

PROPOSAL 110

5 AAC 27.185. Management plan for herring spawn on kelp in pounds fisheries in Sections 3-B, 12-A, and 13-C, and District 7.

Allow the department to close fishing to some herring pound types to manage the fishery within the allowable guideline harvest level, as follows:

5 AAC 27.185(b) is amended to read:

(b) In Sections 3-B, 12-A, and 13-C, and District 7, a herring spawn-on-kelp CFEC permit holder may jointly operate an open pound with one or more other herring spawn-on-kelp CFEC permit holders and a closed pound with one or more other herring spawn-on-kelp CFEC permit holders. A permit holder operating an open pound may use fronds or individual kelp blades in the open pound, but may not use both during a fishing season.

(xx) The department may close fishing for some pound types listed in 5 AAC 27.185 (c) and 5 AAC 27.185 (dd)(2) if necessary to avoid exceeding the guideline harvest level.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? At the 2015 Southeast and Yakutat Finfish board meeting, the kelp allocation table was modified to give incentives for permit holders to join into multi-permit, combined pounds. In addition, there was no kelp allocation and thus no fishery, when the guideline harvest level (GHL) was less than 250 tons. This was initially effective as the number of structures decreased from 76 in 2015 to 46 in 2016.

The modification to the kelp allocation tables did not provide the incentives needed for the unexpected drop in GHL that occurred in the 2017 season. In order to remain within the GHL of 349 tons, the department determined that no more than 20 herring pounds could be allowed. This number of pounds was determined using the GHL of 349 tons and assumptions of 20 tons of herring per pound and 125 permits participating in the fishery. The department closed the fishery to herring pounds with fewer than six permit holders by invoking 5 AAC 27.185 (q) which allows the department to restrict the transfer of herring into pounds, effectively limiting the fishery to 20 pound structures.

The department is asking that language be added to the regulation to make clear that the department may close any of the pound types to fishermen in order to achieve the appropriate number of pound structures and thus manage the fishery within the GHL.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F17-109)
