

PROPOSAL 67

5 AAC 18.331. Gillnet specifications and operations.

Allow the use of single filament mesh web in a set gillnet in the Kodiak Area, as follows:

Notwithstanding 5 AAC 39.250(c), in the Kodiak Area, a person may use single filament mesh web in a set gillnet.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Kodiak salmon setnet fishermen are experiencing increasing extreme slime events. 2017 and 2018 were the worst that have occurred. During these time periods – approximately 26 days in 2017 and 21 days in 2018 - setnets were coated with slime and rendered unfishable. The slime occurred during some of the most productive time periods, late July and early August, for Kodiak setnetters. The slime we are experiencing is so heavy it is difficult to leave our web in the water. It becomes so heavy that it breaks the net from the setnet frame.

The multi-strand web we are legally allowed to fish is very susceptible to capturing and holding this heavy slime and it is difficult to clean with water pressure pumps. We believe that single filament mesh web may be less susceptible to absorbing and holding slime and may be easier to pump clean and catch fish again.

To test this theory, four Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game Commissioner Subsistence Permits have been issued to Northwest Setnetters Association members. These permits will be used during heavy slime events in the 2019 salmon season to test fish single filament mesh web alongside our multi-strand web and ascertain its benefits. These results will be presented to the Board of Fisheries meeting scheduled for Kodiak in 2020.

What will happen if problem is not solved? Kodiak setnet fishermen will lose valuable fishing time due to nets becoming “slimed”.

PROPOSED BY: Northwest Setnetters Association

(HQ-F19-063)
