NOTICE TO LICENCE HOLDERS

To: Marine Scalefish Fishery, Restricted Marine Scalefish Fishery, Northern Zone Rock Lobster Fishery (with Marine Scalefish Access), Spencer Gulf Prawn Fishery, Gulf St Vincent Prawn Fishery and Charter Boat Fishery licence holders.

Refinement to King George Whiting Spawning Spatial Closure in May

I am writing to inform you of the refinements to the King George Whiting (Sillaginodes punctatus) spawning spatial closure for 2019, which have been implemented through a notice issued under section 79 of the Fisheries Management Act 2007.

A King George Whiting spawning spatial closure was implemented in 2017 and 2018 to enable undisturbed spawning opportunities for this species following a review of management arrangements in 2016, as part of a package of measures including a size limit increase and a recreational bag limit reduction. These were implemented in response to stock concerns in both gulfs and at a time when these stocks were classified as ‘transitional depleting’ which means biomass is not yet depleted and recruitment is not yet impaired, but fishing mortality is too high and moving the stock in the direction of becoming recruitment impaired. The management measures that were implemented have been in place for two years and stocks have now recovered to a sustainable position. Further information about the status of the King George Whiting stocks can be found at:


The South Australian Research and Development Institute (SARDI) Aquatic Sciences is currently conducting a Fisheries Research and Development Corporation (FRDC) funded research project to better inform our understanding of the spatial extent of the King George Whiting spawning areas through the southern gulf systems of South Australia. Taking into account the most recent information from this research project and feedback from the targeted meetings held with commercial, recreational and charter boat fishery representatives in February 2019, refinements have been made to the King George Whiting spawning spatial closure for 2019 as part of an adaptive management approach (see enclosed map).

The King George Whiting spawning spatial closure makes it unlawful for any person to target and/or take and/or undertake any fishing activity that may result in the taking of King George Whiting and/or have possession of King George Whiting in following State water areas:

Objective ID: A3984705
Area 1 – Southern Spencer Gulf
The King George Whiting Spawning spatial closure comprises the State waters contained within and bounded by a line commencing at 34°30'00" South, 137°03'57" East, then east to the location on mean high water springs closest to 34°30'00" South, 137°20'14.16" East, then beginning south-easterly following the line of mean high water springs to the location closest to 34°31'39" South, 137°20'48" East, south to the location on mean high water springs closest to 34°55'48.20" South, 137°20'48" East, then beginning westerly following the line of mean high water springs to the location closest to 34°54'52.65" South, 137°03'57" East, and north to the point of commencement.

Area 2 – Investigator Strait
The King George Whiting Spawning spatial closure comprises the State waters contained within and bounded by a line commencing at 35°14'42.96" South, 136°49'19.20" East, then beginning south-easterly following the line of mean high water springs to the location closest to 35°06'50.10" South, 137°45'34.97" East, south-westerly to 35°33'10" South, 137°38'06.55" East, west to 35°33'10" South, 137°19'30" East, south-westerly to 35°40'19.20" South, 136°49'19.20" East and north to the point of commencement.

It is prohibited to travel through the closure area in possession of King George Whiting. This measure is in place to ensure the closure is practically enforceable by fisheries officers.

The closure applies from 0001 hours on 1 May 2019 until 2359 hours on 31 May 2019. A copy of the closure notice and a map are enclosed for your reference.

These arrangements are to protect these key spawning areas during a critical reproductive period and to maintain the sustainable stock status of King George Whiting across South Australia.

For any questions relating to the King George Whiting spawning spatial closure, please contact Mr Jonathan McPhail, Marine Scalefish Fishery Manager on telephone (08) 8429 0596 or via email: jonathan.mcphail@sa.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Sean Sloan
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

Encl. King George Whiting spawning spatial closure section 79 notice
A map of the King George Whiting spawning spatial closure