

PROPOSAL 177

5 AAC 29.110. Management of coho salmon troll fishery.

Allow commercial fishing with troll gear for hatchery-produced coho salmon, in certain areas, during commercial troll fishery coho salmon conservation closures, as follows:

(e) Notwithstanding other sections of this regulation, the department in consultation with hatchery operators may, for the purpose of allowing troll access to hatchery coho, define areas where coho retention is permitted during closures made under (b) of this section.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The troll fleet is chronically behind on its allocation of enhanced fish. We would like to see ADFG given the authority to open areas where the fleet can access hatchery coho during the August troll closure. ADFG should be given flexibility to determine whether to open these areas each year based on the health of wild stocks and the broodstock needs of the hatchery operators.

In 1994, the Board of Fisheries (Board) formed a task force composed of seine, gillnet, and troll representatives to develop an allocation plan for enhanced salmon. The Southeast Alaska Allocation Task Force recommended, and the Board approved, a troll allocation of 27-32% of the total value of the commercial catch of enhanced salmon. When authorizing the allocation plan, the Board also unanimously adopted a set of Guiding Principles (94-148-FB) to assist the Regional Planning Teams, ADFG, and future Boards in arriving at hatchery allocation decisions.

The troll fleet has consistently fallen short of its allocated share of enhanced salmon. Since 2005, the actual troll share has averaged just 16-19%. This long-term shortfall is economically significant and estimated to be roughly \$4 million per year.

Achievement of hatchery allocation goals is based on review of 5-year rolling averages. The 9th guiding principle provides that when a gear group has been outside of its allocated range for three consecutive years as measured using a 5-yr average, adjustments can be made. The troll fleet has been below its allocation range for 22 consecutive years.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Trollers Association

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