

**PROPOSAL 251**

**5 AAC 31.2XX. New section.**

Establish permit and reporting requirements for shrimp floating processor vessels in the Prince William Sound Area (PWS; Registration Area E), as follows:

**(a) The vessel owner or operator of a floating processor used in the processing of shrimp shall obtain a permit from the department before starting processing operations and comply with all requirements and reporting procedures specified in this section.**

**(b) The vessel owner or operator of a floating processor shall report to the department:**

**(1) the vessel location and any changes in location, by reporting latitude and longitude of vessel;**

**(2) the projected dates that processing will commence, conclude, and resume;**

**(3) at least once per day, for the preceding 24 hours, the permanent ADF&G vessel license plate number of all vessels delivering to the floating processor;**

**(4) the number of vessels making deliveries, the number of deliveries, and the pounds, in whole weight by species of shrimp purchased for each statistical area;**

**(5) at least 24 hours before beginning to unload processed shrimp, the time and place that it will be unloaded; and**

**(6) any other information required by the department for the purpose of conserving and developing shrimp resources.**

**(c) The vessel owner or operator shall allow local representatives of the department to inspect at any time, the vessel's holds, live tanks, freezers, processing areas, and unprocessed shrimp.**

**(d) The vessel owner or operator shall complete a fish ticket for each delivery and submit the tickets to the department within seven days of the delivery.**

**(e) The commissioner may require an onboard observer on a floating processor during processing operations.**

**(f) For the purpose of this section, a "floating processor" means a vessel that purchases or processes shrimp delivered to it by other vessels; in Registration Area E, a floating processor may not operate shrimp gear.**

**(g) If the department determines that a requirement specified in this section is not necessary for conserving and developing shrimp resources, the department may waive or**

**modify that requirement to ensure the conservation and development of the shrimp resources.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** There is increasing interest from floating processors to participate in the shrimp pot and trawl fisheries in PWS. The guideline harvest levels (GHLs) in PWS shrimp fisheries are modest and targeted by the department by monitoring landings at ports from each vessel. Floating processors may buy shrimp from multiple catcher vessels, and therefore, the department needs a mechanism for documentation and reporting of landings to floating processors, because they can potentially hold large amounts of shrimp without returning to port. The floating processor can freeze shrimp which allows them to remain at sea for extended periods of time. Daily reporting requirements will aid the department in targeting the GHL in these small fisheries.

Additionally, this proposal would clearly limit the activity of a floating processor to purchasing or processing shrimp from other vessels in PWS and would not allow a floating processor to operate gear in the shrimp fishery. The statewide definition of “floating processor” in 5 AAC 39.130 (o)(12) is interpreted to allow a catcher-processor to also operate as a floating processor and be the first purchaser from other vessels. However, in 5 AAC 39.130 (o)(3) “catcher-processor” is defined as a commercial fisherman who sells or attempts to sell processed or unprocessed fish that were legally taken only by the catcher-processor. By statewide regulation 5 AAC 31.033, a vessel used to tender shrimp may not have shrimp gear or equipment on board and may not be used to fish for shrimp. This proposal would specify what is allowable activity by a floating processor in PWS.

A similar regulation exists for the shrimp fishery in Registration Area A, Southeast Alaska with a definition of floating-processor (5 AAC 31.144); catcher-processor is also defined by Southeast area regulation (5 AAC 31.143). The definition of floating processor in this proposal for PWS clarifies allowable activities.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F20-136)  
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