

Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan (7 proposals)

PROPOSAL 121

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Modify intent language within the Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan, as follows:

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. (a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure adequate escapement of salmon into the Northern District drainages and to provide management guidelines to the department. [THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MANAGE THE COMMERCIAL DRIFT GILLNET FISHERY TO MINIMIZE THE HARVEST OF NORTHERN DISTRICT AND KENAI RIVER COHO SALMON IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SPORT AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERMEN A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO HARVEST THESE SALMON STOCKS OVER THE ENTIRE RUN, AS MEASURED BY THE FREQUENCY OF IN RIVER RESTRICTIONS.] **The department shall also manage the common property fisheries with a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources.** The department shall manage the Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery as described in this section.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Delete unnecessary language in the Cook Inlet salmon management plans to direct the department to minimize the commercial harvest of coho. That language restricts the flexibility for the managers to manage on a real time basis, based on in season abundance, to harvest the surplus of all salmon species and results in gross over-escapements and the waste of valuable harvestable salmon surpluses. This language 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. The sports fishery has a reasonable opportunity to fish because of the fact that salmon run into thousands of streams in the Cook Inlet drainage from May to October and most all are open to sports fishing. If one system is not open, for escapement reasons, a sports fisherman has many other system they can fish. 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. There is unfair and has no parity in reasonable opportunity between commercial and recreational fisheries under the current management plans. There are no conservation concerns on coho and most coho runs are harvested well below acceptable 60% to 70% exploitation rates, with many exploitation rates being less than 5% and most less than 2%. 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-F23-025)

PROPOSAL 122

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Repeal the 'one percent rule' in the Central District drift gillnet fishery as follows:

5 AAC 21.353. (4) (E) (3) (B).

Delete " The department determines that less than one percent of the season's total drift gillnet Sockeye salmon harvest has been taken per fishing period for two consecutive fishing periods in the drift gill net fishery."

By removing the language from this section, it would allow the drift fishery to remain open in whatever waters we are permitted to fish in until August 15th.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Remove this restriction from the regulations. This restriction does not allow for harvest of available surpluses in salmon stocks should a surplus be available. The reduced fleet participation and lack of effort after August 1st makes it virtually impossible to meet this threshold. The remaining vessels still engaged in the fishery after August 1st are predominately local owners. It is a chance for local owners to continue to fish without a significant impact to any one stock. The regulation also does not take into account late arriving runs and the pulses that naturally occur in every fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Harrison (EF-F23-048)

PROPOSAL 123

5 AAC 21.310. Fishing Seasons; 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Repeal the "one percent rule" from Upper Cook Inlet commercial salmon fishery management plans as follows:

Eliminate the 1% rule from the management plans and manage on abundance using the most reliable science available.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The 1% rule doesn't work and only creates harm to the commercial fishing industry, communities and the resource. Since its inception there has been million of salmon gone un-harvested and countless systems being over-escaped. There are not conservation concerns with coho or any other salmon species after July. In fact salmon are returning in good numbers. Kenai sockeye salmon are consistently returning at a higher rate in August and the 1% rule has prevented their harvest along with forgoing harvest of vast numbers of chum and pink salmon in August. The 1% regulation is simply an unreasonable allocation. No other fishery in the State has this unscientific regulation. The 1 % rule prevents the managers from harvesting the millions of surplus salmon, especially on even year pink returns. Delete the mandatory 1% rule regulation from all management plans. The 1% rule restricts the flexibility for 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 1% rule 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. There 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-F23-034)

PROPOSAL 124

5 AAC 21.310. Fishing Seasons.; 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Repeal the “one percent rule” from Upper Cook Inlet commercial salmon fishery management plans as follows:

The 1% rule is repealed in order to access the harvestable surplus of sockeyes of which many return in August.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Repeal the 1% rule – large harvestable surplus is wasted.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F23-064)

PROPOSAL 125

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Repeal sections of the *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan* to provide additional commercial salmon fishing opportunity with drift gillnet gear as follows:

Delete 5AAC 21.353 (4) (e) (1) (A)(B)(C)(D) (2)(A)(B)(C)(3)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The fishing area after August 1st had been inlet wide for a hundred year and was by a misguided Board generated Proposal three years ago. The data shows Northern District bound salmon stock are through the central District by Aug 1st. The closure implemented three years ago unnecessarily closed fishing on local west side salmon stocks that are remote, and get little to no sports fishing and with the closure get little or no commercial harvest.

It is poor management to close this area after Aug 1st which only results in little to no commercial harvest on surplus salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F23-026)

PROPOSAL 126

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Increase drift gillnet fishing opportunity in Drift Gillnet Area 2 as follows:

Open Area 2 to drift gillnetting twice a week 7am – 7 pm during all inlet wide openings throughout the season.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Area Restrictions – the beach is closed, access to harvestable surplus, area 2 has been closed for over a decade.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs

(HQ-F23-061)

PROPOSAL 127

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

Modify weekly fishing periods in the *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan* as follows:

The drift fleet will fish 2 - 12 hour openings inlet wide, 1 - 12 hour opening (6 mile corridor) WEEKLY.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Drift gillnet openings – the beach is closed, no set nets.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs

(HQ-F23-066)
