

**ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES**  
**DECEMBER 5–6, 2013**  
**CHIGNIK FINFISH**

**PROPOSAL 38 - 5 AAC 15.357. Chignik Area Salmon Management Plan.** Open commercial fishing in June in the Western District, excluding the Inner Castle Cape Subsection, concurrently with commercial fishing openings in Chignik Bay, Central, and Eastern districts, as follows:

During June, commercial salmon fishing may occur in the Chignik Bay, Central, Eastern and Western Districts. Through approximately June 26, the Chignik Bay, Central, and Eastern districts and the Inner Castle Cape Subsection (273-93) of the Western District shall open and close concurrently by regulation (5 AAC 15.357(c)(1)) based upon achieving early run escapement objectives. In addition, June openings in the Western District, excluding the Inner Castle Cape Section, shall open and close concurrently with fishing periods in the Chignik Bay, Central, Eastern districts and the Inner Castle Cape Section.

**ISSUE:**

- Provide the option of more fishing opportunity in the Western District during June therein affording the department greater management flexibility and lessening differential exploitation of Chignik early run stocks based on migration patterns (east migrants vs. west migrants).
- Ensure that local harvest opportunities are fully exploited particularly in years when the strength of the early Chignik run is at or above average.
- Reduce fleet competitiveness by providing more fishing area therein allowing the fleet to disperse more. This is important as permit numbers increase which is occurring since the COOP years and new fishers enter the fishery, particularly local boats and fishers.
- Provide for a more steady harvest of high quality fish and alternative seining areas when weather conditions are problematic.
- Restore historic terminal stock harvest opportunity in Chignik's Western District.
- Reduce the inequity of limiting fishing opportunities in waters known to be dominated by Chignik sockeye salmon.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?**

- Continued inequity by limiting fishing opportunity in the Western District when Chignik sockeye salmon are available for harvest and are dominant (WASSIP study).
- Limit the department's flexibility to ensure optimum management of the Chignik early run when the run comes in strong and the timing is compressed.
- Continued differential exploitation of west and east migrant Chignik sockeye salmon in Chignik waters.
- Will limit fleet dispersal which is of greater concern now due to increases in the numbers of permits fished since the COOP years and new fishers enter the fishery, particularly local boats and fishers.

**WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?** Yes, indirectly by providing earlier and greater fishing

opportunity during June on the Chignik early run when the run is at or above average run return strength therein lessening pulse fishing and the likelihood of harvest limits imposed by processing gluts. Further, it would also decrease the derby type fishing behavior evident at times on the more terminal capes by encouraging fleet dispersal. All of which would favor better on the grounds handling and landing of product and more optimum resource utilization.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** Trident (the only local based processor), all Chignik salmon fishers, and the Chignik early run by reducing pulse fishing and differential exploitation.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** Nobody, as no significant numbers of non-Chignik bound sockeye would be expected per the WASSIP study and given that the Perryville District would still remain closed and because the Western District would only be open when the Chignik run was sufficiently strong enough to support fishing in the Eastern, Central, and Chignik Bay districts simultaneously.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?** None, as it is unreasonable to limit June fishing opportunity in the Western District when the Chignik run is sufficiently strong enough to support fishing activity at Igvak and the SEDM and when non-allocated fisheries (e.g. Shumagins, Dolgoi Island area) are exploiting Chignik bound sockeye salmon per the WASSIP study.

**PROPOSED BY:** Chignik Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-111)  
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**PROPOSAL 39 - 5 AAC 15.357. Chignik Area Salmon Management Plan.** Change management plan to direct department to manage Perryville and Western districts based on abundance of pink, chum, and coho salmon in Stepovak and Shumagin Islands sections of Southeastern District, including closures in July through August, as follows:

A. From July 9 through September 30,

- (1) the department shall manage the Chignik fishery of the Perryville and Western Districts of the fishery based on the abundance of pink, chum, and coho salmon stocks in the Stepovak area of the SEDM and the Shumagin Islands;
- (2) When fish stocks of pink, chum and coho salmon have low escapement in the Stepovak Area of the SEDM and the Shumagin Islands during July, August and September the Perryville District 275-40, 275-50, 275-60 and the Western District 273-74, 273-80, 273-90 will be closed until there are significant returns of salmon in the streams and Area M Fishermen are able to commercial salmon fish in these areas;
- (3) In July and August in the Perryville District and Western District there shall be at least one 48 hour closed period within a seven day period in order to maintain healthy fish stocks in the SEDM.

**ISSUE:** Local set net and Seine fishermen have been denied access to harvesting salmon in August and September these past few years due to low numbers of westward returning chum and pink salmon in the Stepovak Area and Shumagin Islands. At the same time the Area M fishermen are shut down Chignik Fishermen are fishing for pinks and chum salmon in the

Perryville and Western District of the Chignik Area at times fishing 7 days a week day after day catching and producing high numbers of Pink Salmon and Chum Salmon destined for the Stepovak Area and Shumagin Islands while the Area M fishermen are shut down and salmon are not returning to the local streams.

When fish stocks of pink and chum salmon have low escapement within the Stepovak Area of the SEDM and the Shumagin Islands during July, August and September, the Perryville District 275-40, 275-50, 275-60 and the Western District 273-74, 273-80 and 273-90 will be closed until there are significant returns of salmon in the streams and Area M Fishermen are able to commercial salmon fish in these areas.

In early July and August in the Perryville District and Western District there shall be at least one 48 hour closed period within a seven day period in order to maintain healthy fish stocks in the SEDM and Shumagin Islands.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** The Area M setnetters and seiners will continue to be denied access to local historical fishing areas on the Southeast District Mainland and Shumagin Islands when low returns of chums, pinks, reds and cohos occur within the area which is affecting the viability of setnetting, seining and subsistence fishing in the Stepovak Area of the SEDM and Shumagin Islands.

**WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?** Yes, fish processors and fishermen will be able to harvest a high quality product of salmon in July, August and September.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** Fishermen in both areas will benefit due to the fact that the local fish stocks will be a healthy renewable resource from year to year and we will all have a viable fishery. Our local streams will become a restored, wholesome, renewable resource once again.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** No one will suffer from this proposal being adopted.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?** Combining Area L and Area M into 1 area.

**PROPOSED BY:** Jack R Foster Jr, Amy M Foster (HQ-F13-207)  
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**PROPOSAL 40 - 5 AAC 15.357. Chignik Area Salmon Management Plan.** Change "shall" to "may" relative to use of emergency orders (EOs), as follows:

5 AAC 15.357(b)(1) the commissioner may [SHALL] open, by emergency order, the commercial salmon fishery when 20,000 sockeye salmon have escaped into the Chignik River; however if the department determines that a strong buildup of sockeye salmon exists in Chignik Lagoon and that 20,000 sockeye salmon will escape into the Chignik River, the commissioner may open, by emergency order, the commercial salmon fishery before 20,000 sockeye salmon have escaped into the Chignik River;

**ISSUE:** This proposal addresses the criteria for opening the commercial salmon fishery in the Chignik Management Area. Prior to the Chignik cooperative fishery (co-op), a set of criteria were in place to open the fishery when a minimum of 40,000 sockeye salmon passed the weir so that subsistence users had an opportunity to harvest salmon. These initial criteria took into account escapement objectives. With the advent of the Chignik co-op, there were concerns that the fleet(s) would not be able to harvest enough fish early in the season and excess escapement would result. The opening criteria language was changed to reflect these concerns. After the cooperative salmon fishery was ended by court action, the intent of regulatory language was to reflect fishery management from the years prior to the co-op. The regulatory language resulting from this change ensures that fish are available for subsistence users, but does not account for the timing or the relative strength of the run and the ability to meet escapement objectives. If the Chignik River escapement meets the criteria of a total or cumulative estimate of 20,000 sockeye salmon, yet cumulative escapement is far below the escapement objectives for that date, a commercial salmon fishing period may not be warranted.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** If a fishing period was announced when 20,000 sockeye salmon had passed the weir in a year of very low sockeye salmon abundance, early-run escapement objectives and escapement goals may not be achieved.

**WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?** No.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** Managers will be better able to manage the sockeye salmon resource in a sustainable manner.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** No one.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?** None.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-173)  
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**PROPOSAL 41 - 5 AAC 15.332. Seine specifications and operations.** Change seine specification for when seine has stopped fishing, as follows:

Change the regulation concerning seine specifications and operations in Chignik in regard to when a purse seine is considered to have ceased fishing. The new regulation would read:

**5 AAC 15.332 (g) A purse seine has stopped fishing when both ends of the seine, excluding tow lines and straps, are attached to the fishing vessel.**

**ISSUE:** The current regulations in effect in Chignik state that a purse seine has not ceased fishing until all of the purse rings are out of the water. This regulation causes Chignik fishermen to lose harvest opportunity right before closures due to the fact they have to close their seines well before a fishing closure in order to ensure they get their purse rings out of the water in time.

This unnecessary loss of harvest opportunity is felt area-wide and compounds itself with each closure. The regulation in effect for our next door neighbors in Kodiak only requires that the ends of the seine be together and attached to the boat for a purse seine to be considered to have ceased fishing. There is no logical reason for this discrepancy between Chignik and Kodiak in terms of when a purse seine is considered to have stopped fishing.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** Chignik fishermen will have to continue to deal with this unnecessary lost harvest opportunity.

**WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?** No.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** All Chignik fishermen and processors. Alaska Department of Fish and Game should benefit as it will be easier to see any violations.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** No one.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?** None.

**PROPOSED BY:** Axel Kopun (HQ-F13-151)  
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**PROPOSAL 42 - 5 AAC 15.332. Seine specifications and operations.** Increase purse and hand purse seine, and seine lead lengths allowed in Eastern, Central, Western, and Perryville districts, as follows:

Change the regulation concerning maximum purse seine length specifications in Chignik in the Eastern, Central, Western, and Perryville Districts to match those allowed in Kodiak, Area M, and SE Alaska. The new regulation would read:

5 AAC 15.332 (a) In the Eastern, Central, Western and Perryville Districts no purse seine less than 100 fathoms or more than **250** [225] fathoms in length may be used.

(b) In the Eastern, Central, Western and Perryville Districts no hand purse seine less than 100 fathoms or more than **250** [225] fathoms in length may be used.

(e) No lead may be more than **100** [75] fathoms in length. The aggregate length of seine and lead may not be more than **250** [225] fathoms in the Eastern, Central, Western and Perryville Districts.

**ISSUE:** The current regulations in effect in Chignik under 5 AAC 15.332(a), (b), (e) which restricts purse seine length to a maximum of 225 fathoms in the Eastern, Central, Western and Perryville Districts. The limitation hampers efficiency and results in lost harvest opportunity for Chignik fishermen. This regulation is also inconsistent with purse seine lengths allowed in the SE Alaska, Kodiak, and Area M purse seine fisheries.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** Chignik fishermen will continue to be unfairly restricted to shorter purse seines than their neighbors on either side of them, and thus reduced efficiency as well.

**WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?** No.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** Chignik fishermen who choose to use the longer purse seines.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** No one.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?** None.

**PROPOSED BY:** Axel Kopun (HQ-F13-152)  
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**PROPOSAL 43 - 5 AAC 28.36X. Cook Inlet Area State-Waters Groundfish Trawl Management Plan; 5 AAC 28.46X. Kodiak Area State-Waters Groundfish Trawl Management Plan; and 5 AAC 28.53X. Chignik Area State-Waters Groundfish Trawl Management Plan.** Create state-waters groundfish management plans for trawl vessels less than 58 feet in the Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and Chignik management areas. *(This proposal will be considered at the Chignik, Lower Cook Inlet, and Kodiak Finfish meetings.)*

Central and Western Gulf of Alaska State Water trawl fisheries for all Groundfish Management. Set combined quota for state water areas of Prince William Sound (E) outside district, Cook Inlet (H), Kodiak (K) and Chignik (L) equal to 25% of all groundfish species in Central Gulf federal waters. Set quota for area (M) South Peninsula equal to 25% of all groundfish species in western Gulf of Alaska federal waters. Fishery to open January, 20th of each year, close on TAC or Bycatch limit or December 31st of same year. Participating vessels must be less than 58 feet in overall length. Landing limits of 150,000 pounds total of all species with a landing limit of 100,000 Pacific cod in a single landing. With a duration of no less than 72 hours between landings. All vessels using trawl gear in state water fisheries would be required to have 100% observer coverage, with one observer onboard for all trips. Observer cost would be paid by vessel. Set state water PSC caps for state waters including crab.

**ISSUE:** Develop New State Water Management Plan for groundfish in state waters for vessel less than 58 feet using trawl gear.

Management to include separate state water quota's for all groundfish, Pacific cod, flat fish, Arrowtooth and other misc. finfish. Along with PSC caps.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** There will be no opportunity for small vessel Alaskan fisherman to utilize many species of groundfish in state waters. Result of no trawl opportunity in state waters will add pressure to other state water fisheries. National Marine Fisheries Service and the North Pacific Management Council are moving towards a federal

waters catch share program in the Gulf of Alaska federal trawl fishery. With this action, it is time for the State of Alaska to manage all groundfisheries in state waters separate from federal management to maintain viable fisheries for Alaskans. Federal catch share programs are overly consolidating and not viable for small boat fisherman.

**WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?** Trip limits and duration between trips would slow fishery pace to improve quality and better utilize fish, also give vessels time to avoid by-catch with a slower pace fishery.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** Small vessels who want to participate in state water fisheries, local communities that are supported by fisheries around them and other state water fisheries that could see a reduced effort.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** Federal quotas would likely be reduced, but many species of groundfish are not fully utilized now in the federal fisheries.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?** Current management. The best way for the State of Alaska to ensure healthy viable state water fisheries for maximum benefit to Alaska is to manage all state fisheries themselves.

**PROPOSED BY:** Matt Hegge (HQ-F13-121)

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**PROPOSAL 44 - 5 AAC 28.36X. Cook Inlet Area Pollock Management Plan; 5 AAC 28.46X. Kodiak Area Pollock Management Plan; and 5 AAC 28.53X. Chignik Area Pollock Management Plan.** Create state-waters walleye pollock management plans for Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and Chignik management areas. *(This proposal will be considered at the Chignik, Lower Cook Inlet, and Kodiak Finfish meetings.)*

Create a state water Pollock fishery in areas E, H, K, L, and M in the State of Alaska waters of the Gulf of Alaska. Set quota for state water Pollock fishery to equal twenty-five percent (25%) of federal quota annually. Areas of Prince William Sound (E)(Outside District), Cook Inlet (H), Kodiak (K), and Chignik (L) would use a combined quota equal to twenty-five percent (25%) of the total combined quota of areas 620, 630, and 640 federal waters. Area (M) south Peninsula quota would be equal to twenty-five (25%) of area 610 of federal waters. State water Pollock season would open January 20<sup>th</sup> of each year, close on TAC or December 31<sup>st</sup> each year. Vessels participating in the state water Pollock fisheries may be no more than fifty-eight feet in length (To include all trawling in state waters). Legal gear shall be pelagic trawl, non-pelagic trawl, seine and jig. All state water Pollock limited to a maximum of 150,000 pounds per landing, with duration of no less than 48 hours between landings. All vessels using trawl gear would be required to have 100% observer coverage with one observer onboard for all trips. Observer cost would be paid by vessel.

**ISSUE:** Develop a state water Pollock fishery in the Gulf of Alaska State waters.

**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** There will be very little to no opportunity for Alaskans to harvest Pollock in the Gulf of Alaska. Currently the state waters are open to anyone who chooses to fish Pollock when there is federal quota available. National Marine Fisheries Service and the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council are moving towards a Catch Share Program in the Gulf of Alaska Pollock fishery. With this action, it is time for the State of Alaska to create a separate state water fishery that maintains open access to harvesting Pollock in state waters for Alaska. This type of program is not constitutional within state waters of Alaska. Federal catch share programs have proven to be overly consolidating and cost to buy into catch share fisheries is not viable for small boat fishermen.

**WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?** The 150,000 pound trips versus 300,000 pound trips in the federal fishery would reduce harvest rate, along with minimum duration between trips. This could improve processors ability to fully utilize fish with less waste and improved quality.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** Anyone who wants to participate in state water Pollock fisheries with small vessels. Alaskan small coastal communities in these areas and the fisherman who live within these areas. Future fisherman who want to enter into fishing. The federal Pollock fishery in the central Gulf of Alaska has 30–50 large vessels participating annually. State water fisheries in the Central Gulf of Alaska have over 10 times the participants that could benefit from increased opportunity within state waters.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** This action would likely reduce the federal quotas.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?** With the looming possibility of a federal catch share program, I do not see any other solution to providing continued equal access to participants fishing Pollock in State of Alaska waters of the Gulf of Alaska.

**PROPOSED BY:** Matt Hegge (HQ-F132-147)  
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**PROPOSAL 45 - 5 AAC 28.3XX. New Section (Cook Inlet Area); 5 AAC 28.4XX. New Section (Kodiak Area); and 5 AAC 28.5XX. New Section (Chignik Area).** Require 100 percent observer coverage on groundfish trawl vessels in state-waters of the Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and Chignik management areas. *(This proposal will be considered at the Chignik, Lower Cook Inlet, and Kodiak Finfish meetings.)*

All vessels fishing for groundfish with trawl gear in state-waters management area are required to carry 100% observer coverage in the Central Gulf of Alaska.

**ISSUE:** Trawl fisheries currently operate in the Central Gulf of Alaska under the restructured program with 13–15% observer coverage. With halibut and Chinook salmon stocks in decline and declines in available harvest for Tanner crab fisheries, accurate information on the number of these species caught as bycatch in the trawl fisheries is critical. The current levels of observer coverage do not ensure that bycatch is accurately estimated.



**WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** If observer coverage is not increased to 100% we will continue to lack accurate estimates of the amounts of bycatch. Management decisions will not be informed by reliable data and we will continue to have an incomplete understanding of the levels of mortality and impacts of bycatch on Chinook salmon, halibut and Tanner crab stocks.

**WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?** None.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?** Users of Chinook salmon, halibut and Tanner crab will benefit because we will have better information about the level of bycatch in groundfish fisheries. The state will benefit from better data on fisheries in state-waters. Groundfish fishermen will benefit from having accurate information about their catches and bycatch.

**WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?** No one. Those who find the 100% observer coverage requirement overly burdensome can choose to fish in federal waters and be subject to the federal observer program which does not require 100% coverage at this time.

**OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?** None.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Marine Conservation Council, Cape Barnabus Inc., Ouzinkie Community Holding Inc. (HQ-F13-264)

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*Proposal 368 is a board-generated proposal created by the board at its October 2013 Work Session meeting. This proposal will be considered at the Chignik Finfish Meeting, December 5–6, 2013, Anchorage, Alaska.*

**PROPOSAL 368 – 5 AAC 39.999. Policy for changing board agenda.** Change the deadline for submission of an agenda change request (ACR), as follows:

5 AAC 39.999. Policy for changing board agenda.

(a)(3) the board will consider an agenda change request only at its first meeting in the fall; a request must be sent to the executive director of the board at least **60** [45] days before the first meeting in the fall.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Current regulations require ACRs to be submitted to the department 45 days before the first board meeting in the fall. The first meeting typically occurs in early to mid-October, necessitating a due date of late August–early September.

This timeline has proven problematic for Alaska Department of Fish and Game staff. Staff who are ending their summer management season prepare information for the work session, including summaries of escapement goal analyses and stocks of concern relevant to the upcoming cycle. Department staff conduct a review of relevant information and develop formal comments two weeks prior to the meeting.

Providing an additional 15 days of review and response time will allow staff additional time to review ACRs and provide more meaningful information for the board's consideration.

**PROPOSED BY:** Alaska Board of Fisheries at the request of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

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