

RC 009

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Board of Fisheries
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Dear Board of Fish Members,

I urge you to support Agenda Change Request #26 at you next meeting on Oct. 15, 2014.

There are a persistent and growing number of boats knowingly ignoring the 58 foot limit while the troopers are shackled by a lack of clarity in the regulations. Vessel creep is occurring in the seine fishery giving significant advantage to boats longer than 58 feet. One vessel fishing Prince William Sound was 63 feet long! Don't think of the bow being longer - the extra length is in the fish hold giving the boat a huge competitive advantage.

The regulations currently limit seine vessels to 58 feet plus an anchor roller. Any attempt to enforce the limit is fruitless until anchor rollers are defined. Anchor rollers are defined in the Bristol Bay Regulations in 5ACC06.341(b)(1). "Anchor roller" means a device used solely in aid of deploying and retrieving anchor gear and does not provide any additional floatation, planing surface or structural support to the vessel." Further in 5AAC06.341(a) the regs state that "an anchor roller may not extend more than 8 inches beyond the 32 foot overall length."

The language is there and should be applied to salmon seine vessels. Just because seiners are bigger does not change what an anchor roller is.

I think Fish and Wildlife Troopers would welcome this clarity. It is not an accident that boats are breaking the 58 foot limit. It is intentional, unfair, and illegal. Please approve ACR #26 so we can bring clarity and order to seine vessels in Alaska.

Regards,

Kenneth M. Jones