



Advisory Announcement

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CONTACT: Rhea Ehresmann
Region I Groundfish Project Leader
rhea.ehresmann@alaska.gov
(907) 747-6688

2026 SOUTHERN SOUTHEAST INSIDE SUBDISTRICT SABLEFISH FISHERY

The 2026 Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) Subdistrict sablefish commercial annual harvest objective (AHO) is 514,688 round pounds. **The equal quota share (EQS) for each of the 20 permit holders is 25,734 round pounds.** The number of permits for this fishery has been reduced from last year by one non-transferable permit. Permit holders with legal overage or underage incurred during the 2025 fishing season will have their 2026 personal quota share (PQS) adjusted accordingly.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) determines the SSEI AHO by evaluating stock status using commercial fishery and survey catch per unit effort (CPUE) data, biological information (age, weight, length, and maturity), and trends in sablefish populations in surrounding areas such as Chatham Strait, Eastern Gulf of Alaska (EGOA), and British Columbia, Canada (BC). Because no abundance estimate or population model exists for this stock, these indirect indices of abundance are used to set the AHO each year. Analysis of longline survey CPUE data indicates a 27% decrease from 2024 to 2025 and a 20% decrease relative to the 10-year average. Pot fishery CPUE decreased 40% from 2024 to 2025. Comparisons of the longline fishery CPUE are confidential due to fewer than three vessels using with longline gear since 2022.

Previous tagging studies suggest that sablefish in SSEI have approximately a 30% probability of leaving SSEI waters after one year of occupancy, typically moving into EGOA and BC waters. However, the absence of older, larger fish in SSEI, particularly the older fecund females, cannot be fully explained by migration, based on historical age data. Although recruitment remains strong from the 2014–2021 age classes in SSEI and neighboring areas, declines in survey and fishery CPUE data support a 20% reduction in the 2026 AHO. As a result, the EQS for each permit holder decreased by 16%, reflecting a conservative management approach to ensure long-term fishery stability and sustainability.

The SSEI sablefish fishery will open 8:00 a.m., June 1, 2026, for both longline and pot fisheries and will close at 12:00 noon, November 15, 2026.

Area Description 5 AAC 28.105 (a)(1)

The SSEI Subdistrict (Figure 1) consists of 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 continuous 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.

The Annette Islands Reserve is a federally recognized Indian reservation in Alaska. The waters within 3,000 feet of Annette Island, Ham Island, Hemlock Island, Spire Island, Walker Island, Lewis Island, and the adjacent rocks and islets are designated within the fishing reserve (Figure 1). Fisheries within the reserve are managed by the Metlakatla Indian Community for authorized fisheries participants.

Legal Gear

Sablefish may be taken in the directed SSEI sablefish fishery only by longline and pot gear. Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) limited entry C61C permits can fish with both longline and pot gear while C91C permits are restricted to the use of pot gear only. Groundfish pot gear requires individual tunnel eye openings with perimeters 36 inches or less and a sidewall containing an escapement opening equal to or exceeding 18 inches in length that must be laced, sewn, or secured together by a single length of untreated, 100-percent cotton twine, no larger than 30 thread of which may be knotted at each end only and must be parallel to and within six inches of the bottom of the pot [5 AAC 39.145 (1)].

Collapsible groundfish pots (“slinky pots”) must contain two escape mechanism openings in the mesh with each equal to or exceeding 18 inches in length that must be laced, sewn, or secured together by a single length of untreated, 100-percent cotton twine, no larger than 30 thread of which may be knotted at each end only and must be on opposite sides of the pot. If the escape mechanism is placed on the tunnel side, the opening must be in an area that does not include the pot door and within six inches of the edge of the pot [5 AAC 39.145 (5)].

Pots must have at least two circular escape rings, with a minimum inside diameter of three and one-half inches, installed on opposing vertical or sloping walls of the pot [5 AAC 28.130 (f)]. King and Tanner crab pots as described in 5 AAC 34.050 (2) and 5 AAC 35.050 (2) may not be used to take groundfish.

Sablefish permit holders operating longlined pot gear in the directed SSEI sablefish fishery must have an attached buoy at each end of a groundfish pot longline marked with the permanent ADF&G vessel plate number of the vessel operating the groundfish longlined pot gear and the buoy must have the letters “LP” to designate the gear as longlined groundfish pot gear. The numbers and letters must be marked in the top one-half of the buoy in numbers and letters that are at least four inches high, one-half inch wide, and in a color that contrasts with the color of the buoy [5 AAC 28.050(b)].

Registration and Logbook Requirements

Fishers must register prior to fishing [5 AAC 28.106 (b)] and keep a logbook during the fishery [5 AAC 28.175(a–g)]. Registration forms and logbooks will be available at ADF&G offices in Southeast Alaska by May 8. Permit holders will receive a PQS tracking form at the time of registration. This form is used to record the total round weight landed for 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. Completed logbook pages must be attached to the ADF&G copy of the fish ticket at the time of delivery. Fish tickets must be submitted to ADF&G within 7 days of landing. Confidential envelopes for logbook pages may be requested when registering.

Logbooks must include: the target species of the trip, port of landing, the date the vessel left port and the date the vessel landed, crew size, bait used, and gear specifications. For each set, the logbook must include the set’s target species, date and time gear is set and retrieved, specific location of harvest by latitude and longitude for start and ending positions, hook spacing, amount of gear (number of hooks, skates, or pots) used, the amount of gear lost or impacted by depredation, the depth of set, estimated number or weight of the target species, estimated number or weight of bycatch by species retained and released at sea, the tag number of any tagged fish captured, and other information as specified in regulation [5 AAC 28.175 (b)]. A permit holder must retain all visibly injured or dead sablefish. Sablefish that are not visibly injured or dead may be released unharmed. The permit holder must record in the logbook, by set, the number or weight of live sablefish released [5 AAC 28.170 (g)], as well as the discard reason (e.g., fish are small, PQS has been met, etc.).

Tagged Sablefish

Fishers are requested to document tagged sablefish. Please record tag number(s) and attach tags directly to the logbook with the corresponding set information. All persons who return an ADF&G sablefish tag will receive a tag reward (e.g., a hat, knife, or t-shirt; reward varies by year). Tag returns with valid recovery information (person’s name, date of recovery, latitude, longitude, and physical tag) are entered into an annual random drawing for a cash prize.

Fish Ticket Requirements (5 AAC 39.130)

Landed weights must be recorded on a fish ticket at the time of delivery. If a fisher delivers fish in the round, the total round weight delivered must be recorded on the fish ticket. If a fisher delivers dressed fish, the fish ticket must include the total landed dressed weight as well as the round weight equivalent, determined by using the standard 0.63 recovery rate. There is a 2% percent allowance for ice and slime when unrinsed whole iced sablefish are weighed. Fish tickets must be completed prior to resuming fishing and each permit holder must retain copies of their fish tickets from the current season as well as their PQS tracking form onboard the vessel. Fish tickets must be submitted to ADF&G within 7 days of landing. Fishers are reminded that a completed fish ticket must be submitted to ADF&G before fish are transported out of Alaska.

Possession and Landing Requirements

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 [5 AAC 28.170 (j)]. 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 EQS in an amount greater than five percent as such actions may be prosecuted under AS 16.05.722 or AS 16.05.723 [5 AAC 28.170 (j)]. If a permit holder's harvest is less than the permit holder's EQS 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 2026 SSEI sablefish fishery, five percent of the annual EQS equals 1,287 round pounds.**

Bycatch Allowances for the SSEI Sablefish Fishery

Percentages below indicate the amount of bycatch that may be sold on a SSEI sablefish permit and are based on the round weight of sablefish and bycatch species or species group on board the vessel:

Bycatch Species	Longline Gear	Pot Gear
All rockfish, including thornyheads	15% in aggregate, of which up to 1% may be DSR	
Lingcod	0%	0%
Pacific cod	20%	20%
Spiny dogfish	35%	20%
Other groundfish	20%	20%

CFEC permit holders fishing for groundfish or halibut must retain, weigh, and report all rockfish taken, including thornyhead rockfish [5 AAC 28.171 (a)]. The allowable bycatch percentage by species or species group is based on the round weight of sablefish and round weight of bycatch on board the vessel [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 retained 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 bycatch shall be surrendered to the state.

A CFEC permit holder fishing for groundfish must retain all Pacific cod when the directed fishery for Pacific cod is open and up to the maximum retainable bycatch amount (20%) when a directed fishery for Pacific cod is closed [5 AAC 28.070 (e)]. Pacific cod taken in excess of the bycatch limit in areas open to directed fishing for Pacific cod may be landed on a CFEC miscellaneous saltwater finfish permit designated for the gear that was used. Fishers with halibut IFQ in regulatory area 2C and a CFEC halibut permit card must retain all halibut over 32 inches in length, up to the amount of their IFQ. More information on calculating groundfish bycatch can be found on the groundfish harvest webpage at:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareasoutheast.groundfish#harvest>

Sablefish Live Market

A permit holder may possess live sablefish for delivery as live product except that, upon request of a local representative of the department or law enforcement, a permit holder must present sablefish for inspection and allow biological samples to be taken [5 AAC 28.170 (l)].

Prohibitions

The operator of a fishing vessel may not take sablefish in the SSEI area with sablefish from another area on board. Also, the operator of a vessel taking sablefish in the SSEI area shall unload those sablefish before taking sablefish in another area

[5 AAC 28.170(a–b)]. A vessel or a person on board a vessel may not participate in a commercial sablefish fishery in the SSEI or the Northern Southeast Inside (NSEI) Subdistrict if the vessel or a person on board the vessel operates commercial, subsistence, sport, or personal use halibut or groundfish fishing gear during the 72-hour period immediately before an opening of the commercial sablefish fishery in that subdistrict [5 AAC 28.180(a)].

A vessel or CFEC permit holder on board a vessel that participates in a commercial sablefish fishery in NSEI or SSEI may not operate subsistence, sport, or personal use halibut or groundfish fishing gear during a commercial sablefish opening or during the 72 hours immediately following the closure of a commercial sablefish fishery in that subdistrict unless the vessel or CFEC permit holder is not registered for the commercial sablefish fishery in that subdistrict; or the vessel or CFEC permit holder has harvested their total EQS pounds and at least 72 hours have passed since the commercially harvested sablefish were offloaded from the vessel; commercial fishing gear used in the commercial fishery by the vessel or the CFEC permit holder onboard a vessel has been removed from the water for at least 72 hours; and at least 72 hours have passed since the vessel owner, or owner’s agent, has contacted a local representative of the department and requested that the department cancel the vessel’s commercial sablefish registration, and the department has canceled the vessel’s commercial sablefish registration [5 AAC 28.180(b)].

For additional information, visit: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareasoutheast.groundfish>.

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

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<i>ADF&G</i>	225-5195	772-3801		747-6688	465-4250	766-2830	784-3255
<i>AWT</i>	225-5111	772-3983	874-3215	747-3254	465-4000	766-2533	784-3255
<i>Groundfish Hotline</i>				747-4882			

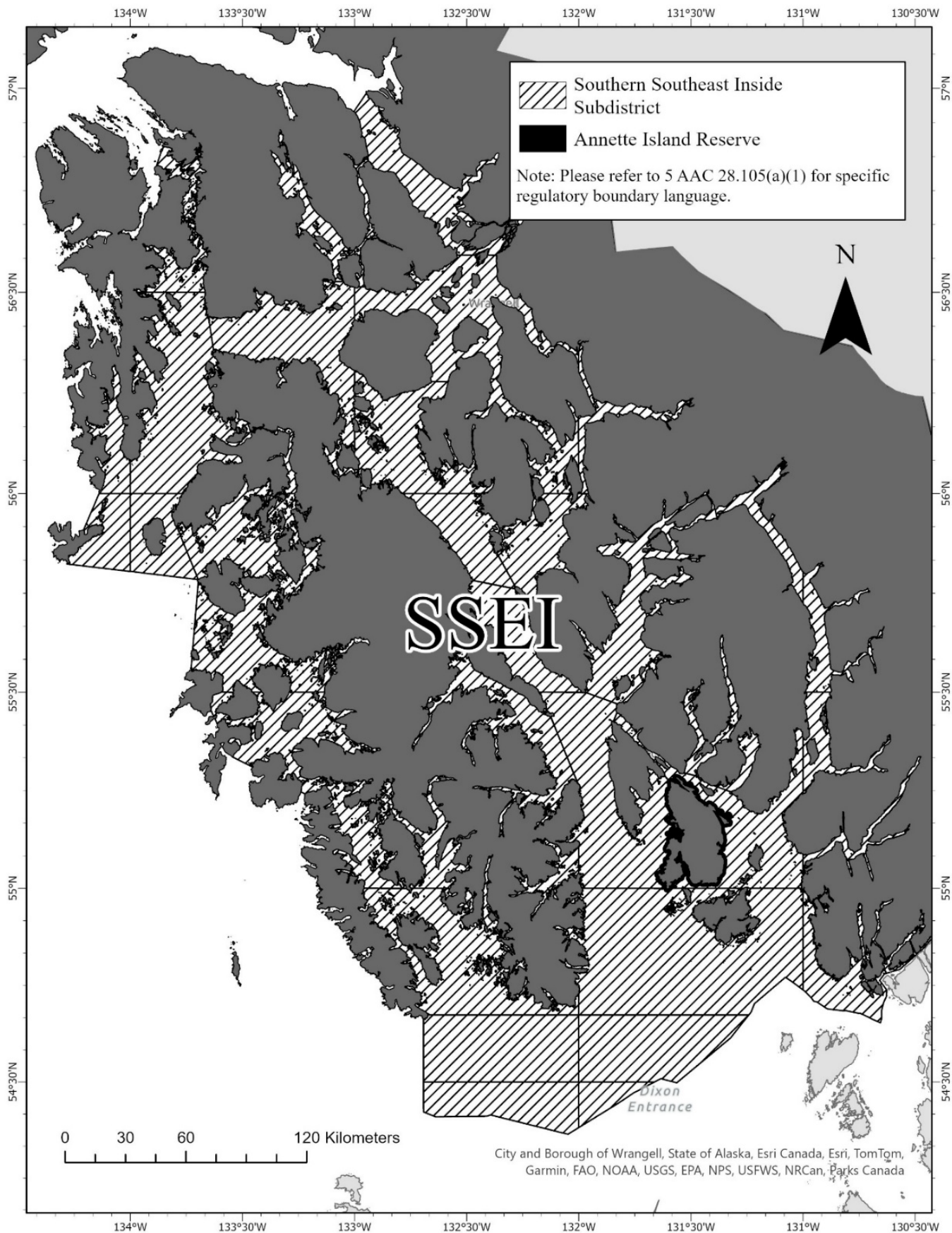


Figure 1.—Southern Southeast Inside (SSEI) Subdistrict. This map is for general information purposes only. For specific area descriptions refer to 5 AAC 28.105 (a)(1).