

PROPOSAL 20

5 AAC 01.320. Lawful gear and gear specifications.

Allow use of drift gillnets not more than 10 fathoms in length for subsistence salmon fishing in the Wood and Nushagak Rivers near Dillingham, as follows:

Allow the use of drift nets of not more than 10 fathoms for subsistence salmon fishing in the Wood and Nushagak Rivers in the vicinity of Dillingham - but not in the commercial district, not upstream of a point in the Nushagak River and not upstream of Red Bluff in the Wood River (and reduce sport / subsistence conflicts, navigational issues with other boats and brush tangles).

Suggested boundaries and language:

Lawful Gear and Specifications: new language in

5AAC 01.320 (b)

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(7) in the Nushagak District from a point approximately two miles south of Bradford Point at 58_E58.63' N. lat., 158_E33.62' W. long. to a point at Red Bluff on the west shore of Wood River at 59_E09.58' N. lat., 158_E32.36' W. long., and upstream in the Nushagak River to Black Point subsistence fishing may be conducted with a drift gill net.

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Drift netting would spread out effort reducing controversies, require less preparation and allow fishers to quickly catch the fish needed. The nature of drifting would require operators to be "on-the-net" while its fishing - avoiding some of the problems with set nets.

Boundaries are selected to reduce avoid conflicts with other vessel traffic, sport fisheries etc. Some language may be needed to address proximity to set subsistence nets. Contingency language for addressing subsistence fishing in the Wood River when the commercial fishery is opened in the Wood River Special Harvest Area.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Existing regulatory language that may apply:

5 AAC 01.320:

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(b) Outside the boundaries of any district, salmon may only be taken by set gillnet, except that salmon may also be taken as follows:

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(c) Except as specified in (b) of this section, the maximum lengths for gillnets and beach seines used to take salmon are as follows:

(1) set gillnets may not exceed 10 fathoms in length in

(A) the Naknek, Egegik, and Ugashik Rivers;

(B) the Nushagak District during the emergency order subsistence openings described in 5 AAC 01.310(b);

(C) all waters of Nushagak Bay upstream of a line from a point approximately two miles south of Bradford Point at 58°E58.63' N. lat., 158°E33.62' W. long. to Snag Point at 59°E03.18' N. lat., 158°E25.59' W. long.;

(D) repealed 5/31/98;

(2) in the remaining waters of the Wood River and Nushagak River not described in (c)(1)(C) of this section, set gillnets may not exceed 25 fathoms in length;

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Currently subsistence salmon fishing in Nushagak Bay near Dillingham is only allowed with the use of set gillnets. Available sites for subsistence nets is very limited in the Dillingham area and competition for space can be very aggressive and sometimes contentious. Instances of unauthorized "borrowing" or even misuse of sites and gear such as anchors and running lines and stakes causes controversy every year. In addition it is a lot of time consuming work to set up a good set net site requiring anchors, lines, stakes or other on shore anchor points. Access to some sites is often limited by tide levels or weather making them harder to access and much harder to deploy, pick or to inactivate the gear.

PROPOSED BY: Nushagak Fish and Game Advisory Committee

(HQ-F18-056)
