

Commercial salmon gear (7 proposals)

PROPOSAL 147

5 AAC 09.331. Gillnet specifications and operations.

Reduce maximum gillnet depth to 70 meshes, as follows:

5 AAC 09.331. Gillnet specifications and operations. (a) The size and operation of drift gillnets is as follows:

(3) In the Northwestern, Unimak, and Southwestern Districts, no drift gillnet may exceed 70 [90] meshes in depth.

(b)The size and operation of set gillnets is as follows:

(C) in the Northwestern, Unimak, Southwestern, South Central, and Southeastern Districts, a set gillnet may not exceed 70 [90] meshes in depth;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Area M salmon seine fisheries harvest the depleted western Alaska chinook and chum salmon stocks. Sockeye salmon are known to prefer surface waters while chinook and chum run deeper. Sockeye salmon are the primary target of these fisheries, the money fish. While extraordinary conservation measures have been taken to conserve the many Alaskan stocks of chinook and western Alaskan chum stocks. Focusing these fisheries on sockeye to help with the conservation of depleted salmon stocks which surround Area M is logical fisheries management.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This concern has been widely discussed in western Alaskan groups. I was not aware of the proposal being brought to the Board of Fisheries this cycle, so I am submitting it just ahead of the proposal deadline.

PROPOSED BY: Charles Lean

(EF-F26-078)

PROPOSAL 148

5 AAC 09.332. Seine specifications and operations.

Amend the seine specification to reduce the allowable size gear as follows:

(a) Purse seines or hand purse seines may not be less than 100 fathoms nor more than 250 fathoms in length. A purse seine or hand purse seine may not exceed 325 [375] meshes in depth. Seine mesh may not be more than three and one-half inches, except that the first 25 meshes above the leadline may not be more than seven inches.

(b) **A lead [LEADS] may not be [less than 50 fathoms nor] more than 100 [150] fathoms in length. The aggregate length of seine and lead may not be more than 250 fathoms in length.** Only one lead may be used with a seine. [A LEAD MAY BE ATTACHED TO ONLY ONE END OF A SEINE, AND THE LEAD MAY NOT BE ATTACHED TO THE BOAT END OF THE SEINE.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The rapid increase of chum salmon caught in the June fishery in the South Unimak and Shumagin Island purse seine fishery. The South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fishery has averaged approximately 572,000 chums per season over the past five years (2020–2024), which is among the highest five-year average in

decades. Chum stocks in the Artic-Yukon-Kuskokwim region are struggling to even meet escapement goals. The huge changes made in the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fishery in 2004, coupled with the rapid growth of the purse seine fleet in recent years has resulted in this recent huge increase in chum interception in the June fishery. Purse seiners harvest over 90% of the chums caught in the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fishery.

Current regulations allow the aggregate length of purse seines and leads in this area to be up to 400 fathoms in length. That is 60% longer than what is allowed in Kodiak and Lower Cook Inlet (up to 250 fathoms), and 78% longer than what is allowed in Chignik and Prince William Sound (up to 225 fathoms). Longer seines = more fish per set.

Current regulations also allow purse seine depth in this area to be a maximum of 375 meshes. The deeper a purse seine, the more chums and chinook salmon it will catch as they travel at greater depths than sockeye, pinks, and coho. This fishery is supposed to be targeting traveling sockeye salmon, and not chums and chinook.

Bring the purse seine regulations in this area into line with the purse seine regulation in Chignik, Kodiak, Cook Inlet, and Prince William Sound. Shorten the seines and reduce the allowable depth in order to reduce the interception of migrating chums and chinook. 250 fathoms in length and 325 meshes deep is more the adequate to harvest targeted salmon species, as is evidenced by the purse seine fisheries in Chignik, Kodiak, Cook Inlet, and Prince William Sound.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. No

PROPOSED BY: Western Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
(EF-F26-022)

PROPOSAL 149

5 AAC 09.331. Gillnet specifications and operations.

Amend the gillnet specification to increase the size of set gillnets as follows:

(b)The size and operation of set gillnets is as follows:

(1)a set gillnet may be no more than **200** [100] fathoms in length; the aggregate length of set gillnets operated by a CFEC permit holder may be no more than 200 fathoms; no more than two gillnet sites may be operated by a CFEC permit holder, except that in the...

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Set gillnet permits should be able to fish a single net of allotted length like every other gear group in the region, with the existing restrictions in certain areas retained. In order of importance, this change is for safety, equality and simplicity.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This proposal was not developed in coordination with others or our ADF&G AC. It was reviewed by a few permit holders who encouraged me to to submit it.

PROPOSED BY: Virgil Porter
(EF-F26-034)

PROPOSAL 150

5 AAC 09.331. Gillnet specifications and operations.

Amend gillnet specifications to allow the use of monofilament as follows:

(d) Notwithstanding 5 AAC 39.250(c), in a set gillnet in the Unimak, Southwestern, South Central, and Southeastern Districts (South Peninsula), the gillnet web may be single filament.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The regulation for setnet gillnet filament has to have at least six strands in the South Peninsula District. Algae buildup is a problem with using six filament gillnet web. Setnets are stationary in the water column, with tide going through the net, the filament fills up very fast with silt and algae rendering the net unfishable in matter of minutes. Setnets on the South Peninsula were 30 filaments in very far past, then were reduced to 6 filaments. A single filament is the most practical for the setnet to reduce the algae and silt build up in the web, there are no strands that can trap the silt and algae. With cost of fuel, fishing time, we need an efficient net in the water to offset these inefficiencies of the six strand filament.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Yes I brought this proposal before the Sand Point Advisory Committee and they approved it.

PROPOSED BY: Edgar Smith (EF-F26-061)

PROPOSAL 151

5 AAC 09.331. Gillnet specifications and operations.

Amend gillnet specification to reduce the allowable gear as follows:

5 AAC 09.331. Gillnet specifications and operations.

[(5) IN THE UNIMAK, SOUTHWESTERN, SOUTH CENTRAL, AND SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICTS, 25 FATHOMS OF SEINE WEBBING MAY BE USED ON THE SHOREWARD END OF A SET GILLNET;]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current regulation allows 25 fathoms of seine webbing to be used on the shoreward end of a set gillnet in the South Peninsula salmon fishery on the theory the seine webbing is necessary to make fishing easier and safer when the weather is bad. Another Regulation allows the shoreward end of a set gillnet to be anchored up to one-half mile from the mean high tide mark. Instead of protecting the safety of the set gillnet fleet, the combination of these regulations allows set gillnet fishermen to increase their catching power. There is no legitimate reason for maintaining this regulation - it is simply an expansion of an intercept fishery.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Yes. Input from local fishermen was solicited in the development of this proposal

PROPOSED BY: Chignik Intertribal Coalition (EF-F26-105)

PROPOSAL 152

5 AAC 09.332. Seine specifications and operations.

Amend the seine specification to reduce the allowable size gear as follows:

5 AAC 09.332. Seine specifications and operations

- (a) Purse seines or hand purse seines may not be less than 100 fathoms nor more than 250 fathoms in length. A purse seine or hand purse seine may not exceed 325 [375] meshes in depth. Seine mesh may not be more than three and one-half inches, except that the first 25 meshes above the leadline may not be more than seven inches.
- (b) A lead [LEADS] may not be [LESS THAN 50 FATHOMS NOR] more than 100 [150] fathoms in length. The aggregate length of seine and lead may not be more than 250 fathoms in length. Only one lead may be used with a seine. [A LEAD MAY BE ATTACHED TO ONLY ONE END OF A SEINE AND THE LEAD MAY NOT BE ATTACHED TO THE BOAT END OF THE SEINE.]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current regulations allow Area M seiners to use a 250 fathom long seine, plus a 150 fathom long lead, which in effect results in the ability to use a net 400 fathoms long. The seines are also allowed to be up to 375 meshes deep. This is an extreme outlier in the entire Central and Western Gulf of Alaska seine fisheries. Shorter and shallower seines will reduce the killing power of the seine fleet and will reduce the interception and bycatch of struggling non-target stocks, including AYK chum, Chignik-bound sockeye, and chinook caught there while migrating through the area.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. Yes. We relied on local knowledge and talked with fishermen who have fished seines of varying depths over the years.

PROPOSED BY: Chignik Intertribal Coalition (EF-F26-106)

PROPOSAL 153

5 AAC 09.331. Gillnet specifications and operations.

Amend the gillnet specifications to allow the use of monofilament as follows:

5 AAC 09.331

(c) Notwithstanding 5 AAC 39.250(c), in a set gillnet in the Northern District, the Northwestern District, the Unimak District, the Southwestern District, the Southcentral District, and the Southeastern District, the gillnet web may be single filament.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? This proposal would allow the use of single strand filament web in the set gill net fishery.

The set gill net fishery in the Northern district allows the use of monofilament gill nets. Allowing all set gill netters in the Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Islands area (Area M) to be able to use single strand filament web in the fishery would bring rules into alignment. There are many good reasons besides rule alignment. Single strand filament gill net web is less susceptible to algae and other suspended elements in the ocean such as silt. It is easier to clean and manage debris than multifilament gill net web. It is also likely to be cheaper.

Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain. This proposal was developed by the Sand Point Advisory Committee with community input.

PROPOSED BY: Patrick Brown, Sand Point AC Chair

(EF-F26-172)
