

**PROPOSAL 271 – 5 AAC 07.365. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan.** Require four-inch mesh subsistence gillnets to be operated only as set gillnets in the Kuskokwim River during times of king salmon conservation, as follows:

5 AAC 07.365 (d)(2)(A) is amended to read:

**5 AAC 07.365. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan. (d)(2).**

(A) the gillnet mesh size may not exceed four inches **and a gillnet may only be operated as a set gillnet** until sockeye and chum abundance exceeds the king salmon abundance;

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** In January 2013, the Alaska Board of Fisheries adopted a new provision to the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan that includes additional king salmon conservation measures allowing the department to restrict subsistence gillnet mesh size to four inches or less until sockeye and chum salmon abundance exceeds king salmon abundance, effectively closing the subsistence salmon fishery until sockeye and chum salmon are present in adequate abundance.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, fishermen may target whitefish and other non-salmon species with a four-inch or less mesh size gillnet, used as either a set or drift gillnet, that may not exceed 60 feet in length. In 2012 and 2014, the department closed the subsistence salmon fishery for up to 31 days and there were reports of subsistence fishermen intentionally targeting king salmon by drifting four-inch mesh gillnets during the closures. The practice of targeting king salmon with drift gillnets during times when king salmon conservation measures are in place will continue to threaten the already diminished Kuskokwim River king salmon resource.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game

*(formerly ACR 6)*

\*\*\*\*\*