

PROPOSAL 140

5 AAC 21.333. Requirements and specifications for use of 200 fathoms of drift gillnet in the Cook Inlet Area.

Allow a dual-permit vessel to have 200 fathoms of gear on board while in Chinitna Bay subdistrict, but fish with no more than 150 fathoms of gear in the subdistrict at any time, as follows:

5 AAC 21.333(e)(l) is amended to read:

(e) The operation of additional drift gillnet gear is not allowed when drift gillnet gear is restricted to any of the following areas:

(1) Chinitna Bay Subdistrict;

(i) Notwithstanding 5 AAC 39.240(a), in Chinitna Bay, up to 200 fathoms of drift gillnet gear may be aboard a vessel, but not more than 150 fathoms of drift gillnet gear may be operated at any time.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Dual-permit (D-boat) fishing for drift gillnet vessels in Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) was first authorized by the board in 2008. Currently, two Cook Inlet drift gillnet CFEC permit holders fishing from the same vessel, or one person holding two Cook Inlet drift gillnet CFEC permits, may operate 50 fathoms of additional drift gillnet gear, but no more than 200 fathoms total. Currently, the Chinitna Bay Subdistrict and the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area (KRSHA) are two regions where D-boat fishing is not allowed. At the 2017 board meeting, the provision limiting the amount of gear on board while in the KRSHA was repealed, however, the limit on the amount of gear that may be fished in the KRSHA was not changed. Because D-boat fishing is not allowed in Chinitna Bay, any dual-permit drift fisherman who wishes to fish there must remove one shackle of gear (50 fathoms) off the boat completely before fishing to comply with 5 AAC 39.240 (a), which states that a vessel shall have aboard only one legal limit of salmon fishing gear. The Chinitna Bay subdistrict is often opened by emergency order on Tuesdays and Fridays after the chum salmon SEG in Clearwater Creek has been met. The Chinitna Bay drift gillnet opener often occurs after August 16th when Drift Gillnet Areas 3 and 4 are open on Mondays and Thursdays by regulation. D-boat fishing is allowed in Drift Gillnet Areas 3 & 4. Thus if a D-boat fishes in Drift Gillnet Area 3 or 4 on Monday, the vessel permit holder(s) must completely remove 50 fathoms of gear off their boat in order to fish in Chinitna Bay on Tuesday. The Chinitna Bay gear restriction unnecessarily limits the amount of gear dual-permit fishermen may have aboard in Chinitna Bay when traveling to the west side of UCI to take advantage of back to back fishing periods.

This proposal seeks to allow a dual-permit vessel to have 200 fathoms of gear on board while in Chinitna Bay subdistrict, but fish with no more than 150 fathoms of gear in the subdistrict at anytime.

PROPOSED BY: Dan Anderson

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