

**PROPOSAL 205**

**5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan.**

Clarify the definition of “minimize” in the *Northern District Salmon Management Plan*, as follows:

I would like to see the BOF specifically define what is meant by the term "minimize." This could take the form of a specified percentage of the harvestable surplus or it could be a specific cap number based on the five-year average of sport harvested silvers in the Northern District or, perhaps, more specific restrictions on time and area for the commercial fishery than currently exist.

I don't have a specific methodology in mind other than having a specific definition as guidance for ADF&G to manage to. When the commercial drift fleet harvests 191,490 silvers, as they did in 2017 and the entire Northern District sport harvest was 47,706, it doesn't appear that any "minimization" of the commercial harvest is occurring.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** When the Board of Fisheries developed this plan, they included purpose and direction for ADF&G to follow when managing under this plan. The plan starts, "(a) The purposes of this management plan are to minimize the harvest of Coho salmon bound for the Northern District of upper Cook Inlet and to provide the department direction for management of salmon stocks ... The department shall also manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks to minimize the harvest of Northern District Coho salmon, to provide sport and guided sport fishermen a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon resources over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restriction .... "

The term "minimize" has never been defined in regulation. Over the last ten years, using available data from Fish and Game (2008 to 2017), the Central District commercial drift fishery has harvested more Coho bound for the Northern District than the entire Northern District sport catch in eight of the last ten years. At the 2017 UCI meeting, I was personally told by the Soldotna commercial fisheries management biologist that 95% of all coho salmon harvested by the drift fleet had been shown by genetic sampling to be northern-bound silvers. If the Northern District commercial set net fishery is included, then the commercial fishery has harvested significantly higher numbers of coho salmon in all ten years. How is this "minimizing" the commercial harvest of northern-bound coho?

The commercial data comes from Fisheries Management Report No. 18-10, Upper Cook Inlet Commercial Fisheries Annual Management Report, 2017, by Pat Shields and Alyssa Frothingham. The sportfishing data comes from Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996--. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited April 7, 2019).

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