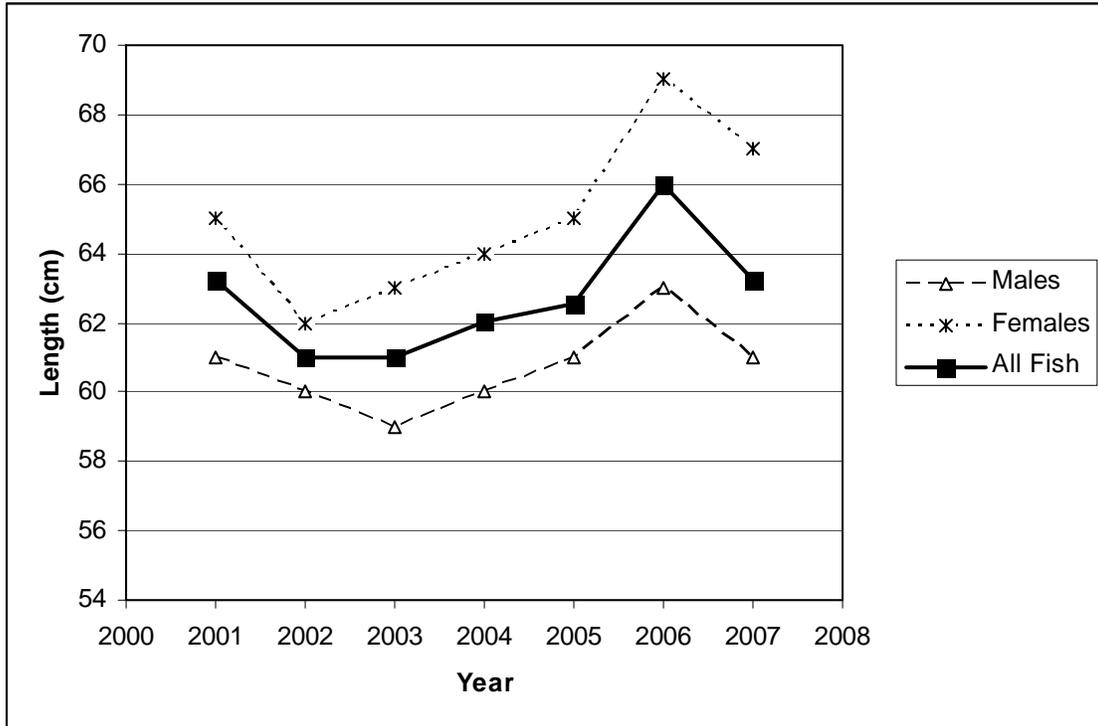


Figure 4.—Average length of sablefish sampled from the SSEI longline commercial fishery, 2001–2007.

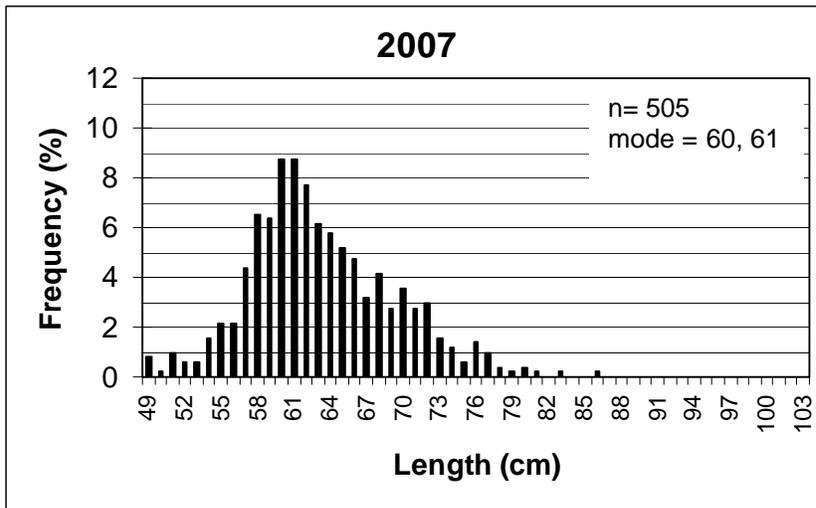
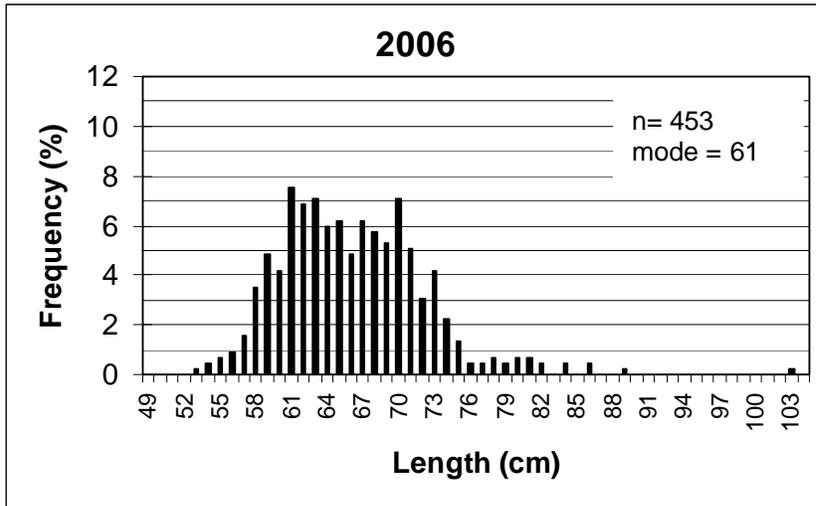
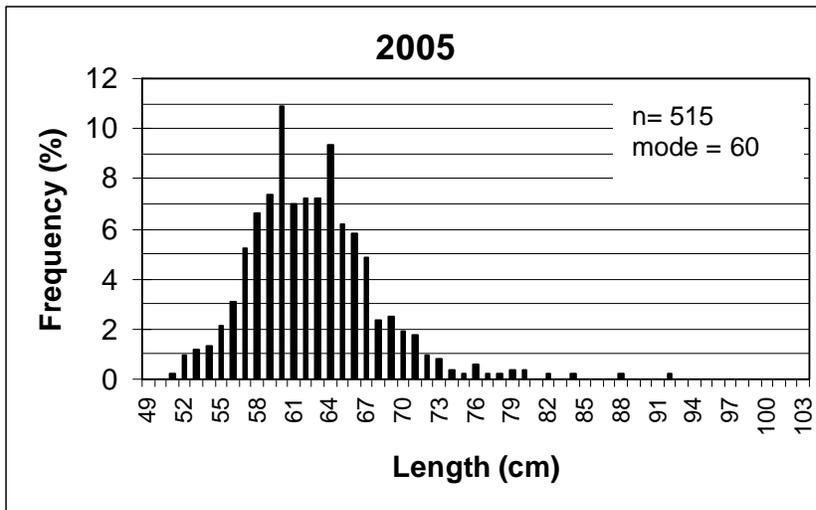


Figure 5.—Length Frequency Distribution for Sablefish in the SSEI Longline Fishery, 2005–2007.

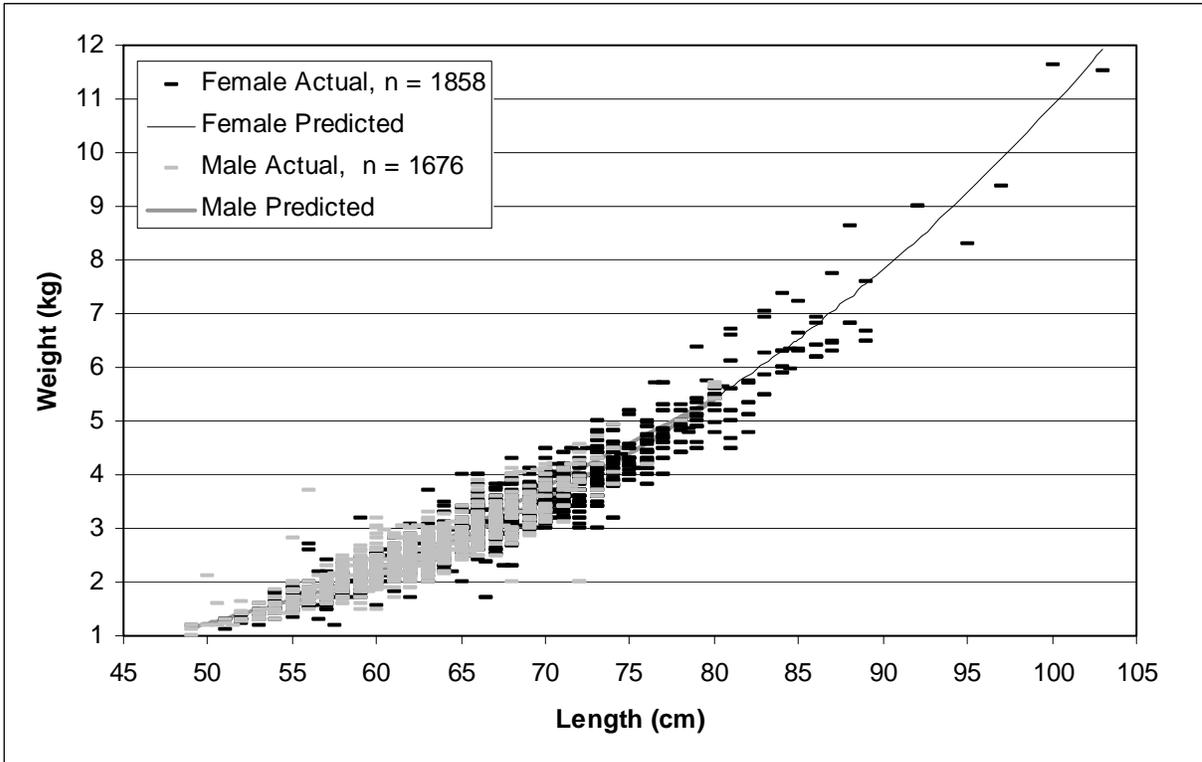


Figure 6.—Lengths and weights of sablefish sampled in port, 2005–2007, plotted against predicted weights derived in 2005.

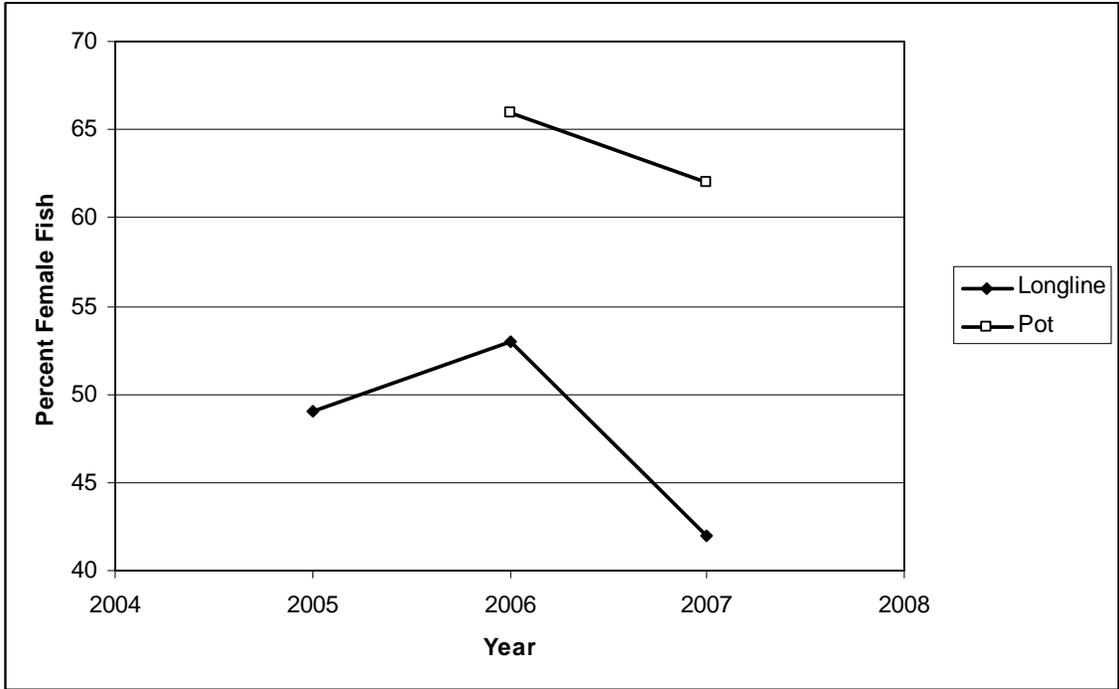


Figure 7.—Sex composition of sablefish sampled in port in SSEI, 2005–2007.

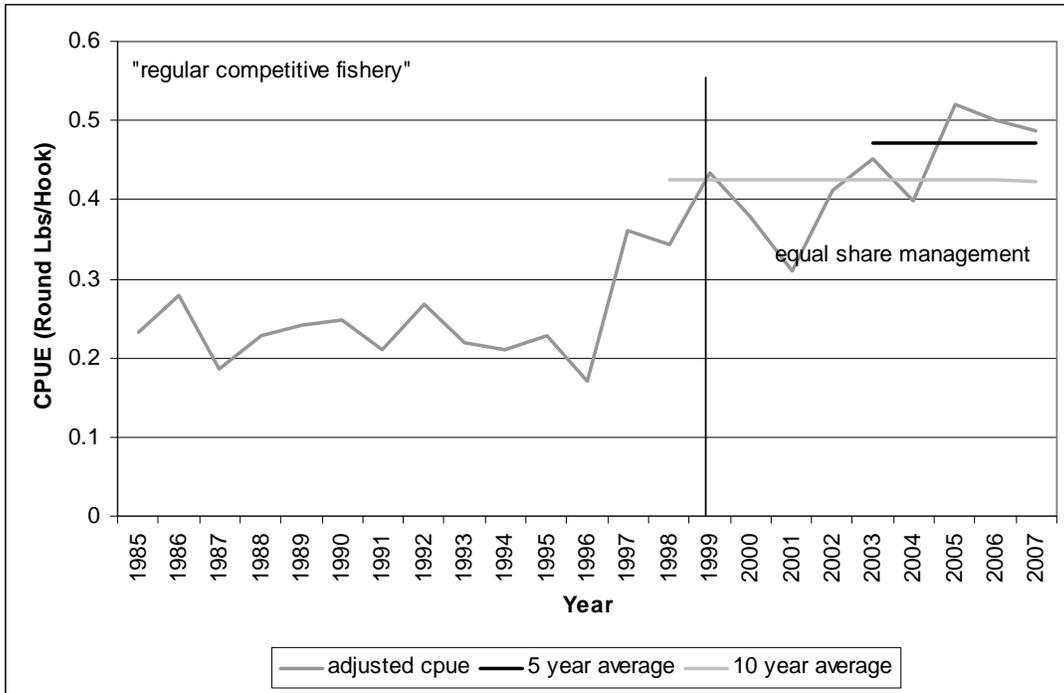


Figure 8.—SSEI commercial longline CPUE (fleet overall) in round pounds per hook, 1985–2007.

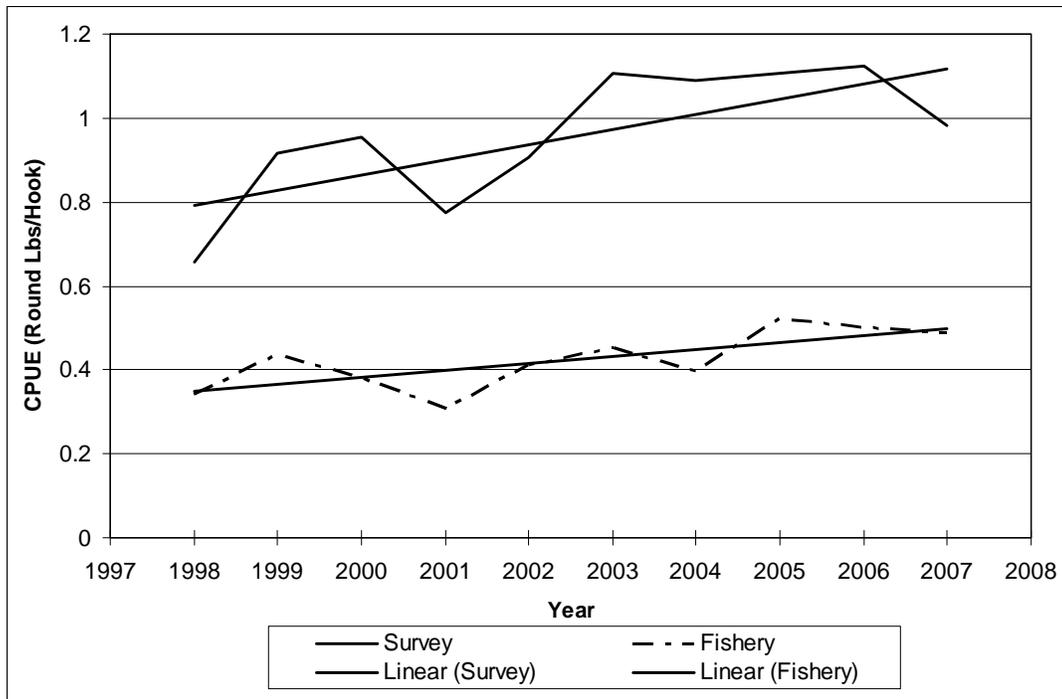


Figure 9.—SSEI longline survey and commercial fishery CPUE in round pounds per hook, 1998–2007.

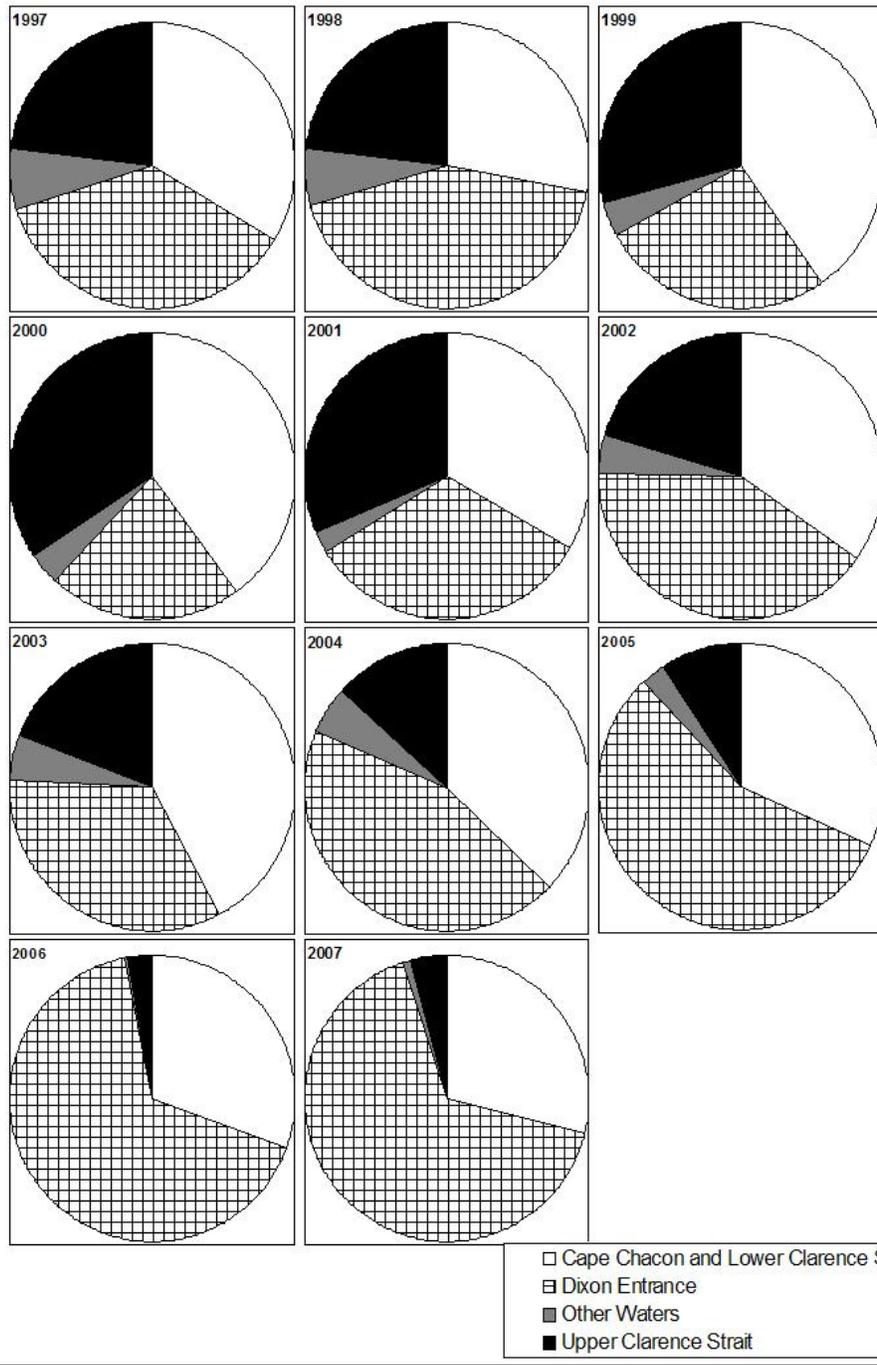


Figure 10.—Proportional distribution of the longline sablefish catch in Cape Chacon and lower Clarence Strait (areas 315432 and 315502), Dixon Entrance (areas 315401, 315431, 325401, and 325431), upper Clarence Strait (areas 325531, 325533, and 325602), and other waters (areas 315501, 315531, 325433, 325501, 325532, 335601, 325503, 305501, 305531, 315532, and 305431) in SSEI, 1997–2007.

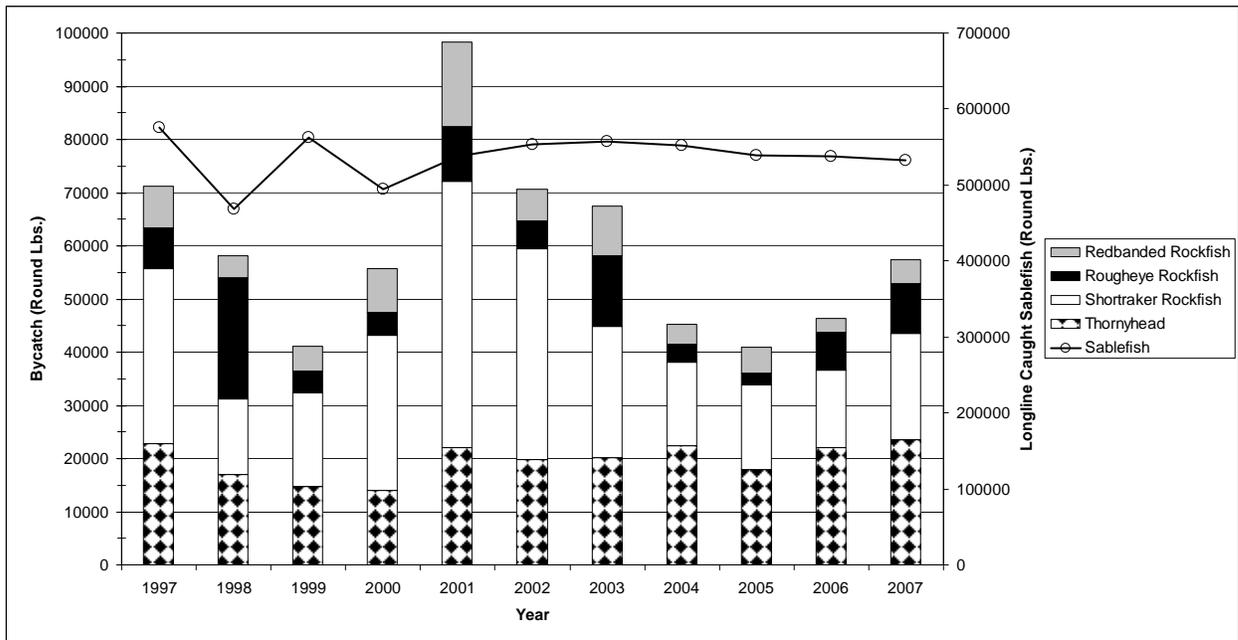


Figure 11.—Bycatch of the four main bycatch species landed in the SSEI longline sablefish fishery, 1997–2007.

**APPENDIX A. PERMITS, PAPERWORK, REGULATIONS, AND
OTHER INFORMATION NEEDED TO FISH IN THE SSEI
SABLEFISH FISHERY**

Appendix A1.–Permits and paperwork required to fish in the SSEI Sablefish Fishery.

- Valid CFEC limited entry permit card specific to the SSEI Sablefish Fishery
- ADF&G Vessel license
- Vessel registration filed prior to fishing and kept onboard while fishing
- Logbook completed daily, copies kept on board the vessel for the duration of the fishery, including a record of the round weight delivered to date if multiple deliveries are made per season and pages documenting the landing attached to the fish ticket at the time of landing. Use of ADF&G Longline-Pot Fishery Logbooks is requested. ADF&G logbooks are available at ADF&G offices
- Equal Quota Share Tracking Form with Personal Quota Share balance
- Seabird Avoidance Plan, current and signed, on board the vessel while fishing

CFEC gear cards, emergency transfer requests, and ADF&G vessel registrations are available only from CFEC and not at ADF&G offices. Applications for these permits are available at ADF&G area offices or on the web at www.cfec.state.ak.us/.

A seabird avoidance plan template can be downloaded from the NMFS website at www.fakr.noaa.gov/protectedresources/seabirds/torilines/form.pdf

Delivering fish out of state takes prior planning, well in advance of fishing, as several agencies and permits are required. In order to take unprocessed fish out of the state, an individual or company must have an exporter license. There are two different types of exporter licenses, buyer or catcher. The buyer can buy from fishers and export unprocessed fish while the catcher can only export their own catch. The Department of Revenue requires the exporter to be bonded and prepay taxes before they can operate. All processor and exporter applications are together in the “2005 Alaska Seafood Processor and Exporter License and Permit Application: Intent to Operate”. The web link for this application is:

www.cf.adfg.state.ak.us/geninfo/permits/intent/instruct.pdf

Fishers are required to complete a fish ticket and a physical copy of that fish ticket must be provided to ADF&G before the vessel leaves the state. A completed fish ticket must include:

1. weight of each species with the corresponding condition (delivery) code (i.e., round, bled, headed and gutted etc.).
2. an imprint of the valid CFEC gear card.
3. an imprint of a valid Alaskan processor code.
4. a breakdown by percentage of the groundfish statistical areas fished.
5. signatures of fisher and processor (or agent of the processor) at bottom of the fish ticket.
6. a completed logbook documenting the landing must be attached to the ticket.

If fish weights are estimated, a completed fish ticket with final weights must be returned to ADF&G within 7 days of landing. If the processor is someone other than the fisher, ADF&G must have a letter authorizing the use of the Alaskan processor code used on the fish ticket before the ticket is completed and filed with the department.

5 AAC 28.105. DESCRIPTION OF EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA AREA DISTRICTS, SUBDISTRICTS, SECTIONS, AND SECTORS

(a) Southeast District: all waters described in 5 AAC 28.100.

1. **Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) Subdistrict:** All waters of Dixon Entrance, Clarence Strait, Ernest Sound, Behm Canal, Bradfield Canal, Sumner Strait, Cordova Bay, Tlevak Strait, Bucarelli Bay, Gulf of Esquibel, Davidson Inlet, Sea Otter Sound, Stikine Strait, Blake Channel, Zimovia Strait, Eastern Passage, and contiguous bays and inlets and that portion of Frederick Sound, bordered by a line from 54° 43.50' N. lat., 130° 37.62' W. long. to 54° 43.40' N. lat., 130° 37.65' W. long. to 54° 43.25' N. lat., 130° 37.73' W. long. to 54° 43' N. lat., 130° 37.92' W. long. to 54° 42.97' N. lat., 130° 37.95' W. long. to 54° 42.78' N. lat., 130° 38.10' W. long. to 54° 42.37' N. lat., 130° 38.43' W. long. to 54° 41.15' N. lat., 130° 38.97' W. long. to 54° 39.90' N. lat., 130° 38.97' W. long. to 54° 39.23' N. lat., 130° 39.30' W. long. to 54° 39.80' N. lat., 130° 41.58' W. long. to 54° 40.05' N. lat., 130° 42.37' W. long. to 54° 40.70' N. lat., 130° 44.72' W. long. to 54° 40.68' N. lat., 130° 44.98' W. long. to 54° 40.77' N. lat., 130° 45.85' W. long. to 54° 41.10' N. lat., 130° 48.52' W. long. to 54° 41.08' N. lat., 130° 49.28' W. long. to 54° 41.35' N. lat., 130° 53.30' W. long. to 54° 41.43' N. lat., 130° 53.65' W. long. to 54° 42.45' N. lat., 130° 56.30' W. long. to 54° 42.57' N. lat., 130° 57.15' W. long. to 54° 43' N. lat., 130° 57.68' W. long. to 54° 43.77' N. lat., 130° 58.92' W. long. to 54° 44.20' N. lat., 130° 59.73' W. long. to 54° 45.65' N. lat., 131° 03.10' W. long. to 54° 46.27' N. lat., 131° 04.72' W. long. to 54° 42.18' N. lat., 131° 13' W. long. to 54° 40.87' N. lat., 131° 13.90' W. long. to 54° 39.15' N. lat., 131° 16.28' W. long. to 54° 36.87' N. lat., 131° 19.37' W. long. to 54° 29.88' N. lat., 131° 33.80' W. long. to 54° 30.53' N. lat., 131° 38.02' W. long. to 54° 28.30' N. lat., 131° 45.33' W. long. to 54° 26.68' N. lat., 131° 49.47' W. long. to 54° 21.85' N. lat., 132° 02.90' W. long. to 54° 24.87' N. lat., 132° 23.65' W. long. to 54° 24.68' N. lat., 132° 24.48' W. long. to 54° 24.68' N. lat., 132° 24.58' W. long. to 54° 24.65' N. lat., 132° 26.85' W. long. to 54° 25.33' N. lat., 132° 41.53' W. long. to the Cape Muzon Light to the northernmost tip of Eagle Point on Dall Island and passing successively through the southernmost tip of Point Arboleda, the northernmost tip of Point San Rogue, the southernmost tip of Cape Ulitka, the northernmost tip of Cape Lynch to the southernmost tip of Helm Point, and from a point west of Gish Bay at 55° 54.53' N. lat., 134° 12.50' W. long. to the Cape Decision Light and from Point Camden to Salt Point Light on Keku Strait and from Beacon Point to Wood Point;
2. **Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI) Subdistrict:** All waters of Frederick Sound, Stephens Passage, Lynn Canal, Icy Strait, Glacier Bay, Chatham Strait, and contiguous bays and inlets bordered by a line from Beacon Point to Wood Point, from Point Camden to Salt Point Light, the Cape Decision Light to a point west of Gish Bay at 55° 54.53' N. lat., 134° 12.50' W. long. to the southernmost tip of Helm Point to the westernmost tip of Hazy Island to the Cape Ommaney Light, north of 57° 30' N. lat. in Peril Strait, from the westernmost tip of Column Point to the northernmost tip of Soapstone Point and from the southernmost tip of Cape Spencer through Yakobi Rock to Yakobi Island;
3. **Icy Bay Subdistrict:** All waters of the Southeast District between 140° W. long., including Yakutat Bay three miles seaward of a line from Ocean Cape at 59° 30' N. lat.;
4. **Southeast Outside Subdistrict:** All remaining waters of the Southeast District:
 - (A) Southern Southeast Outside (SSEO) Section: all waters of the Southeast Outside Subdistrict south of 56° N. lat., and east of 137° W. long.;
 - (B) Central Southeast Outside (CSEO) Section: all waters of the Southeast Outside Subdistrict between 56° N. lat. and 57° 30' N. lat., and east of 137° W. long.;
 - (C) Northern Southeast Outside (NSEO) Section: all waters of the Southeast Outside Subdistrict north of 57° 30' N. lat., and east of 137° W. long.;
 - (D) East Yakutat (EYKT) Section: all waters of the Southeast Outside Subdistrict between 137° and 140° W. long.

5 AAC 28.110. SABLEFISH FISHING SEASONS FOR EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA AREA.

(a) In the Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area, sablefish may be taken only as follows:

1. in the Northern Southeast Inside Subdistrict, from 8:00 a.m. August 15 until 12:00 noon November 15;
2. in the Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict, from 8:00 a.m. June 1 until 12:00 noon August 15 with longline gear, and from 8:00 a.m. September 1 until 12:00 noon November 15 with pot gear.

(b) Repealed 6/15/97.

(c) Notwithstanding (a) of this section, sablefish may be taken outside of established seasons in order to provide information on stock condition and other research questions, as provided in this subsection. The commissioner shall request that permit holders who are interested in fishing outside of established seasons for that purpose notify the department. The commissioner will randomly select from those permit holders, and selected permit holders shall fish under terms specified by the commissioner.

5 AAC 28.160 HARVEST GUIDELINES AND RANGES FOR EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA AREA.

(a) In the Northern Southeast Inside Subdistrict, the department will set the annual guideline harvest limit for the taking of sablefish based on information available to the department, including estimates of sablefish biomass.

(b) In the Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict, the department will set the annual guideline harvest limit for the taking of sablefish based on information available to the department, including estimates of sablefish biomass.

5 AAC 28.170. SABLEFISH POSSESSION AND LANDING REQUIREMENTS FOR EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA AREA.

(a) The operator of a vessel taking sablefish in the Northern or Southern Southeast Inside Subdistricts shall, before taking sablefish in another area, unload all sablefish taken in either subdistrict and submit a completed fish ticket to the department.

(b) The operator of a fishing vessel may not take sablefish in the Northern or Southern Inside Subdistricts with sablefish taken in another area on board.

(c) In the Northern and Southern Southeast Inside Subdistricts, and in the waters of Alaska within the Southeast Outside Subdistrict, a sablefish bearing a fisheries agency tag at the time of capture may be retained and sold at any time, if the fish is landed with the tag intact and the recovery is reported to the department at the time of landing. The tagged fish must be presented to a local representative of the department upon request.

(d) Repealed 6/15/95.

(e) Repealed 11/16/96.

(f) Except as provided in (j) of this section, in the Northern Southeast Inside Subdistrict, 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 equal quota share that is specified by the department. A permit holder must retain all visibly injured or dead sablefish. Sablefish that are not visibly injured or dead may be released unharmed, but the permit holder must record the live releases in a logbook by gear settings. The department shall determine the annual amount of sablefish equal quota share by dividing the annual harvest objective by the number of CFEC permits and interim use permits eligible to be fished in the fishery. The department shall use the best available information, including harvest rate and biological data, to set the annual harvest objective.

(g) Except as provided in (j) of this section, in the Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict, 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 equal quota share specified by the department. The department shall determine the annual amount of sablefish equal quota share by dividing the annual harvest objective by the number of CFEC permits and interim use permits eligible to be fished in the fishery. The department shall use the best available information, including harvest rate and biological data, to set the annual harvest objective.

(h) In the portion of the Southeast Outside Subdistrict that is state waters under 5 AAC [39.975\(13\)](#) , retention of sablefish is prohibited.

(i) When participating in the sablefish fishery in the Northern Southeast Inside Subdistrict or Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict, a person holding a CFEC permit or interim use permit for that fishery must retain in the person's possession and present for inspection on board the vessel on which that person is registered to fish, a copy of each completed fish ticket issued to the person during the current season. The permit holder shall provide each buyer with the total round weight of sablefish that the permit holder has landed to date in the fishery for that year.

(j) If a permit holder's harvest exceeds the permit holder's equal quota share established under (f) or (g) of this section for that year, by not more than five percent, the department shall reduce the permit holder's equal quota share for the following year by the amount of the overage. The adjusted equal quota share is the permit holder's quota share for that year. 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. A permit holder may not assume that the ability to adjust a quota share under this section is an opportunity to knowingly exceed a quota share or to 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](#) .

(k) If a permit holder's harvest is less than the permit holder's equal quota share established under (f) or (g) of this section for that year, the department shall increase the permit holder's equal quota share only for the following year by the amount of the underage that does not exceed five percent of the equal quota share.

5 AAC 28.130 LAWFUL GEAR FOR EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA AREA.

(a) In the Northern Southeast Inside Subdistrict, the Southeast Outside Subdistrict, and the East Yakutat District, sablefish may be taken only with longlines. In the Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict, sablefish may be taken only with longlines and pots.

(f) In the Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area, pots may not be longlined, except that pots may be longlined in the Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict sablefish fishery. At least one buoy on each groundfish pot must be legibly marked with only the permanent department vessel license plate number of the vessel operating the gear. The number must be placed on the top one-third of the buoy in numerals at least four inches high and one-half inch wide, must be in a color contrasting to the color of the buoy, and must be visible above the water surface when the buoy is attached to the groundfish pot. If groundfish pots are longlined under this subsection, a buoy is not required for each pot, but at least one buoy must be attached to the longline, and the buoy must be marked as described in this subsection.

(i) Repealed 7/18/2003.

5 AAC 39.145 ESCAPE MECHANISM FOR SHELLFISH AND BOTTOMFISH POTS.

Pot gear must include an escape mechanism in accordance with the following provisions:

1. a sidewall, which may include the tunnel, of all shellfish and bottomfish pots must contain an opening equal to or exceeding 18 inches in length, except that in shrimp pots the opening must be a minimum of six inches in length. The opening must be laced, sewn, or secured together by a single length of untreated, 100 percent cotton twine, no larger than 30 thread. The cotton twine may be knotted at each end only. The opening must be within six inches of the bottom of the pot and must be parallel with it. The cotton twine may not be tied or looped around the web bars.

Dungeness crab pots may have the pot lid tie-down straps secured to the pot at one end by a single loop of untreated, 100 percent cotton twine no larger than 60 thread, as a substitute for the above requirement; the pot lid must be secured so that, when the twine degrades, the lid will no longer be securely closed;

2. all king crab, Tanner crab, shrimp, miscellaneous shellfish and bottomfish pots may, instead of complying with (1) of this section, satisfy the following: a sidewall, which may include the tunnel, must contain an opening at least 18 inches in length, except that shrimp pots must contain an opening at least six inches in length. The opening must be laced, sewn, or secured together by a single length of treated or untreated twine, no larger than 36 thread. A galvanic timed release (GTR) device, designed to release in no more than 30 days in salt water, must be integral to the length of twine so that, when the device releases, the twine will no longer secure or obstruct the opening of the pot. The twine may be knotted only at each end and at the attachment points on the galvanic timed release device. The opening must be within six inches of the bottom of the pot and must be parallel with it. The twine may not be tied or looped around the web bars;
3. in an area open to commercial, personal use, sport, or subsistence fishing with pot gear, including a pot storage area, a registered commercial fishing vessel or a vessel used for personal use, sport, or subsistence fishing may not have on board the vessel or in the water, in fishing or stored condition, any bottomfish or shellfish pot gear that does not have an opening or rigging as specified in (1) or (2) of this section;
4. beginning January 1, 2007, all subsistence, personal use, and sport shellfish pots constructed with rigid mesh must have at least one opening in a sidewall of the pot which may include the tunnel, except Dungeness crab pots that have a pot lid tie-down that complies with (1) of this section; the opening in a king crab or Tanner crab pot must be equal to or exceed a 12-inch by 8-inch rectangle; the opening in a Dungeness crab pot must be equal to or exceed a 10-inch by 6-inch rectangle; the lower long edge of the opening must be parallel to, and within six inches of, the bottom of the pot; the opening in a shrimp pot must be equal to or exceed a four-inch square; the lower edge of the opening must be parallel to, and within six inches of, the bottom of the pot; the opening may be covered with a single panel secured to the pot with no more than four single loops of untreated, 100 percent cotton twine no larger than 30 thread; each single loop of cotton twine may contain only one knot and may not be laced along the opening; the panel must be attached to the pot in a manner that when the cotton twine degrades the panel will drop away from the pot exposing the opening completely.

5 AAC 28.180. PROHIBITIONS FOR EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA AREA.

(a) 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 Northern or Southern Southeast Inside Subdistricts 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 either subdistrict during that open sablefish fishing period.

(b) Unless authorized by the terms of a scientific, propagative, or educational permit issued under [AS 16.05.340](#) (b), a person may not possess groundfish in a manner that indicates an intent to keep the groundfish alive.

5 AAC 28.106. EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA AREA REGISTRATION.

(b) Notwithstanding 5 AAC [28.020\(a\)](#), before a person uses a vessel to operate gear to take sablefish in the Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI) Subdistrict or the Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) Subdistrict, the vessel owner, or the owner's agent, shall register the vessel with the department as follows:

1. the vessel must be registered before fishing in the sablefish fishery;

2. the vessel owner, or the owner's agent, shall include on the registration form the vessel's name and the full name and CFEC permit number or interim use permit number of each sablefish permit holder who will be on board the vessel during the open fishing period;
3. the vessel owner, or the owner's agent, shall sign the registration form;
4. a person who holds a CFEC sablefish permit or interim use sablefish permit for the NSEI Subdistrict or for the SSEI Subdistrict may not register to fish on more than one vessel at a time;
5. a separate registration is required for each subdistrict.

5 AAC 28.175. LOGBOOKS FOR EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA AREA

(a) An operator of a vessel fishing for groundfish in the waters of Alaska in the Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area or in a state-managed directed fishery in the waters of the exclusive economic zone adjacent to the Eastern Gulf of Alaska Area shall maintain an accurate logbook of all fishing operations for each type of gear used.

(b) A logbook described in (a) of this section

(1) for longline gear must include, by set, the date, the specific location of harvest by latitude and longitude for start and ending positions, hook spacing, the amount of gear (number of hooks) used, the depth of each set, the estimated weight of all target species taken, an estimated weight of the bycatch retained or discarded at sea, and the tag number of any tagged fish landed; for the Northern Southeast Inside Subdistrict and the Southern Southeast Inside Subdistrict sablefish fisheries, a logbook must include a record of the round weight delivered, the purchasing processor, and date of each delivery during that season if multiple landings have been made;

(2) for dinglebar, mechanical jig, or hand troll gear must include the date, the specific location of harvest by six digit statistical area and nearest headland, the number of lines and hooks per lines used, the average depth fished, the hours fished for each line, and the number of bycatch fish taken, by species; for the target species the following is required:

(A) the number retained;

(B) the number discarded; and

(C) for lingcod only, their estimated sex ratio;

(3) must be updated, within 24 hours after midnight local time on the day of operation;

(4) must be retained, with its original pages, for a period of two years by the owner or operator of the vessel; and

(5) must include the tag number of any tagged fish landed, with the date and specific location.

(c) A logbook described in (a) of this section must be kept on board the vessel while operating gear, during transits to or from a port of landing, and for five days after delivering groundfish.

(d) Repealed 6/15/97.

(e) A logbook described in (a) of this section must be made available to a local representative of the department upon request.

(f) A copy of the page of the logbook described in (a) in this section pertaining to a landing must be attached to the fish ticket documenting the landing.

(g) A person may not make a false entry in the logbook described in (a) of this section.

5 AAC 28.173. LINGCOD POSSESSION AND LANDING REQUIREMENTS FOR EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA AREA.

(a) In the Southeast District, a vessel fishing for

1. halibut with longline gear may not land or have on board lingcod in excess of five percent, by round weight, of all halibut on board the vessel, except that in the Icy Bay Section, a vessel may not have in excess of 10 percent, by round weight, of all halibut on board the vessel;
2. sablefish may not land or have on board lingcod, except as specified in (3) of this subsection;
3. halibut and sablefish at the same time may not land or have on board lingcod in excess of five percent, by round weight, of all halibut on board the vessel.

(b) In the Southeast District, a vessel fishing with longline gear may not land or have on board lingcod in excess of 35 percent, by round weight, of all target species taken in the directed fishery that are on board the vessel.

(e) All lingcod retained must measure at least 27 inches from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail, or 20.5 inches from the front of the dorsal fin to the tip of the tail. Undersized lingcod must be returned to the water immediately without further harm.

5 AAC 28.190. HARVEST OF BAIT BY COMMERCIAL PERMIT HOLDERS IN EASTERN GULF OF ALASKA AREA.

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 as follows:

1. except for sablefish, lingcod, thornyhead, shortraker, rougheyeye, and yelloweye rockfish, groundfish may be taken at any time; sablefish, lingcod, thornyhead, shortraker, rougheyeye, and yelloweye rockfish, may not be taken for bait or used for bait;

Appendix A4.-ADF&G longline/pot fishery logbook form.

ADF&G LONGLINE - POT FISHERY LOGBOOK

PERMIT HOLDER _____ TARGET SPECIES _____
 VESSEL NAME _____ PORT OF LANDING _____
 ADF&G NUMBER _____ DATE LEFT PORT _____
 SKIPPER NAME _____ DATE OF LANDING _____

CREW SIZE (includes skipper) _____
 SYSTEM USED
 CONV SNAP
 OTHER (please list) _____

LONGLINE GEAR		POT GEAR	
HOOK SIZE/TYPER	SKATE LINE SIZE	POT DIMENSIONS (ft)	POT SPACING (ft)
HOOK SPACING	NUMBER OF HOOKS/SKATE		
			BAIT(S) USED _____ %

SET NO.	DATE SET	TIME SET	Lat X Lon Beginning	Lat X Lon End	DATE HAILED	TIME HAILED	AVERAGE DEPTH (ft)	NO. SKATES OR POTS SET	LOST GEAR	COMMENTS/TAGS ATTATCH TAGS HERE FOR THIS SET

CATCH DATA
 please indicate if catch is in NUMBERS or POUNDS (round)
 use separate box for each species

SET NO.	DATE SET	TIME SET	Lat X Lon Beginning	Lat X Lon End	DATE HAILED	TIME HAILED	AVERAGE DEPTH (ft)	NO. SKATES OR POTS SET	LOST GEAR	COMMENTS/TAGS ATTATCH TAGS HERE FOR THIS SET

CATCH DATA
 please indicate if catch is in NUMBERS or POUNDS (round)
 use separate box for each species

SET NO.	DATE SET	TIME SET	Lat X Lon Beginning	Lat X Lon End	DATE HAILED	TIME HAILED	AVERAGE DEPTH (ft)	NO. SKATES OR POTS SET	LOST GEAR	COMMENTS/TAGS ATTATCH TAGS HERE FOR THIS SET

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS: Did you shake gear and/or subfish due to reaching your limit? _____ How much? _____

Appendix A5.–Listing of ADF&G Region I Commercial Fisheries Groundfish Personnel.

Scott Kelley, Regional Supervisor	Douglas Office
Kyle Hebert, Regional Research Supervisor	802 3 rd Street
Jennifer Stahl, Fishery Biologist II	Douglas, AK 99824
Deidra Holum, Fishery Technician IV	(907) 465-4250

Bill Davidson, Regional Management Supervisor	Sitka
Cleo Brylinsky, Groundfish Project Leader	304 Lake Street, Room 103
Mike Vaughn, Fishery Biologist II	Sitka, AK 99835
Allison Sayer, Research Analyst II	(907) 747-6688
Kamala Carroll, Fishery Technician IV	
Karl Wolfe, Fishery Technician II	

Rebecca Knight, Fishery Technician III	Petersburg
	16 Sing Lee Alley
	Box 667
	Petersburg, AK 99833
	(907) 772-3801

<p>For commercial permits and vessel license applications contact:</p>	<p>State of Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (907) 789-6150</p> <p>National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Regional Office (907) 586-7229</p> <p>Restricted Access Management program (RAM), P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668, (907)-586-7202</p>
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