**Alaska Rocks: Outreach and Communication Efforts Aimed at Rockfish Conservation**

**Ryan Ragan, Alaska Department of Fish and Game**

There are nearly 40 different species of rockfish found in the salt waters of Alaska. Rockfish are often targeted by private and chartered anglers as they can be fairly easy to catch, make good table fare, and can be abundant in certain areas. Rockfish are among the longest-lived fish species found in Alaska. Some individuals have been aged to over 200 years. Rockfish are slow-growing fish, and it can take many years for individuals to reach sexual maturity. These aspects of rockfish make them highly susceptible to overharvest.

The focus of this presentation will be on how the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has coordinated and implemented communication and outreach efforts aimed at increasing angler awareness of rockfish biology, life history, deepwater release methods, and conservation of this important species. The presentation will cover information related to ongoing directed public outreach efforts to increase the use of deepwater release mechanisms and will cover topics related to how the agency communicates complex scientific information about rockfish to the public.

Presenting staff will have informational brochures, rockfish playing cards, rockfish identification sheets, and a limited number of deepwater release mechanisms to distribute to attendees.