

PROPOSAL 211

5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

Repeal certain restrictive provisions of the Northern District Salmon Management Plan as follows:

5 AAC 21.358 Northern District Salmon Management Plan

Delete Section (c) in its entirety as it is not needed because in 2020 the Board of Fisheries removed the Susitna sockeye “Stock of Yield Concern.” The Northern District set net fishery would revert to normal management by the department where the department can manage the fishery by area, time, and gear restrictions based on stock abundance.

Repealed

~~(c) From July 20 through August 6, if the departments assessment of abundance indicates that restrictions are necessary to achieve the escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Northern District and immediately reopen a season during which the number of set gillnets that may be used is limited to the following options selected at the discretion of the commissioner except that from July 31 through August 6, the commissioner may allow the use of two set gillnets in that portion of the General District south of the Susitna River:~~

- ~~(1) three set gillnets that are not more than 105 fathoms in aggregate length;~~
- ~~(2) two set get gillnets that are not more than 70 fathoms in aggregate length;~~
- ~~(3) one set gillnet that is not more than 355 fathoms in length;~~

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Gear restrictions in the Northern District of Upper Cook Inlet during the peak sockeye run in the Northern District.

In 2008, the Board of Fisheries designated Susitna sockeye as a “Stock of Yield Concern.” Associated with that designation was the authority for the Department to restrict the fishing gear in the Northern District set net fishery from July 20 to August 6. Subsequently, the majority of the Northern District has been restricted to one net during this period.

In 2020, the Board of Fisheries removed the Susitna sockeye as a “Stock of Yield Concern.” Also, in 2020, the Board of Fisheries approved a new and expanding mixed stock fishery in the lower Susitna mainstem prosecuted as a dip net fishery.

No corresponding action was taken to address the gear reduction in the commercial set net fishery at that time.

The commercial set net fishery has continued to have gear reduced to one net during the peak of the sockeye run from July 20 to August 6 for a sockeye stock that is no longer a “Stock of Yield Concern,” and on a stock for which the Board of Fisheries considered sufficient to open a new fishery in 2020.

The Northern District Set Netters would like the regulations to reflect the Board’s decision to remove the Susitna sockeye “Stock of Yield concern” designation and remove the regulatory Northern District restrictions during the July 20 to August 6 time period.

PROPOSED BY: Northern District Set Netters of Cook Inlet (HQ-F23-091)
