

PROPOSAL 138

5 AAC 09.365. South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June Salmon Management Plan. and 5 AAC 09.366. Post-June Salmon Management Plan for the South Alaska Peninsula.

Amend the *South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June Salmon Management Plan* and the *Post-June Salmon Management Plan for the South Alaska Peninsula* to reduce commercial salmon fishing opportunity in the Dolgoi Island Area, as follows:

5 AAC 09.365 (d): amend to include the following and repeal 5 AAC 09.365 (f).

(*) for set gillnet gear in the Dolgoi Island Area (Statistical Areas 283-20, 283-21, 283-23, 283-25, 283-26, 284-36 thru 284-39, and 284-42),

(A) beginning June 7 commercial fishing periods will begin at 6:00 a.m. and run 66 hours until 11:59 p.m. two days later; commercial fishing will then close for 54 hours and reopen at 6:00 a.m. three days later.

(B) notwithstanding (A) of this paragraph, the final commercial fishing period will end at 11:59 p.m. on June 28.

(*) for seine and drift gillnet gear in the Dolgoi Island Area (Statistical Areas 283-20, 283-21, 283-23, 283-25, 283-26, 284-36 thru 284-39, and 284-42),

(A) beginning June 10 commercial fishing periods will begin at 6:00 a.m. and run 66 hours until 11:59 p.m. two days later; commercial fishing will then close for 54 hours and reopen at 6:00 a.m. three days later.

(B) notwithstanding (A) of this paragraph, the final commercial fishing period will end at 11:59 p.m. on June 27.

5 AAC 09.366 (c): amend to include the following and repeal 5 AAC 09.366 (j).

(*) In the Dolgoi Island Area (Statistical Areas 283-20, 283-21, 283-23, 283-25, 283-26, 284-36 thru 284-39, and 284-42).

Amend (e) to read:

(e) Notwithstanding the provisions of (d) of this section, commercial fishing periods will be equivalent and concurrent with that provided in waters of the SEDM as regulated on the harvest of Chignik-bound sockeye salmon July 1 - July 25 in accordance with 5 AAC 09.360.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Dolgoi Island Area Fishery of Area M South Peninsula June 1–July 25.

The Dolgoi Island Area fishery, June thru July 25, is absent of a stock-conservation assignment on Chignik-bound sockeye salmon and a parallel provision for ensuring a harvest preference for the Chignik terminal-stock fishery. Known is that the Dolgoi fishery targets primarily Bristol Bay (BB) and Chignik bound sockeye salmon, and other non-local sockeye stocks (Upper CI and Kodiak sockeye). While its impact on BB sockeye is rather negligible, the fishery substantially impacts eastward traveling sockeye salmon headed for Chignik. The WASSIP study verified such even during two of the three study years when the two Chignik runs were relatively weak (2007 & 08).

In 2007 and 2008, Area M's Southeastern District Mainland (SEDM) fishery was closed due to Chignik-run failures, but the Dolgoi Island Area fishery remained open. Similarly in Kodiak's 2008 Igvak fishery on Chignik-bound sockeye it too was completely closed and again, in 2014 along with the SEDM fishery. In those years Dolgoi Island Area fished without any limit on the harvest of Chignik-bound sockeye salmon or sharing in the conservation burden. It is quite reasonable for the Dolgoi fishery, based on the 2006-08 WASSIP study which identified an average 50% Chignik-stock component, to shoulder a conservation assignment on Chignik sockeye salmon along with a minimum harvest preference as provided in the Igvak and SEDM plans for the Area L Chignik fishery.

Certainly the Dolgoi Island Area fishery is historic. However, it has accelerated and now having more impact on Chignik-bound sockeye than in the past. Catch numbers have increased and the recently imposed 191,000 sockeye salmon limit is not comprehensive to where there is accounting for weakness or failures in either of the two Chignik runs. In the 2016 Dolgoi fishery 429,000 sockeye were harvested through July 25th and in 2017 the catch was 258,000. The excessive catches were due to a combination of factors but mainly owing to a false assumption that the cap would effectively prevent catches from exceeding a total of about 200,000 sockeye salmon through July 25th. Such was not the case. Of the 429,000 sockeye taken in the 2016 fishery 175,000 were harvested after the closure of the statistical areas covered by the cap. In 2017 66,000 sockeye salmon were harvested in excess of the 191,000 cap. Secondarily leading to those overages, management permitted continued fishing in the prescribed closed areas 12 hours after fish tickets tallied 191k and for 6 hours in the 2017 fishery. The justification cited was time needed to accommodate orderly gear removal. At Chignik in 2017 due to a poor second run mainly only 897,000 sockeye salmon were harvested, an amount 40% less than the averages for 2007-16 and 2012-16 and not enough to sustain the fleet and local villages without record high catches of other salmon species which thankfully occurred with the local pink and chum salmon runs. Reasonable safeguards are needed in the interception fisheries known to harvest strong numbers of Chignik bound sockeye salmon; the Board has acknowledged this in the current Igvak and SEDM plans, and this is needed in the Dolgoi Island fishery to safeguard, as best possible, the economic and cultural viability of the Chignik salmon fishery.

As current regulations stand the Dolgoi Island Area fishes regardless of whether the early and/or late Chignik runs fail or where escapement needs are barley met or even not met which could be the case for the 2018 early run. Presently, ADF&G is projecting the lower end on the 80% confidence range on Chignik's 2018 first-run to be zero (0) fish----- no catch or escapement.

The change being proposed is to adjust the fishing time in June in the Dolgoi Island Area to 75% of the current assigned time through June and thereafter, July 1-25, provide fishing time equivalent and concurrent with that provided in waters of the SEDM as regulated on the interception of Chignik bound sockeye salmon. But importantly, none of the Dolgoi sockeye salmon catch would be assigned to or against the 7.6% SEDM-Chignik allocation, and there would **not be** a 191,000 sockeye cap imposed on the Dolgoi Island Area Fishery June 1-July 25 as provided in current regulation.

PROPOSED BY: Jacob Shangin

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