

Division of Commercial Fisheries
Sam Rabung, Director

Homer Area Office
3298 Douglas Place
Homer, AK 99603



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner

PO Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
www.adfg.alaska.gov

Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: September 18, 2023

CONTACT: Aaron Poetter
Groundfish Management Coordinator
(907) 267-2295

Prince William Sound Area Rockfish GHL Exceeded

The *Prince William Sound (PWS) Rockfish Management Plan* (5 AAC 28.265) establishes a guideline harvest level (GHL) of 150,000 lb and requires full retention of all rockfish caught when participating in a directed groundfish or halibut fishery in the PWS Management Area. The plan also sets limits, by fishery, as a percentage of the round weight of the directed species on board the vessel. Any amount of rockfish that exceeds this bycatch limit is accounted for as overage and proceeds are surrendered to the state.

To stay within the annual PWS rockfish GHL the department reduced rockfish bycatch limits and did not open the parallel Pacific cod season in PWS. Despite these directed management actions, the PWS rockfish GHL has been exceeded this season.

The department has growing concerns about the status of rockfish stocks in Prince William Sound and is seeking the assistance of participants in the halibut longline fishery to set gear away from aggregates of rockfish. The department is considering pursuing additional regulatory management measures to control rockfish bycatch. Voluntary measures taken to aid in the conservation of rockfish are greatly appreciated and may have a positive effect on future opportunities.

-end-