

PROPOSAL 101 – 5 AAC 07.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. Repeal Kuskokwim Area depth specifications for commercial gillnets greater than six-inch mesh, as follows:

5 AAC 07.331(b) is amended to read:

(b) The maximum depth of gillnets is as follows:

(1) gillnets with six-inch or smaller mesh may not be more than 45 meshes in depth;

(2) **repealed** / / [GILLNETS WITH GREATER THAN SIX-INCH MESH MAY NOT BE MORE THAN 35 MESHES IN DEPTH].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Within the Kuskokwim Area commercial fisheries, only gillnets with six-inch or smaller mesh are considered legal gear. Since gillnets with larger than six-inch mesh are not legal gear in the Kuskokwim Area commercial fisheries, there is no need to have a mesh depth regulation specified for that mesh size. The suggested change would simplify the codified regulations and remove unnecessary regulatory language.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game

(HQ-F15-023)

PROPOSAL 102 – 5 AAC 07.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. Change gillnet mesh size from six inches or smaller to five and three-quarters inches or smaller in District 4 of the Kuskokwim Area, as follows:

5 AAC 07.331. Gillnet specifications and operations is amended to readL:

(d)

(2) salmon may be taken only with gillnets of **5 3/4-inch** [6-inch] or smaller mesh.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Due to the closed and highly regulatory restrictions on the harvest of the Chinook salmon in District W-4, commercial fisherman, have foregone the opportunity to harvest the more abundant sockeye and chum salmon. Sockeye and chum salmon runs overlap the Chinook salmon run which makes it a challenge to minimize the commercial harvest of the more abundant species. Additionally, the nature and design of the commercial salmon fishery in the “W-4” district makes it an incredible

challenge to utilize alternative gear to avoid and minimize the harvest of Chinook salmon. Many of the commercial fisherman of District W-4 (Quinhagak) depend on the commercial fishery as their sole source of income for the few short months it is open. By reducing the mesh size from 6 inches to 5 3/4 inches, this would allow commercial fisherman the opportunity to harvest sockeye and chum salmon during their peak run timing while providing the Chinook salmon the opportunity to escape during times of conservation. Should the Chinook salmon conservation be lifted, then so should the mesh size reduction, allowing commercial fisherman in district W-4 to go back up to 6-inch or less in mesh size.

(Editor note: 5 AAC 07.331(d) also addresses District 5.)

PROPOSED BY: Native Village of Kwinhagak (EF-C15-107)

PROPOSAL 103 – 5 AAC 07.367. District 4 Salmon Management Plan. Amend the Kuskokwim Area District 4 Salmon Management Plan to include District 5, as follows:

5 AAC 07.367 is amended to read:

5 AAC 07.367. District 4 **and 5** Salmon Management Plan. (a) The objective of the District 4 **and 5** Salmon Management Plan is to maintain a level of sustained yield which will provide for subsistence needs, the long-term economic health of the commercial and sport fishing industries, and recreational opportunities, in the **districts** [DISTRICT] and freshwater systems flowing into the **districts** [DISTRICT].

(b) The District 4 commercial salmon fishery is to open before June 16.

(c) When the catch of king salmon in the commercial fishery is less than 50 percent of the catch of king and sockeye salmon combined, the department shall manage, to the extent practicable, the commercial salmon fishery based on the strength of the sockeye salmon return.

(d) Commercial salmon fishing periods are established by emergency order. The department shall allow at least one fishing period per week, unless a severe conservation problem develops.

(e) When a closure of the commercial salmon fishery is required, the department shall decide, on or before the 10th day of the closure, whether to close the sport fishery to the taking of the species of the biological concern and whether additional management actions on the sport fishery are needed.

(f) During times of king salmon conservation, the commercial fishery in District 5 may be restricted to that portion of Goodnews Bay east of a line from ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately two miles south on the seaward side of the entrance of Goodnews Bay to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately two miles north on the seaward side of the entrance of Goodnews Bay and west of a line from Big Beluga to Little Beluga.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently the department uses elements of the *District 4 Salmon Management Plan* to manage District 5 salmon resources for sustained yield. Including applicable aspects of the *District 4 Salmon Management Plan* to manage

District 5 will make fisheries management strategies clearer to fishermen in District 5. The District 5 fishing area has been reduced in the past by emergency order to conserve king salmon while directing the harvest at sockeye salmon.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F15-022)

PROPOSAL 104 – 5 AAC 07.200. Fishing districts, subdistricts, and sections. Increase the commercial fishing area in District 5 of the Kuskokwim Area, as follows:

5 AAC 07.200(d) is amended to read:

(d) District 5 consists of that portion of Goodnews Bay east of a line from an ADF&G regulatory marker located at Red Mountain, approximately 3–5 [TWO] miles south of the seaward side of the entrance [MOUTH] of Goodnews Bay to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at Qengallek Point, approximately 3–4 [TWO] miles north of the seaward side of the entrance of Goodnews Bay and west of a line between the mouth of Ukfigag Creek at 59° 04.17' N. lat., 161° 36' W. long., and the mouth of the Tunulik River at 59° 08' N. lat., 161° 37' W. long."

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Extend the line on the seaward side of the district. When the fishery opens during the summer there are lot of fishermen that comes down to Goodnews Bay District from other villages to fish and with the influx of fishermen there is a lack of space to fish, especially during low tides. The inside of the Bay shrinks to more than half of its size since most of the Bay becomes mudflats and most of it becomes very shallow and what little area of deep enough water to fish in, it always becomes congested creating sometimes tensions between the fishermen and the only option is to go outside of the Bay to fish and even outside with more boats from other villages there is lack of space to fish since it would be impracticable to fish very close to the other boats.

PROPOSED BY: Peter Julius, Native Village of Goodnews Bay (EF-C15-036)
