

PROPOSAL 157

5 AAC 33.366. Northern Southeast seine salmon fishery management plans.

Include wild sockeye salmon harvested in the Amalga Harbor Special Harvest Area in the District 12 commercial salmon purse seine fishery wild sockeye harvest limit, as follows:

(a) During July, the department may allow the operation of purse seines in District 12 north of Point Marsden to harvest pink salmon migrating northward in Chatham Strait only as follows:

(1) the department may open only those portions of the area in which a harvestable abundance of pink salmon is observed; open areas and times must consider conservation concerns for all species in the area;

(2) the department shall close the seine fishery in District 12 north of Point Marsden during July after 15,000 wild sockeye salmon are taken; hatchery produced sockeye salmon will not count against the 15,000 sockeye salmon harvest limit; all wild sockeye salmon harvested by seine vessels that the department identifies as fishing north of Point Marsden **including wild sockeye salmon harvested by the seine fleet in a common property opening of the Amalga SHA for chum salmon** during any July fishing period when other areas are open concurrently will be counted against the 15,000 sockeye salmon harvest limit under this paragraph; during the openings, the department will use aerial flyovers, on-the-ground sampling, and interviews to estimate the sockeye harvest north of Point Marsden.

(b) Salmon may be taken during emergency order openings for chum salmon in Excursion Inlet only in waters of Section 14-C north of the latitude of the northern tip of the Porpoise Islands; the department may open the area by emergency order only after consideration of concerns for chum and coho salmon conservation.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? A common property seine fishery in Amalga Harbor SHA occurred the first time in 2012. After five years of seine opportunities in the Amalga Harbor SHA it is felt that the additional harvest of sockeye occurring in the SHA by the seine fishery is affecting the migration of sockeye stocks to upper Lynn Canal and Taku. Sockeye salmon stocks in the area during July are Chilkoot, Chilkat, Berners Bay, Taku, Speel, and Crescent. The District 15 and District 11 gillnet fisheries are ending up on a 6” net restriction for sockeye conservation every year.

The purpose of this proposal would be to close the seine fishery in District 12 north of Point Marsden once the sockeye cap is reached but that all wild sockeye caught north of Point Marsden including sockeye caught in District 11A is counted toward the sockeye cap.

PROPOSED BY: United Southeast Alaska Gillnetters (USAG)

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