

PROPOSAL 145

5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

Increase commercial fishing opportunity in the *Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan* as follows:

Delete 5 AAC 21.354 [(a) (b) (c) (1) (2)]

Replace with: **(a) The department shall use additional time and area to manage the Cook Inlet pink salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall strive for a harvest rate in the accepted 60% to 70% exploitation range.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Insert The current pink salmon management plan does not allow the managers the flexibility to harvest the pink salmon surplus. Literally tens of millions of pinks are not allowed to be harvested under the current management plans. Under the current management plans less than 2% of the pink salmon runs are harvested. ADF&G data shows that the Cook Inlet has had even year returns of up to 40 million pinks. That is a lot of food and economic resource not being utilized. The current pink salmon management plan restricts the flexibility of the managers to manage on a real time basis, based on in season abundance and salmon migration, to harvest the surplus of all salmon species and results in gross over-escapements and the waste of valuable harvestable salmon surpluses. The current pink salmon management plan is unscientific and intentionally inadequate and has resulted in tens of millions of harvestable salmon going un-harvested and negatively affects the commercial fishing industry, communities, National food source, interstate commerce, economies and also decreases future salmon production resulting from the effects of over escapement. It also violates the Magnuson Stevens Act and other applicable laws. The sports fishery has a reasonable opportunity to fish and reasonable numbers of salmon to harvest. In comparison the commercial fisherman, when restricted or closed down, has no other area to fish because they are restricted to the areas and their gear type by their limited entry permit they own. This is unfair and has no parity in reasonable opportunity between commercial and recreational fisheries under the current management plans. Because of overly restricted commercial fishing management plans only around half of the CFEC permit holders are currently participating in the Cook Inlet fishery, thereby reducing their harvest potential by half.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F23-028)
