

RCSI

PROPOSAL 143

Proposal 143, seeking to change the Central District Gillnet Fishery Management Plan, reduces the area(s) that a drift permit holder may fish from July 19 to August 10. The current form of the Management Plan is not working, as evidenced by the number of stock of concern or near stock of concern findings in the Northern District, plus those additional salmon stocks with no escapement goals that are empirically having fewer and fewer fish return.

The Board of Fish has made several regulations in the past six years that were meant to help these salmon stocks recover. These regulations have not been implemented effectively by the State's management department. Since preservation of these salmon stocks is of utmost importance to the people of Alaska (and I hear it is written in law) the Board of Fish needs to make regulations that minimize the effect State management can have on escapement. That may call for even more restrictive regulations than this proposal suggests.

I would like the Board to consider (basically) eliminating management from the equation for three years, until our salmon stocks in the Northern District recover. Otherwise, we are risking the loss of several stocks in the Northern District. Write regulations that do not have significant options for more commercial fishery openings at the whim of management. If something significant is not done to allow more fish to pass through the commercial fishery to reach upper Cook Inlet streams to spawn, and done at this meeting, some our salmon stocks decline is likely irreversible.

Tony Russ