

**PROPOSAL 126 – 5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.** Increase maximum mesh size for set gillnets to 5-inches and expand the fishing season to August 6–15 in the commercial pink salmon fishery, as follows:

(c) (1) set gillnet may not have a mesh size greater than 5 [four and three quarters] inches and

(b) Repeal and amend: to provide a Pink salmon fishery from August 6<sup>th</sup> through August 15<sup>th</sup>, 5 openings available per week during the commercial pink salmon fishery on even years.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Kenai River pink salmon harvest and limit on mesh size. Kenai pink salmon are on average larger than Southern District or Northern District pink salmon. The average weight size is .7 of pound larger than Northern District pink salmon stocks. The 4 and ¾ mesh size requirement impeded commercial harvest and quality of the salmon resource available.

The current Plan is unduly restrictive with only two fishing periods. Current regulations state at least 50,000 pink salmon harvest per opening and limited to 2500 coho; only a small percentage are Kenai bound coho. Less than one-half of one percent harvest on average annual Kenai coho runs per opening. So, within a two day commercial pink salmon fishery the set gillnet fishery is 1% of the Kenai Coho run and only 1% of the Kenai River pink salmon run. Pink salmon stocks are designated commercial stocks.

Nowhere in this state by Region does the Department or the Board restrict the harvest of pink salmon stocks per similar situated fisheries on abundant salmon resources in mixed stock salmon fisheries. Application of Fishery Management Plans (5 AAC 39.200) (a) provides for an equitable distribution of the available harvest. 1% is not “equitable” nor fairly distributed under the current pink Plan. Regulations “should be consistent with statutes.”

**PROPOSED BY:** Jeff Beaudoin

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