

PROPOSAL 103

5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan.

Allow use of dipnets in the Upper Subdistrict commercial salmon fishery as follows:

(F) Upper Subdistrict set gillnet commercial fishing periods that are limited under this section may be limited to fishing within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark and are exempt from hour and gear limitations identified under (e)(3)(A)-(E) of this section.

(G) if commercial fishing is limited under (e)(3) of this section, the operation of set nets operated by a CFEC permit holder shall be restricted to:

(i) up to four set gillnets that are each not more than 35 fathoms in length., 105 fathoms in aggregate length, and 29 meshes in depth, or two set gillnets that are each not more than 35 fathoms in length and 45 meshes in depth; set gillnets used that are not more than 29 meshes hi depth must be identified at the end of the gillnet with an attached blue buoy that is not less than nine and one-half inches in diameter; or

(ii) up to two set gillnets that are each not more than 35 fathoms in length and 29 meshes in depth or one set gillnet that is not more than 35 fathoms in length and 45 meshes in depth; set gillnets used that are not more than 29 meshes in depth must be identified at the end of the gillnet with an attached blue buoy that is not less than nine and one-half inches in diameter.

(iii) if restrictions for Kenai River king salmon are in effect, commercial fishing permit holders may harvest sockeye salmon within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark from 6am until 10pm except when set gillnet fishing is allowed in those areas. A maximum of two dip nets per vessel may be used and must adhere to the same requirements as per (Section 5 AAC 39.105 Types of legal gear) of the Alaska Administrative Code. The commercial permit holder shall be physically present on the vessel during active harvesting. Retention of king salmon is prohibited. Commercial fishing vessels shall not exceed 25ft in overall length, as defined by the United States Coast Guard and must be a licensed fishing vessel as per (Section. 16.05.490 - Vessel license).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal favors Alaska Administrative Code Section 5 AAC 21.359 with the purpose of protecting returning king salmon and ensuring sport fishing and commercial fishing opportunities in the future. Sockeye salmon harvesting has been directly affected by regulations and restrictions necessary to effectively protect returning king salmon populations back into the Kenai River watershed.

Unfortunately, those measures restrict sockeye salmon harvesting efforts which result in over escapement and missed opportunities for commercial harvesting efforts in the upper cook inlet region. This proposal shall provide a valuable harvest tool to help manage the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon and to further achieve a sustainable escapement goal (SEG).

Amend the Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan to include provisions for commercial salmon dip net harvesting within the upper cook inlet management area to include

“East Foreland section, Kenai Section, and Kasilof Section” between June 20th-August 15th from 6am until 10pm except when set gillnet fishing is allowed in those areas.

PROPOSED BY: Chris Little

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