

Pink Salmon Management Plan (2 proposals)

PROPOSAL 144

5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

Amend the *Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan* as follows:

Regulation as currently written:

5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan

(a) The purpose of this management plan is to allow for the harvest of surplus pink

salmon in the Upper Subdistrict for set gillnet and drift gillnet gear. Notwithstanding 5 AAC 21.310(b)(2)(C)(iii), from August 11 through August 15, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open a commercial pink salmon fishery in an even-numbered year for up to two regular 12-hour fishing periods if the commissioner determines that the sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers are being achieved and coho salmon run strength is sufficient to withstand additional harvest.

(b) The first pink salmon commercial fishing period will occur only if, during the regular fishing periods from August 6 through August 10, the daily harvest of pink salmon in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery exceeds 25,000 fish or the cumulative harvest is 50,000 or more pink salmon. The second pink salmon commercial fishing period will occur only if 25,000 or more pink salmon and no more than 2,500 coho salmon are harvested in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery during the first pink salmon commercial fishing period.

(c) During a pink salmon commercial fishing period opened under this section, a

set gillnet may not have a mesh size greater than four and three-quarters inches; and

(2) drift gillnet may not have a mesh size greater than four and three-quarters inches, and fishing with drift gillnet gear will only be opened in the areas defined in 5 AAC 21.200(b)(2)(B).

Proposed regulation wording

5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan

(a) The purpose of this management plan is to allow for the harvest of surplus pink salmon in the Upper Subdistrict for set gillnet and drift gillnet. One additional pink salmon commercial fishing period per week will be allowed during the first two weeks of August on even calendar years.

(b) The second pink salmon commercial fishing period will occur only if no more than 2,500 coho salmon are harvested in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery during the first pink salmon commercial fishing period.

(c) During a pink salmon commercial fishing period opened under this section, a

set gillnet may not have a mesh size greater than four and three-quarters inches; and

(2) drift gillnet may not have a mesh size greater than four and three-quarters inches, and fishing with drift gillnet gear will only be opened in the areas defined in 5 AAC 21.200(b)(2)(B).

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Commercial opportunity needs to be defined to allow harvest.

Regulations as written are not working, review historical data.

Can't remember the last time we had a pink harvest opener.

PROPOSED BY: Chris Every

(EF-F23-107)

PROPOSAL 145

5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

Increase commercial fishing opportunity in the *Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan* as follows:

Delete 5 AAC 21.354 [(a) (b) (c) (1) (2)]

Replace with: **(a) The department shall use additional time and area to manage the Cook Inlet pink salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. The department shall strive for a harvest rate in the accepted 60% to 70% exploitation range.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Insert The current pink salmon management plan does not allow the managers the flexibility to harvest the pink salmon surplus. Literally tens of millions of pinks are not allowed to be harvested under the current management plans. Under the current management plans less than 2% of the pink salmon runs are harvested. ADF&G data shows that the Cook Inlet has had even year returns of up to 40 million pinks. That is a lot of food and economic resource not being utilized. The current pink salmon management plan restricts the flexibility of the managers to manage on a real time basis, based on in season abundance and salmon migration, to harvest the surplus of all salmon species and results in gross over-escapements and the waste of valuable harvestable salmon surpluses. The current pink salmon management plan is unscientific and intentionally inadequate and has resulted in tens of millions of harvestable salmon going un-harvested and negatively affects the commercial fishing industry, communities, National food source, interstate commerce, economies and also decreases future salmon production resulting from the effects of over escapement. It also violates the Magnuson Stevens Act and other applicable laws. The sports fishery has a reasonable opportunity to fish and reasonable numbers of salmon to harvest. In comparison the commercial fisherman, when restricted or closed down, has no other area to fish because they are restricted to the areas and their gear type by their limited entry permit they own. This is unfair and has no parity in reasonable opportunity between commercial and recreational fisheries under the current management plans. Because of overly restricted commercial fishing management plans only

around half of the CFEC permit holders are currently participating in the Cook Inlet fishery, thereby reducing their harvest potential by half.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F23-028)
