

PROPOSAL 84

5 AAC 31.136. Closed waters in Registration Area A.

Close additional waters in District 2 to commercial pot shrimp fishing, as follows:

(4) Shrimp may not be taken: in the waters of Kasaan Bay north and west of a line from the northern most tip of Daisy Island located at 55°28.816'N lat, 132°19.379'W long. northeast to a point on Kasaan Peninsula located at 55°30.533'N lat, 132°18.191'W, including all waters of Twelve-mile Arm;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? ~~The 2013 October commercial shrimp season for District 2 has left the personal use shrimpers with low shrimp biomass. District 2 is a large area; however the commercial fishing fleet focused their efforts in the waters of Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm in 2013 which are adjacent to the communities of Hollis and Kasaan. Both areas were hard to navigate during the fishery from the large amount of commercial gear. After the 2013 commercial season, personal use fishermen had a hard time locating shrimp in the waters of Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm. When shrimp was harvested, the numbers of them caught, and continue today in the single digits and small in size. The area used to receive moderate personal use fishing pressure through-out the year from residents of Prince of Wales Island as well as Ketchikan. Prince of Wales has a large population of subsistence / personal use users who rely on the land and ocean to feed their families. The island has a high cost of living with a financially depressed economy. ADF&G held a 2014 commercial shrimp season; however they closed Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm after a period where the commercial fishermen were catching very low numbers for the effort they put in to the fishery. Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm remained closed for the 2015 and 2016 commercial shrimp seasons by emergency order due to a low biomass. The personal use fishermen have exhausted most of their efforts and express they will continue their efforts when the shrimp catch rate equals the financial burden of fuel and operation costs. Currently the shrimp biomass is harvested commercially in October while the female shrimp contain eggs and is marketed to an overseas market. This commercial closure of Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm is a small percentage of District 2 which runs the eastern shores of Prince of Wales Island south of Narrow Point and north of the US/Canadian border. This area includes all waters of bays and sounds on Prince of Wales Island on the eastern shore, south of Narrow Point. The large commercial vessels can easily navigate these areas open to commercial shrimping and away from the communities of Hollis and Kasaan who rely on a subsistence lifestyle to exist.

A regulation closure of the area to commercial shrimping would protect a relatively small percentage of District 2 to allow personal use fishermen to utilize the resource. Ketchikan personal use fishermen would benefit from closed commercial shrimp area as buoys in the Kasaan Bay are routinely observed with Ketchikan addresses. The area selected for the closure is in close proximity to the community of Hollis and village of Kasaan. Both places have harbors and boat launches which are utilized by all residents of Prince of Wales Island with small vessels. Commercial vessels would still be able to fish District 2 in waters not directly adjacent to the communities of Hollis and Kasaan.

PROPOSED BY: Hollis Community Council Inc.

(EF-F17-021)
