

**PROPOSAL 128**

**5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.**

Amend the *Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan* to remove the provision to minimize the commercial harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho salmon and add a provision for reasonable opportunity for common property fishery harvest, as follows:

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. (a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure adequate escapement of salmon into the Northern District drainages and to provide management guidelines to the department. [THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MANAGE THE COMMERCIAL DRIFT GILLNET FISHERY TO MINIMIZE THE HARVEST OF NORTHERN DISTRICT AND KENAI RIVER COHO SALMON IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SPORT AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERMEN A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO HARVEST THESE SALMON STOCKS OVER THE ENTIRE RUN, AS MEASURED BY THE FREQUENCY OF INRIVER RESTRICTIONS. **The department shall also manage the common property fisheries with a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources.** The department shall manage the Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery as described in this section.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Delete unnecessary language in the Cook Inlet salmon management plans that restricts the flexibility for the managers to manage on a real time basis based on in season abundance to harvest the surplus salmon. This language has resulted in tens of millions of harvestable salmon going unharvested and negatively affects the commercial fishing industry, communities, national food source, economies and also decreases future salmon production resulting from the effects of over escapement. The sports fishery has a reasonable opportunity for the fact that salmon run in the thousands of streams in the Cook Inlet drainage from May to October and most all are open to sports fishing. If one system is not open for escapement reasons a sports fisherman has many other system they can fish. In comparison the commercial fisherman, when restricted or closed down, has no other area to fish because they are restricted to the areas and their gear type by their limited entry permit they own. There is unfair and has no parity in reasonable opportunity between commercial and recreational fisheries under the current management plans. There are no conservation concerns on coho and most coho runs are harvested well below acceptable harvest rates, with many harvest being less than 10%.

**PROPOSED BY:** Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F19-098)

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