

PROPOSAL 214

5 AAC 38.142 Southeastern Alaska Geoduck Management Plan.

Allow for areas that have been closed for 5 years as a result of the estimated geoduck biomass dropping below 30% of the original biomass estimate to be resurveyed and potentially reopened.

At the end of paragraph (h) of 5AAC 38.142 add:

Once an area is closed for a period of 5 years due to exceeding the 30% threshold of the original biomass estimate, the Commissioner may direct the department to conduct a stock assessment and determine a new biomass estimate on which to base a new GHL for a resumption of fishing.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Under the current geoduck management plan once a commercial harvest area's population estimate goes below the 30% threshold of the original biomass estimate, the area is closed to commercial harvesting. Given significant ecosystem changes, it is very difficult to reopen areas once they meet this threshold. In many areas being closed, it does not mean overfishing has occurred; rather it is a reflection of environmental changes since the original biomass estimate was conducted. In these areas, use of an original biomass estimate is not reflective of current conditions. As a reference, in areas without drastic environmental changes, geoduck biomass and GHL have increased on re-survey.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This proposal was developed in conjunction with the Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association geoduck committee, which is comprised of 20 CFEC geoduck permit holders.

PROPOSED BY: Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association (HQ-F24-088)
