

Kodiak Area Commercial Herring (2 proposals)

PROPOSAL 56

5 AAC 27.510. Fishing seasons and periods for Kodiak Area.

Modify the fishing season and periods for the Kodiak Management Area to increase commercial herring fishing opportunity as follows:

5 AAC 27.510. Fishing seasons and periods for Kodiak Area.

(1) [FROM APRIL 1 THROUGH MAY 7] fishing periods for purse seines are from **9:00 a.m.** [12:00 NOON] until **9:00** [9:00] p.m. [ON ODD-NUMBERED DAYS, AND FROM 9:00 A.M. UNTIL 12:00 NOON ON EVEN-NUMBERED DAYS IF A HARVESTABLE SURPLUS IS AVAILABLE; FROM MAY 8 THROUGH JUNE 30, FISHING PERIODS FOR PURSE SEINES ARE FROM 12:00 NOON UNTIL 10:00 P.M. ON ODD-NUMBERED DAYS, AND FROM 9:00 A.M. UNTIL 12:00 NOON ON EVEN-NUMBERED DAYS IF A HARVESTABLE SURPLUS IS AVAILABLE];

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Operating hours for herring are an awkward artifact of the past. A gillnet fishery in all practicality no longer exists, and coordination between processors, harvesters, and the department is much improved from when the current regulatory structure was implemented. Extending daily fishing periods would facilitate a more orderly fishery providing fishermen with more time to focus harvest on higher quality fish. The fishery would still be managed based on harvest volumes and biomass and would not increase exploitation rates.

PROPOSED BY: Darren Platt

(HQ-F23-059)

PROPOSAL 57

5 AAC 27.510. Fishing seasons and periods for Kodiak Area; 5 AAC 27.525. Seine specifications and operations for Kodiak Area and 5 AAC 27.535. Harvest strategies for Kodiak Area.

Modify herring purse seine gear, fishing season and periods, and herring sac roe harvest strategy to increase commercial herring harvest as follows:

5 AAC 27.510 (a) Unless otherwise provided for by emergency order, herring may be take during the **herring** [sac roe] season from **April 1 through Dec 31** [April 1 through June 30] as follows: **A season, April 1 through May 15. B Season, October 1 through December 31.**

5 AAC 27.525 c) From **October 1 through December 31** [August 1 through February 28], a purse seine may not be more than 1,625 meshes in depth, including meshes used as chafing gear, or more than 150 fathoms in length.

5AAC 27.535 **f) B season shall begin October 1 with a GHY of 1,000 tons, unless the department assess the combined Kodiak Herring Season GHY to be less than 2,500 tons, in which case, A and B season will be evenly split.**

g) Any unharvested GHL from the A season shall be rolled into the B season. Unless the department determines the available biomass assessed in the A season is not large enough to support an exploitation of at least 10%.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? As the sac roe market continues to decline and the need to diversify and bring new value to the herring fishery, management must be modified to allow harvest to take place when the herring are past their spawning phase, and into the high fat stage of life. New Product made from herring, be it canned, pickled, or smoked requires higher fat and better nutrition profiles. This can only be realized after the herring have been feeding for 5 or 6 months past spawning.

Kodiak is unique in Alaska, having the right size herring (+200 grams) and the geographical access during the fall and early winter where this nutritional profile is at its peak. The 2022 study of North Sea herring will best advise the needs, uses, and market placement of the Kodiak fall herring in this proposal. <https://www.alaskaseafood.org/resource/alaska-herring-market-recovery-project-report-2022/>

Most of the allowable herring harvest in Alaska will once again go unharvested in 2023 due to the falling market for "roe herring" that has been the case for many years now. To change the options and direction for unmarketable Alaska herring, management must change to being allowing access to these needed food grade herring.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce Schactler

(HQ-F23-110)
