

RC 92 Suggested Amendment for Proposal 208 - Steve Merritt 2/27/15

Amend the drift net management plan for the District 8 area as follows. In years where there is an Allowable Catch of 1000 Chinook or more and the Department thinks they can conduct a directed fishery, the drift net fishery will use a maximum mesh size of 6 inches, until the 30th of June, in District 8.

Since the regulation book is complex on these things, I think it best the department determine in what part of the regulations this should be placed.

Rationale

It was always my intention to insure that the traditional sockeye fishery of the driftnet fleet be unaffected by the amendment I offered to Proposal 208 during public testimony.

However, it was pointed out to me that abundance and any Allowable Catch is evaluated during the season on a weekly basis. If an Allowable Catch was allowed in mid to late June, Proposal 208 would not permit the department to open a directed fishery using a king net for the gillnet fleet. This would deny the gillnet fleet participation in a traditional directed Chinook fishery.

So in order to protect both the traditional Sockeye and Chinook fisheries of the gillnet fleet, I am submitting this proposed amendment. **The intention of this amendment is to only restrict the gillnet fleet to a Sockeye net until June 30th when the Allowable Catch is less than 1,000 Chinook.**

Granted, there probably exists situations where the department would be able to have a directed fishery if an AC was less than 1000 Chinook, but I would think such occurrences will be extremely rare.

This should protect the gillnetter's traditional fisheries, in addition to granting trollers better access to Anita Bay Chinook when there is no directed fishery.

Sincerely,

Steve Merritt