

## ***All Commercial Herring***

### **PROPOSAL 188**

#### **5 AAC 27.190. Herring Management Plan for Southeastern Alaska Area.**

Limit the number days and limit the number of hours in a day commercial herring activity may occur, require observers for commercial herring fishing, require reporting of bycatch in fishery announcements, and limit the overall commercial harvest of herring in Southeast Alaska to 15,000 tons.

27.190 would be revised with the following additions designed to avoid extreme pressure on herring stocks during commercial fishing activity:

For the management of herring fisheries in the Southeastern Alaska Area, the department:

1. **Shall manage commercial herring fisheries to reduce fishing pressure as follows:**

1. **Commercial herring fishing activity may not occur on a third consecutive day at any time or on more than 7 days in any 30-day period in any management area.**
2. **Herring fishing activity may not take place for more than 8 hours on any given day in any management area.**
3. **All herring fishing activity must be in line of sight of observers monitoring for excessive high-grading, responsible test-setting, or excessive disturbance, corralling, and manipulation of herring schools.**
4. **Total commercial catch of herring in Southeast Alaska shall not exceed 15,000 tons per year.**
5. **Bycatch from herring fisheries must be recorded and reported in fishery announcements.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Sustained sac roe seine fishing activity in localized areas causes depletion of aggregating pre-spawn herring in those areas and leads to reduced spawn in adjacent bays and shorelines. This impacts reasonable opportunity for subsistence and has possible long-lasting impacts on herring recruitment in specific areas of Sitka Sound, as herring are known to return to their natal grounds to spawn with high fidelity. Additionally, ADF&G vessel sounding activities on pre-spawning herring in pursuit of higher-value herring schools contribute to large scale-disturbance on spawning grounds from this fishery, including increased reporting of "false spawn" events in fishing-adjacent areas, wherein stressed males release milt in the absence of eggs and therefore fail to reproduce.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.** We developed the proposal in consultation with a small group of harvesters and elders and informed by prior conversation with many others.

This proposal was informed by the establishment of the Herring Revitalization Committee.

**PROPOSED BY:** Herring Protectors

(EF-F24-175)

\*\*\*\*\*

### **PROPOSAL 189**

#### **5 AAC 27.132. Seine specifications and perations for Southeastern Alaska Area.**

Reduce by half the length limit of purse seine net for commercial herring harvest.

To accomplish this, we recommend revising 5 AAC 27.132 as follows:

(a) A herring purse seine may not be more than **100** [200] fathoms in length.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Too many herring are being set on during a season. Part of the problem is that the nets deployed by the commercial fishery are massive. A smaller net would allow for more precise fishing and less catch-and-release, and thus lower scale loss, disease, mortality, stress, etc.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.** We developed the proposal in consultation with a small group of subsistence herring egg harvesters and community elders and were informed by prior conversations with many others

**PROPOSED BY:** Herring Protectors

(EF-F24-176)

\*\*\*\*\*

**PROPOSAL 190**

**5 AAC 27.190. Herring Management Plan for Southeastern Alaska Area.**

Provide for co-management of herring fisheries with tribal governments.

27.190 would be revised as follows:

For the management of herring fisheries in the Southeastern Alaska Area, the department:

1. **Shall develop a consent-based co-management framework to allow for collaborative management efforts with appropriate local sovereign Tribal Government(s). This co-management framework would be applied to a) determine minimum spawning biomass thresholds below which fishing will not be allowed, b) determine circumstances in which fishing would be allowed, c) determine methodology for other population assessments, including of mortality and of considerations for opening and closing the fishery, and of apt determinants of local herring population health, d) other considerations as appropriate.**
2. **The appropriate Tribal Government may call for an emergency closure at any time if in-season indications make such closure necessary. Such calls will result in immediate closure lasting no less than 48 hours unless the call is rescinded.**

[(1) SHALL IDENTIFY STOCKS OF HERRING ON A SPAWNING AREA BASIS;(2) SHALL ESTABLISH MINIMUM SPAWNING BIOMASS THRESHOLDS BELOW WHICH FISHING WILL NOT BE ALLOWED;(3) SHALL ASSESS THE ABUNDANCE OF MATURE HERRING FOR EACH STOCK BEFORE ALLOWING FISHING TO OCCUR;(4) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED ELSEWHERE, MAY ALLOW A HARVEST OF HERRING AT AN EXPLOITATION RATE BETWEEN 10 PERCENT AND 20 PERCENT OF THE ESTIMATED SPAWNING BIOMASS WHEN THAT BIOMASS IS ABOVE THE MINIMUM THRESHOLD LEVEL;(5) MAY IDENTIFY AND CONSIDER SOURCES OF MORTALITY IN SETTING HARVEST GUIDELINE;(6) BY EMERGENCY ORDER, MAY MODIFY FISHING PERIODS TO MINIMIZE INCIDENTAL MORTALITIES DURING COMMERCIAL FISHERIES.]

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Management practices by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in the sac roe era have resulted in herring population collapses in multiple areas, only some of which have begun to recover. These collapses were foretold by various individuals and entities who warned the Board of Fisheries of impending collapse in multiple instances. The warnings were not heeded.

Current GHGs are unreasonably high, recklessly exceeding the years of highest harvest of the harmful herring reduction fishery era. As one example, in recent years, unprecedentedly high-GHG fisheries have resulted in greater spatial and temporal pressure on herring in Sitka Sound than ever before.

ADF&G must evolve the management strategy to a consent-based co-management framework with appropriate local Tribal Government wherever commercial herring fishing is being considered.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.** We developed the proposal in consultation with a small group of subsistence herring egg harvesters and community elders and were informed by prior conversations with many others.

This proposal was informed by the establishment of the Herring Revitalization Committee.

**PROPOSED BY:** Herring Protectors

(EF-F24-169)

\*\*\*\*\*