

PROPOSAL 276– 5 AAC 33.366. Northern Southeast seine salmon fishery management plans; 5 AAC 33.376. District 13: Deep Inlet Terminal Harvest Area Salmon Management Plan; and 5 AAC 33.383. District 7: Anita Bay Terminal Harvest Area Salmon Management Plan.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Board of Fisheries.

WHAT WOULD THE PROPOSALS DO? Extend the sunset provisions by one year in the *Northern Southeast seine salmon fishery management plan* and the *Deep Inlet and Anita Bay Terminal Harvest Area (THA) management plans*.

WHAT ARE THE CURRENT REGULATIONS? Through the 2020 season, in the waters of District 12 north of Point Marsden a harvest limit of 15,000 wild sockeye salmon may be taken in the purse seine fishery through July 22. Once this limit is reached, no further openings on this shoreline are allowed until after July 22. This regulation expired after the 2020 season. This portion of the regulatory management plan also specifies that hatchery-produced sockeye salmon do not count against the harvest limit, and outlines procedures used to estimate the sockeye salmon harvest in the area.

The Deep Inlet and Anita Bay THA management plans provide guidelines to the department to distribute the harvest of hatchery-produced salmon in the THA between the purse seine, drift gillnet, and troll gear groups. In the Deep Inlet THA, salmon may be taken by the troll gear group when the THA is closed to the net fisheries, including cost recovery and the current ratio of drift gillnet to purse seine openings in regulation is 2:1. In the Anita Bay THA, salmon may be taken from May 1 through November 10 by troll gear. Purse seine and drift gillnet gear is only allowed during time periods specified by EO and the current time ratio of drift gillnet to purse seine openings is 2:1.

The enhanced salmon management plan (5 AAC 33.364) provides a framework for the distribution of hatchery-produced fish among the commercial gear groups. The plan sets value allocations at 44–49% seine, 27–32% troll, and 24–29% drift gillnet. The performance is evaluated annually based on a five-year average. If the value by a gear group is outside its percentage range for three consecutive years, the board may adjust THA fisheries to bring the gear groups back in alignment.

WHAT WOULD BE THE EFFECT IF THE PROPOSAL WERE ADOPTED? The purse seine fishery in District 12 north of Point Marsden would continue to have a sockeye salmon harvest limit described in regulation applying through July 22, providing guidance to fishery managers in ensuring sockeye salmon harvest opportunity is balanced across user groups.

The ratio of drift gillnet to purse seine opening would continue at 1:1 for an additional year in both the Deep Inlet and Anita Bay THAs and the performance of both these fisheries relative to the enhanced salmon allocation would likely not change.

BACKGROUND:

Northern Southeast seine fishery management plan

In 1989, the board adopted 5 AAC 33.366 *Northern Southeast seine salmon fishery management plans* into regulation, reopening the Hawk Inlet shoreline to purse seining in July to improve utilization of Lynn Canal and Taku River origin pink salmon. Under this regulation, openings are dependent on the abundance of early run pink salmon and the conservation of all stocks, in conjunction with a maximum harvest of 15,000 sockeye salmon during the month of July. These management plans were amended in 2003 to clarify the procedure used to account for the sockeye salmon harvest limit, and in 2006 to include only wild sockeye salmon in the harvest limit. In 2015, new language was added concerning south-bound upper Chatham Strait sockeye salmon stocks important to subsistence fisheries, and sockeye salmon harvested in the common property purse seine fisheries in the Amalga Harbor SHA were included in the harvest limit. In 2018, the board removed the Amalga Harbor SHA incidental sockeye salmon harvest from the harvest limit and reduced the time the harvest limit applied to from the entire month of July to July 1–22. The intention of the 2020 sunset clause in the most recent iteration of this regulation was to see how fisheries performed within the new time period for the sockeye limit in regulation and to address it again during the regular 2021 board meeting cycle.

Deep Inlet and Anita Bay THA Management Plans

The enhanced salmon allocation plan defines fair and reasonable distribution of hatchery-produced salmon harvest among the seine, troll, and gillnet fleets. Through 2019 preliminary data, purse seine is within, troll is below, and drift gillnet is above their allocation ranges (Figure 276-1). According to board findings, when harvest adjustments are deemed necessary to meet allocation percentage goals, the following tools should be used: special harvest area management adjustments; new production; and modification of existing production. New production and modifications of existing production are considered long term and will take five to ten years to have an impact. Changes in special harvest areas can be used in the short term to help modify imbalances until long-term adjustments can take effect.

Net gear rotations in the Anita Bay and Deep Inlet THAs have been adjusted periodically in efforts to align the net gear groups in their enhanced salmon allocation as defined by the enhanced salmon allocation management plan. For the Deep Inlet THA, during the 2018 season, the ratio of drift gillnet to seine openings in was 1:2 and during the 2019 and 2020 seasons, the ratio of drift gillnet to seine openings was 1:1. For the Anita Bay THA, the ratio of drift gillnet to seine openings, the ratio of drift gillnet to seine openings has been 1:1 since 2018.

DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **SUPPORTS** extending the sunset clause in 5 AAC 33.366 in order provide guidance to the District 12 purse seine fishery. The department is **NEUTRAL** on extending the sunset clause in the Deep Inlet and Anita Bay THA management plans.

COST ANALYSIS: Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional direct cost for a private person to participate in this fishery. Approval of this proposal is not expected to result in an additional cost for the department.

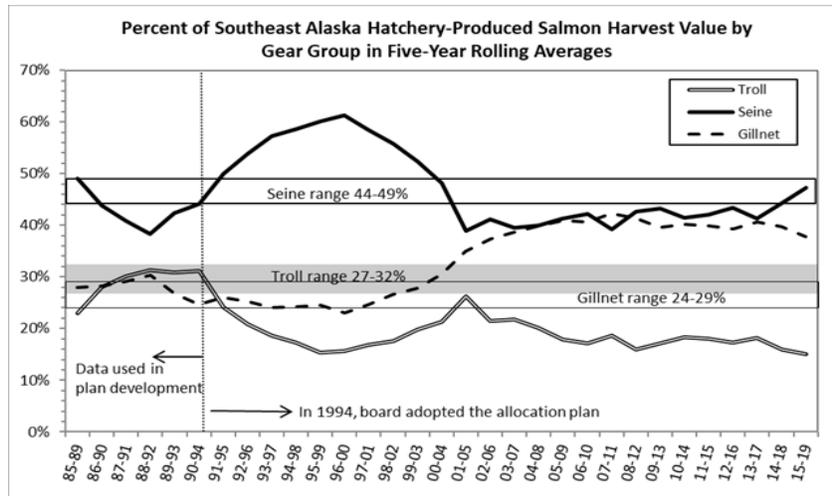


Figure 276-1.— Percent of Southeast Alaska hatchery-produced salmon harvest value by gear group in five-year rolling averages.