

PROPOSAL 207

5 AAC 77.010. Methods, means and general restrictions.

Allow retrieval of personal use scallop dredges with five horsepower or less haulers, as follows:

(k) Unless otherwise specified in this chapter, gear used in the personal use taking of shellfish is limited to the following:

- (1) shrimp may be taken only with pots and ring nets;
- (2) crab may be taken only with pots, ring nets, diving gear, dip nets hooked or hookless handlines, or by hand; a line attached to a pole or rod may be used in the Bering Sea only when fishing a line through the ice;
- (3) clams may be taken only by hand or with rakes, shovels, and manually operated clam guns;
- (4) abalone may be taken only with abalone irons, diving gear, or by hand;
- (5) scallop dredges may be retrieved with a small (5hp or less) line hauler/pot puller.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently a person may only use a hand operated dredge for the PU scallop fishery. A person can use their vessel (with unlimited horsepower) to plane their dredge to the surface and use the buoy method to float their dredge and pull the dredge in horizontally rather than vertically. Pulling the dredge through the water at a high rate of speed to plane it to the surface can harm any bycatch species that need to be returned to the ocean. The buoy method in rough seas (rather common in Alaska) can make this a hazardous procedure. If the dredge were to hook on the bottom while using the buoy method one can easily sink their vessel. Currently in the crab and shrimp PU fisheries a pot/puller are allowed.

Our recommendation is to allow for the use of small (5hp or less) line haulers/pot pullers to assist in the retrieval of a dredge in the PU scallop fishery. The small horsepower will not allow for commercial size dredges. This will make the fishery safer for everyone involved. This will also allow for less harm to come to any bycatch species that need to be returned immediately.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee

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