

PROPOSAL 195

5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

Amend the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet one percent rule to a two percent rule beginning July 31 instead of August 7, as follows:

(2) Central District, for set gillnet:

(C) Upper Subdistrict:

(iii) Kenai, Kasilof, and East Forelands Sections: in the combined Kenai and East Forelands Sections, and separately in the Kasilof Section, the season will close August 15, unless closed earlier by emergency order after **July 31** [AUGUST 7], if the department determines that less than **two** [ONE] percent of the season's total sockeye harvest has been taken per fishing period for two consecutive fishing periods in the combined Kenai and East Forelands Sections, or separately in the Kasilof Section; from August 11 through August 15, the fishery is open for regular fishing periods only; for purposes of this sub-subparagraph, "fishing period" means a time period open to commercial fishing as measured by a 24-hour calendar day from 12:01 a.m. until 11:59 p.m.;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current regulations do not clearly define the closure of the sockeye salmon fishery when harvest of sockeye shows a trend of sharp decline and incidental catches of coho are increasing. Without clear definition it is difficult, if not impossible, for the department to manage the upper Cook Inlet commercial salmon fisheries to minimize the incidental take of Kenai River Coho salmon stocks. Current dates identified in the management plan do not adequately address the period prior to August 7. In addition, the one percent standard does not effectively anticipate the demise of the sockeye run – a higher standard is more appropriate.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association

(HQ-F19-124)
