

Shrimp and miscellaneous

PROPOSAL 170

5 AAC 02.108. Customary and traditional subsistence uses of shellfish stocks. 5 AAC 01.666. Customary and traditional subsistence uses of fish stocks and amounts necessary for subsistence uses. 5 AAC 01.713. Subsistence use of aquatic plants in Southeastern Alaska Area., and 5 AAC 01.716. Customary and traditional subsistence uses of fish stocks and amounts necessary for subsistence uses.

Establish a positive customary and traditional use finding for shellfish and plants for all intertidal areas of Southeast Alaska and Yakutat, as follows:

Add **“(15) unless otherwise specified, include all beach seafood in the Southeastern Alaska-Yakutat Area as defined by 5 AAC 02.100.”**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Indigenous people of the Ketchikan Indian Community have been using all beach resources throughout southeast Alaska since time immemorial. These include but are not limited to clams, cockles, seaweed, gumboots, sea asparagus, and sea cucumbers. In any indigenous household, you can find a number of these resources at any given time. These resources are part of the identity of traditional users. Therefore, we find it appropriate to have all such beach seafood to be classified as customary and traditional resources.

PROPOSED BY: Ketchikan Indian Community (HQ-F20-051)

PROPOSAL 171

5 AAC 31.110. Shrimp pot fishing seasons and periods for Registration Area A.

Change the start of the pot shrimp season from October to after March, as follows:

Might we change the harvest season until after March? (before salmon season)

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Southeast spot shrimp are on a decline, yet we continue commercial harvest during the spawning season. According to your own information, eggs can be found on spot shrimp from October through March.

PROPOSED BY: Richard Foley (EF-F20-005)

PROPOSAL 172

5 AAC 31.110. Shrimp pot fishing seasons and periods for Registration Area A and 5 AAC 31.145. Southeastern Alaska Area Pot Shrimp Fishery Management Plan.

Change the pot shrimp fishery from a fall/winter season to a spring/summer season, as follows:

5 AAC 31.110. Shrimp pot fishing seasons and periods for Registration Area A Except as provided in 5 AAC 31.145 (d), in Registration Area A, shrimp may be taken by pots only from **May 15 through July 31,**[OCTOBER 1 THROUGH FEBRUARY 28] unless closed earlier by emergency order.

5 AAC 31.145. (d) The commissioner may, by emergency order, open a shrimp fishing season from **October 1 through February 30 (winter season)**, [MAY 15 THROUGH JULY 31 (SUMMER SEASON)] in a district where the guideline harvest range was not reached during the season specified in 5 AAC 31.110 **(Summer Season)** [(WINTER SEASON)].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We hope to address the ever-decreasing shrimp stocks and shorter and shorter commercial shrimping seasons in Southeast Alaska by moving the commercial shrimp opener from October to May when the shrimp no longer have eggs. If we continue to hold our commercial shrimp season at a time when a large percentage of the shrimp carry eggs, we can expect the stocks in Southeast Alaska to continue to decline. Canada, with its robust shrimp fishery, proves year after year that targeting the shrimp after they lay eggs is smart management. In the past, some permit holders have resisted this change, citing it would limit opportunity for those that participate in multiple fisheries. However, in recent years 95% of the harvest occurs in the first two-three weeks of fishing, making the conflict with other fisheries less of an issue.

Moving the fishery to the spring would enhance shrimp stocks and possibly lead to more fishing opportunity. ADFG staff have been very supportive of this move in the past saying: “Changing the initial season start date to May 15 would enhance biological conservation and fishery management. Fishing during this time period may allow for increased guideline harvest levels in the future because the fishery would occur before the high natural mortality periods of molting, mating, egg development, and egg extrusion. The current fall fishery occurs after these processes are complete. Fishing on the stock in the spring would also allow females carrying eggs in the fall to brood and hatch their eggs before being subject to fishing mortality, which may enhance long term stock resilience.” (ADF&G 2017. Staff Comments)

Additional benefits would include:

1. Enhanced management of the fishery. Currently the October opener occurs too close to the survey to inform management for that season's fishery. Rev. Dec. 2019
2. More opportunity for a local Market. Regional processors and catcher/sellers have expressed interest in a spring fishery as the tourist season provides more customers and restaurants are wanting shrimp.
3. Safer weather and more participation opportunity for smaller boats
4. A more viable product for US markets. Eggs cause the shrimp to decompose more rapidly and the orange mess is a turnoff to the American consumer.

PROPOSED BY: Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F20-085)

PROPOSAL 173

5 AAC 31.110. Shrimp pot fishing seasons and periods for Registration Area A; and 5 AAC 31.145. Southeastern Alaska Area Pot Shrimp Fishery Management Plan.

Change the pot shrimp fishery from a fall/winter season to a spring/summer season, as follows:

5 AAC 31.110. Shrimp pot fishing seasons and periods for Registration Area A Except as provided in 5AAC 31.145 (d), in Registration Area A, shrimp may be taken by pots only from **May 21 through July 31** [OCTOBER 1 THROUGH FEBRUARY 28] unless closed earlier by emergency order.

5 AAC 31.145.

(d) The commissioner may, by emergency order, open a shrimp fishing season from **October 1 through February 30 (winter season)**, [MAY 21 THROUGH JULY 31 (SUMMER SEASON)] in a district where the guideline harvest range was not reached during the season specified in 5 AAC 31.110 (**Summer Season**) [(WINTER SEASON)].

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? We hope to address the ever-decreasing shrimp stocks and shorter and shorter commercial shrimping seasons in Southeast Alaska by moving the commercial shrimp opener from October to May when the shrimp no longer have eggs. If the commercial shrimp season continues to be held at a time when a large percentage of the shrimp carry eggs, the stocks in Southeast Alaska may continue to decline. In the past, some permit holders have resisted this change, citing it would limit opportunity for those that participate in multiple fisheries. However, in recent years 95% of the harvest occurs in the first two-three weeks of fishing, making the conflict with other fisheries less of an issue.

Moving the fishery to the spring would enhance shrimp stocks and possibly lead to more fishing opportunity. ADF&G staff have been very supportive of this move in the past saying:

“Changing the initial season start date to May 15 would enhance biological conservation and fishery management. Fishing during this time period may allow for increased GHs in the future because the fishery would occur before the high natural mortality periods of molting, mating, egg development, and egg extrusion. The current fall fishery occurs after these processes are complete. Fishing on the stock in the spring would also allow females carrying eggs in the fall to brood and hatch their eggs before being subject to fishing mortality, which may enhance long term stock resilience.” (ADF&G 2017 Staff Comments)

In their consideration of moving the commercial shrimp season opening to May 15, however, ADF&G staff failed to realize that a May 15 opening would create a serious conflict with the long established spring brown bear hunting season for resident and guided non-resident bear hunters. Moving this season opening to May 21 would eliminate most, if not all of this conflict.

Additional benefits of a spring opening would include:

- Enhanced management of the fishery. Currently the October opener occurs too close to the survey to inform management for that season's fishery
- More opportunity for a local Market. Regional processors and catcher/sellers have expressed interest in a spring fishery as the tourist season provides more customers and restaurants are wanting shrimp.
- Safer weather and more participation opportunity for smaller boats
- A more viable product for US markets. Eggs cause the shrimp to decompose more rapidly and the orange mess is a turn off to the American consumer.

PROPOSAL 174

5 AAC 31.110. Shrimp pot fishing seasons and periods for Registration Area A and 5 AAC 31.145. Southeastern Alaska Area Pot Shrimp Fishery Management Plan.

Change the pot shrimp season in Districts 2 and 6 from a fall/winter season to spring/summer season, as follows:

5 AAC 31.110(#) Shrimp pot fishing seasons and periods for Registration Area A:

Except as provided in 5 AAC 31.145(d) and Districts 2 and 6, in Registration Area A, shrimp may be taken by pots only from October 1 through February 28, unless closed by emergency order. In district 2 and 6, shrimp may be taken by pots only from May 15th through July 31st, unless closed earlier by emergency order.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently shrimp season is managed with a fall opener for a small percentage of fishermen and overseas markets. Shrimp in Southeast Alaska are harvested during the fall while the shrimp are bearing eggs. The shrimp stocks continue to decrease and most commercial shrimpers agree shrimp need to be caught during the spring and early summer.

Directly to our south, British Columbia has a sustainable spot prawn fishery. British Columbia has a few similarities with Alaska concerning their commercial fishery. They have a limited entry program to restrict the numbers of permit holders fishing commercially. They restrict the number of pots a vessel can fish and the size volume of the pots. They also have specific sections set aside for recreational fishermen. Harvest logs are required and seasons are closed when a certain catch level has been met.

British Columbia manages their commercial shrimp fishery differently from Alaska several different ways. Fishermen can only haul each shrimp pot once per day. All female shrimp with eggs must be released as well as all shrimp under a certain size. Pots have a minimum mesh size restriction to allow escapement of undersized shrimp. Their shrimp season opens in May and last through the mid to later part of June. The reason for a May opener is to allow “spawners” to release their eggs. Recreational shrimp closures will often occur during winter months to allow “spawners” to release their eggs.

Southeast Alaska waters are directly north of British Columbia. British Columbia has a sustainable fishery. The fishery is recognized by the David Suzuki Foundation/Seachoice program as a BEST CHOICE, the Vancouver Aquarium Vancouver Aquarium’s Ocean Wise program as GREEN, and the Monterey Bay Aquarium’s Seafood Watch as a BEST CHOICE. Southeast Alaska shrimp fishery is only known as a depleted fishery.

The East POW AC would like our represented commercial fishing districts of 2 and 6 to be the turning point for Alaska to have a sustainable shrimp fishery. As British Columbia has proven,

shrimp stocks remain sustainable only if the egg bearing females are allowed to release their eggs prior to an open commercial season. Having a spring season will allow for local sales of the shrimp and a product which is more desirable to the local market. Shrimp with eggs are not desired by the local consumer. At the same time, 90% of British Columbia's shrimp sales are to overseas consumers. When asked, a large percentage of the commercial shrimp fishermen support a spring shrimp fishery in Alaska.

PROPOSED BY: East Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-F20-094)

PROPOSAL 175

5 AAC 31.124. Lawful shrimp pot gear for Registration Area A.

Limit the number of shrimp pots that may be deployed on a longline to 10, as follows:

5 AAC 31.124. Limit of no more than 10 shrimp pots per string.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Limit deployment of no more than 10 shrimp pots per string. This would slow the pace of the fishery, and further provide for gear standardization between large boats and small boats.

Background:

Commercial harvest of shrimp in Southeast Alaska utilizing pot gear began in the late 1960s and continued sporadically with low effort until the mid-1980s, peaking in the mid-1990s. In 1995, the CFEC was petitioned to include pot gear for shrimp into the limited entry program. The pot shrimp fishery is now limited entry and there are currently 256 active and interim permits of the 329 originally issued. In 1997, regulations were adopted that significantly affected the Southeast Alaska Pot Shrimp fishery. These regulations include the current daily fishing periods, pot sizes, and pot limits. These restrictions had several effects: 1) decreased efficiency of the fleet, producing a slower-paced and more orderly fishery; 2) reduced the harvest of small shrimp by limiting fishing hours, leading to longer soak times which allows mesh size to passively sort out smaller shrimp; and 3) provided for gear standardization, allowing fishery performance data to be utilized by managers.

The department supports the concept of establishing regulations that reduce capture of small shrimp. Pot limits are generally allocative between small boat and large boat operations. There may be benefits in slowing the pace of the fishery in some regions.

PROPOSED BY: Don Westlund (HQ-F20-031)

PROPOSAL 176

5 AAC 31.124. Lawful shrimp pot gear for Registration Area A.

Reduce the number of shrimp pots that a vessel may fish, as follows:

5 AAC 31.124. Limits of 100 small pots or 75 large pots.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Reduction of shrimp pots. The shrimp fishery is a five month season. It has now become a one month or less derby. Derbies are never good for the resource and can lead to dangerous conditions that fishermen have to fish in (weather). It would reduce the daily catch. The managers would be able to more accurately determine catch and when to close the individual fishing districts.

Background: Commercial harvest of shrimp in Southeast Alaska utilizing pot gear began in the late 1960s and continued sporadically with low effort until the mid-1980s, peaking in the mid-1990s. In 1995, the CFEC was petitioned to include pot gear for shrimp into the limited entry program. The pot shrimp fishery is now limited entry and there are currently 256 active and interim permits of the 329 originally issued. In 1997, regulations were adopted that significantly affected the Southeast Alaska Pot Shrimp fishery. These regulations include the current daily fishing periods, pot sizes, and pot limits. These restrictions had several effects: 1) decreased efficiency of the fleet, producing a slower-paced and more orderly fishery; 2) reduced the harvest of small shrimp by limiting fishing hours, leading to longer soak times which allows mesh size to passively sort out smaller shrimp; and 3) provided for gear standardization, allowing fishery performance data to be utilized by managers.

The department supports the concept of establishing regulations that reduce capture of small shrimp. Pot limits are generally locative between small boat and large boat operations. There may be benefits in slowing the pace of the fishery in some regions.

256 active permits
Currently 140 small or 100 large pots

256x140=35840
minus
256x100=25600
=10240
/140
= small pot reduction of 73 pot limits

256x100=25600
minus
256x75=19200
=6400
/100
=large pot reduction of 64 pot limits

73 small pot limits + 64 large pot limits = 137 combined pot limits /2 = 68.5 average pot limits reduced

PROPOSED BY: Don Westlund (HQ-F20-032)

PROPOSAL 177

5 AAC 31.136. Closed waters in Registration Area A.

Establish closed waters in the Hydaburg area of Section 3-A, as follows:

Hydaburg LAC proposes to close the following waters to commercial shrimp fisheries.

5 AAC 31.105 Commercial Shrimp

(1) Section 3-A: waters of district 3 south and east of a line through Tlevak Narrows beginning at the eastern most tip of Turn Point at 55° 15.78' N. lat, 133° 07.23' W. long., to a point on Prince of Wales Island at 55° 15.75' N. lat., 133° 06.43' W. long., including Soda bay and its contiguous water, but excluding all waters of Meares Pass and its contiguous waters, AS WELL AS EXCLUDING SUKWAAN STRAITS FROM ROUND POINT 55°.125064; -132.688544 ACROSS TO EEK POINT 55°13770; -132.666874 NORTH TO THE HEAD OF NATZUHINI BAY 55°270024; -132.849299 EXTENDING WEST TO THE OPENINGS OF NORTH PASS 55°210175; -132961267 TO 55°207138; -132938232 AND SOUTH PASS 55.168517; -132.893346 TO 55°.163067;-132890543.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Hydaburg LAC would like to close the commercial fishery in the waters adjacent to the community of Hydaburg. There has been a drastic decline in the shrimp available in the inside waters to personal use shrimp fisherman. Closing the waters to commercial shrimpers will give the shrimp time to rebuild the stocks in area.

PROPOSED BY: Anthony Christianson

(EF-F20-055)

PROPOSAL 178

5 AAC 31.136. Closed waters in Registration Area A.

Expand waters closed to commercial pot shrimp fishery in Kasaan Bay, as follows:

5 AAC 31.136(4) Shrimp may not be taken: in the waters of Kasaan Bay south and west of a line that stretches from the northern most tip of Daisy Island located at 55°28.816'N lat, 132°19.397'W long, to the tip of Baker Point located at 55°30.805'N lat, 132°24.527'W, including all waters of Twelve-mile Arm;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The 2013 October commercial shrimp season for District 2 has left the personal use shrimpers with low shrimp biomass. District 2 is a large area; however the commercial fishing fleet focused their efforts in the waters of Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm in 2013 which are adjacent to the communities of Hollis and Kasaan. Both areas were hard to navigate during the fishery from the large amount of commercial gear. After the 2013 commercial season, personal use fishermen had a hard time locating shrimp in the waters of Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm. When shrimp were/are harvested, the numbers of them caught are very low. The area used to receive moderate personal use fishing pressure throughout the year from residents of Prince of Wales Island as well as Ketchikan. Prince of Wales has a large population of subsistence / personal use users who rely on the land and ocean to feed their families. The island has a high cost of living with a financially depressed economy. ADF&G held

a 2014 commercial shrimp season; however they closed Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm after a period where the commercial fishermen were catching very low numbers for the effort they put in to the fishery. Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm remained closed for the 2015 2016, and 2017 commercial shrimp seasons by emergency order due to a low biomass. ADF&G reopened Kasaan bay during the 2018 and 2019 season. During the 2019 season the commercial shrimp fishermen caught 42,500 pounds of shrimp when the GHL was set at 30,000 pounds. Currently the shrimp biomass is harvested commercially in October while the female shrimp contain eggs and is marketed to an overseas market. This commercial closure of a small section of Kasaan Bay to shrimping will have very little impact on the commercial fishery. The large commercial vessels can easily navigate to the surrounding open areas to commercial shrimp and away from the community of Kasaan who its members rely on a subsistence lifestyle to exist..

A regulation closure of the area to commercial shrimping would protect a relatively small percentage of District 2 to allow personal use fishermen to utilize the resource. Ketchikan personal use fishermen would benefit from closed commercial shrimp area as buoys in the Kasaan Bay are routinely observed with Ketchikan addresses. The area selected for the closure is in close proximity to the community of Kasaan.

PROPOSED BY: East Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-F20-076)

PROPOSAL 179

5 AAC 31.136. Closed waters in Registration Area A.

Expand waters closed to commercial pot shrimp fishery in Twelve-Mile Arm, as follows:

5 AAC 31.136(4) Shrimp may not be taken: in the waters of Twelve-mile Arm south and west of a line that stretches from the northern most tip of Outer Point located at 55°31.233'N lat, 132°31.442'W long, to point located on Prince of Wales Island located at 55°31.937'N lat, 132°32.969'W, including all waters of Twelve-mile Arm;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The 2013 October commercial shrimp season for District 2 has left the personal use shrimpers with low shrimp biomass. District 2 is a large area; however the commercial fishing fleet focused their efforts in the waters of Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm in 2013 which are adjacent to the communities of Hollis and Kasaan. Both areas were hard to navigate during the fishery from the large amount of commercial gear. After the 2013 commercial season, personal use fishermen had a hard time locating shrimp in the waters of Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm. When shrimp was harvested, the numbers of them caught, and continue today in the single digits and small in size. The area used to receive moderate personal use fishing pressure through-out the year from residents of Prince of Wales Island as well as Ketchikan. Prince of Wales has a large population of subsistence / personal use users who rely on the land and ocean to feed their families. The island has a high cost of living with a financially depressed economy. ADF&G held a 2014 commercial shrimp season; however they closed Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm after a period where the commercial fishermen were catching very low numbers for the effort they put in to the fishery. Kasaan Bay and Twelve-mile Arm remained closed for the 2015, 2016, and 2017 commercial shrimp seasons by emergency order due to a low biomass. ADF&G reopened Kasaan Bay and the start of Twelve-mile Arm during the 2018 and

2019 seasons. During the 2019 season the commercial shrimp fishermen caught 42,500 pounds of shrimp when the GHJ was set at 30,000 pounds. Currently the shrimp biomass is harvested commercially in October while the female shrimp contain eggs and is marketed to an overseas market. This small commercial closure of a small section of Twelve-mile Arm to shrimping will have very little impact of the commercial fishery. The large commercial vessels can fish the surrounding open areas to commercial shrimping and away from the community of Hollis who its members rely on a subsistence lifestyle to exist.

A regulation closure of the area to commercial shrimping would protect a relatively small percentage of District 2 to allow personal use fishermen to utilize the resource. The area selected for the closure is in directly adjacent to the community of Hollis.

PROPOSED BY: East Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-F20-078)

PROPOSAL 180

5 AAC 31.112. Sidestripe shrimp beam trawl fishing in Registration Area A.

Repeal observer coverage requirement, as follows:

There would be no new regulation, Only deleting existing language. Repeal line (7) of part (b) of 5 AAC31.112

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? I would ask the Board of Fish to repeal line number (7) of section (b) that reads (the commissioner may require an onboard observer on a vessel during fishing operations) . None of the other shrimp fisheries have this requirement. When engaged in sidestripe fishing I average around 600.00 per day, with one to two crewmembers. The cost of an observer would exceed my income on most days. I do not produce any more bycatch sidestripe fishing than I do pink/stripe peeler shrimp fishing. I have looked at cameras as another means of observation, though it still requires monitoring by Fish & Game, and with budget shortfalls do not see that as a viable alternative. I have been threatened with this added expense when requesting this fishery open.

PROPOSED BY: Brett Stillwaugh (EF-F20-103)

PROPOSAL 181

5 AAC 31.112. Sidestripe shrimp beam trawl fishing in Registration Area A.

Open a directed sidestripe beam trawl fishery in District 8 for remainder of November-February season once the directed shrimp beam trawl fishery has closed, as follows:

5 AAC 31.112 add line (8) to section (b) to read, upon the closure of the Area 8, 4th pink quota of the year. The stand alone sidestripe shrimp trawl fishery will be opened until February 28th or the sidestripe quota has been taken.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Over the last 20 years there have been limited times when there was a market for peeler shrimp (small pink/sidestripe shrimp).

The few beam trawlers fishing during these times worked primarily on larger sidestripe shrimp for the fresh, and frozen tail, and head-on markets. The best quality of sidestripe shrimp in Area 8 show up in the winter months, with the least amount of by-catch. In past years Fish & Game has been reluctant to open the stand alone sidestripe fishery after the 4th quota of the year is taken. The only reasoning I was told was lack of data, that I find hard to believe in a fishery that has been going since 1929. If nothing is changed the shrimp fisherman in area 8 will continue to lose opportunity and income. I looked at many different options from splitting quotas and redrawing area lines. This being the easiest least complicated way of addressing the issue without affecting the Trawlers fishing Pink shrimp. Any trawler would still be able to request a standalone sidestripe shrimp trawl fishery be opened after any one of the three earlier openings.

PROPOSED BY: Brett Stillwaugh (EF-F20-125)

PROPOSAL 182

5 AAC 31.115. Shrimp pot guideline harvest ranges for Registration Area A.

Divide the District 15 GHR into two fishing areas with distinct GHRs for the new areas, as follows:

5 AAC 31.115 (a)(15) is amended to read:

(15) District 15: [0 – 20,000 POUNDS OF COONSTRIPE SHRIMP;]

(A) Chilkoot, Lutak, and Taiya Inlets: 0 – 10,000 pounds of coonstripe shrimp;

(B) remainder of District 15: 0 – 10,000 pounds of coonstripe shrimp;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Current regulations do not reflect management practices for the District 15 pot shrimp fishery that have been utilized since 2009. Past management practices of managing for one GHL for all of District 15 resulted in reductions of GHL and closures. The District 15 GHL for coonstripe shrimp was set at 20,000 pounds, the upper end of the GHR, through the 2004/05 season. It was reduced by 25% to 15,000 pounds for the 2005/06 season in response to concerns for stock health. The district was closed for three seasons from the 2006/07 season through 2008/09 season due to increased concerns for stock health. Beginning with the 2009/10 season, District 15 was split into two management areas, each with a specific management target to further address concerns for stock health. One target of 7,500 pounds was specific to “District 15-East,” an area comprised of Chilkoot, Lutak, and Taiya Inlets. A second management target of 7,500 pounds was specified for “District 15-Remainder,” which included the remainder of the district with Chilkat Inlet being the primary fishing area. This management strategy has allowed the department to better react to changes in the shrimp populations in these areas and provide for more sustainable fisheries.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F20-159)

PROPOSAL 183

5 AAC 47.035. Methods, means, and general provisions – Shellfish. and 5 AAC 77.660. Personal use shrimp fishery.

Establish tunnel eye size requirements for ridged mesh shrimp pots in the personal use and sport fisheries, as follows:

5 AAC 47.035(k)(1) and 5 AAC 77.660(5)(A) A pot used to take shrimp under this chapter must have no more than four tunnel eye openings; no tunnel eye opening may exceed 15 inches in perimeter; except a rigid hard sided pot may have a tunnel eye opening not to exceed 20 inches in perimeter.;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Many commercially available hard sided rigid sport shrimp pots have tunnel eye openings which exceed the 15 inch perimeter requirement. A commonly found shrimp pot has four tunnel eye openings that is rectangular in shape and measures 8 inches wide by 2 inches tall. The rectangular opening has extruder bars which prevent larger fish, crab and starfish from entering the pot.

Looking at the current regulation, a circular tunnel eye opening of 15 inches has a surface area opening of 17.904 square inches. A hard sided rigid mesh tunnel eye opening of 8 inches long by 2 inches high has a surface area opening area of 16 square inches. Even though these rigid mesh pots exceed the current perimeter requirement, they are actually smaller in surface area.

This proposed change in regulation will allow sport fishermen and personal use fishermen to fish with commonly sold rigid hard sided mesh shrimp pots legally in Southeastern Alaska waters. All other pot regulations will remain unchanged.

PROPOSED BY: East Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-F20-091)

PROPOSAL 184

5 AAC 47.035. Methods, means, and general provisions – Shellfish.

Clarify the practice of long-lining shrimp pots in the sport fishery, as follows:

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Longlining of shrimp pots is a common practice in the personal use shrimp fishery. It is specifically addressed in 5 AAC 77.660(4): *“unless otherwise provided for in this chapter, pots operated to take shrimp may be longlined; a buoy is not required for each pot, but at least one buoy on the longline must be marked as required in 5 AAC 77.010(d)”*.

In the sport shrimp fishery there is no explicit statement on the practice of longlining; however, 5 AAC 47.035(f) states *“A sport fisherman using pots to take shellfish shall plainly and legibly inscribe the fisherman’s first initial, last name, and home address on a keg or buoy attached to each pot.”* This would indicate that longlining shrimp pots in the sport fishery is not allowed because each pot is required to be labeled.

We are seeking clarification on the board's intent on allowing longlining of shrimp pots in the sport fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F20-162)

PROPOSAL 185

5 AAC 47.035. Methods, means, and general provisions – Shellfish.

Allow the use of artificial lights as an attractant when taking squid., as follows:

Adopt a new subsection of 5 AAC 47.035 Methods, means and general provisions – Finfish, to wit: (b) **(8) Squid may be taken with the aid of artificial lights.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In recent years, Market Squid (*Doryteutitis Opalescens*) have established a presence in Southeast Alaska and they have become a desirable species to catch for both human consumption and for use as bait. There are currently no regulations that specifically cover the taking of market squid, (i.e. no closed seasons and no bag limits). A common method to take squid in other western states is to utilize artificial lights to attract them. Since there is no law specifically allowing the use of artificial lights, local Wildlife Troopers, when encountering squid anglers, have been issuing warnings for using lights to take squid. I believe that allowing the use of artificial lights when taking squid will increase the opportunity for anglers to take advantage of this resource without doing it any harm. To support this opinion, in October of 2019, Mr. Ben Burford (doctoral candidate at Stanford University) gave a lecture at UAS Sitka Campus on the new market squid presence in Southeast Alaska. He has been studying the migration of these squid to our waters for the last several years. During the Q/A portion of his lecture, I specifically asked him if there was any level of rod and reel take of market squid that would harm their numbers in SE Alaska. He didn't hesitate in saying that there was no way that such a fishery could harm the market squid resource here.

PROPOSED BY: Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F20-089)

PROPOSAL 186

5 AAC 47.035. Methods, means, and general provisions – Shellfish.

Allow the take of squid with hook and line gear with an unlimited number of hooks, as follows:

Adopt a new subsection of 5 AAC 47.035 Methods, means and general provisions – Finfish, to wit: (b) **(7) Squid may be taken by hook and line with up to unlimited number of hooks or jigs.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In recent years, market squid (*Doryteutitis Opalescens*) have established a presence in Southeast Alaska and they have become a desirable species to catch for both human consumption and for use as bait. There are currently no regulations that cover the taking of market squid, (i.e. no closed seasons and no bag limits) with the exception of 5 AAC 75.020 Sport fishing gear (a)(5) which limits anglers to the use of 2 hooks. Squid jigs & Sabiki rigs are commonly available in strings of 5-6 jigs/hooks. Local Wildlife

Troopers, when encountering squid anglers, with no alternative law available to them have been enforcing the 2 hook law.

Since market squid are forage fish versus game species, I believe the law on number of hooks should be expanded. This has already been done for two other forage fish (herring and smelt) in 5 AAC 75.030 which allows use of 15 or less hooks. I do not believe this change to regulations would hurt the market squid resource. To support this opinion, in October of 2019, Mr. Ben Burford (doctoral candidate at Stanford University) gave a lecture at UAS Sitka Campus on the new market squid presence in Southeast Alaska. He has been studying the migration of these squid to our waters for the last several years. During the Q/A portion of his lecture, I specifically asked him if there was any level of rod and reel take of market squid that would harm their numbers in SE Alaska. He didn't hesitate in saying that there was no way that such a fishery could harm the market squid resource here. Allowing the use of more than 2 hooks would increase the opportunity for anglers to take advantage of this resource.

PROPOSED BY: Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F20-090)

PROPOSAL 187

5 AAC 38.140. Southeastern Alaska Sea Cucumber Management Plan.

Allow the department to modify weekly fishing periods by emergency order during the weeks of Christmas and New Year's Day, as follows:

5 AAC 38.140. Southeast Alaska Sea Cucumber Management Plan. (b) **(3) during the weeks of Christmas and New Years the commissioner may, by emergency order, open the fishery on days to maximize the harvest.**

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association would like to give ADF&G the flexibility to manage the southeast Alaska sea cucumber fishery during the Christmas and New Year's holidays. Right now, by regulation, the sea cucumber fishery opens on Monday/Tuesday. In years when the holidays fall on those days or the day after divers and processors may not operate. The department currently does not have the regulatory flexibility to change those days to accommodate the fisheries. This proposal would give the department that needed flexibility.

PROPOSED BY: Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association (HQ-F20-098)

PROPOSAL 188

5 AAC 38.140. Southeastern Alaska Sea Cucumber Management Plan.

Change the start of the sea cucumber fishery from October 1 to the first Monday or Tuesday of October, as follows:

5 AAC 38.140. Southeastern Alaska Sea Cucumber Management Plan.
(b) Sea Cucumbers may be taken from **the first Monday/Tuesday [OCTOBER 1] in October** through March 31 during the fishing period established by emergency order.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? The Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association (SARDFA) would like to clarify that the opening week of the Registration Area A sea cucumber fishery starts during the first full week of October that includes a Monday and Tuesday.

In 2019 the first day of October fell on a Tuesday. Divers wanted a full fishing period (Monday and Tuesday) so ADF&G did not open the fishery the first week of October but opened the fishery on the second week.

SARDFA would like to change the wording of the current regulation to avoid this confusion in the future.

PROPOSED BY: Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association (HQ-F20-100)

PROPOSAL 189

5 AAC 38.142. Southeastern Alaska Geoduck Fishery Management Plan.

Allow the department to increase the number of divers allowed to fish from a vessel from two to four by emergency order, as follows:

5 AAC 38.142. Southeast Alaska Geoduck Fishery Management Plan. (p) During an open geoduck fishing period, no more than two CFEC geoduck permit holders may conduct fishing operations from, or deliver geoducks from, a vessel licensed and registered to commercially fish for geoduck. From 24 hours before, during and for 24 hours after a fishing period, or when commercially harvested geoducks are on board the vessel, no more than three CFEC geoduck permit holders may be on board a vessel that is registered to commercially fish for geoduck.

(1) The commissioner may by emergency order modify the number of CFEC geoduck permit holders able to be onboard or fish from a registered vessel to four divers.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? In the geoduck clam fishery only 2 divers can fish from one vessel (5 AAC 38.142 (p)). However, late in the season it is often difficult to harvest the guideline harvest level (GHL) in some remote areas. We would like to have up to four CFEC geoduck permit holders conduct fishing operations from a vessel that is registered to commercially fish for geoducks to make it more economical to harvest the remaining GHL. This would be done late in the season when only remote areas are open.

PROPOSED BY: Southeast Alaska Regional Dive Fisheries Association (HQ-F20-099)

This proposal will be heard at the Prince William Sound and Southeast meetings and deliberated on at the Statewide meeting.

PROPOSAL 241

5 AAC 75.995. Definitions; and 5 AAC 39.975. Definitions.

Define shrimp, as follows:

5 AAC 75.995, 5 AAC 39.975 Shrimp defined: “Shrimp” means a member of the order Decapoda in Alaska to include the shrimp as a whole

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Currently ADF&G does not have the definition in regulation of what a shrimp is. At the same time, shrimp regulations are imposed with a shrimp either meaning a whole shrimp or a tailed shrimp.

Regulations such as 5 AAC 47.020(16) states the bag and possession limit for shrimp is 3 pounds or three quarts. The regulation does not define if this limit is whole shrimp or shrimp tails. A person would believe a shrimp is defined as a whole shrimp. However the 2019 and 2020 ADF&G Southeast Alaska Sport Fishing Regulations Summary lists the sport shellfish bag and possession limit as 3 pounds or quarts of whole or deheaded (tailed) shrimp.

The amount of shrimp will vary greatly if a person retains 3 pounds of whole shrimp verses 3 pounds of deheaded shrimp. There are regulations referencing shrimp however a shrimp is not defined in regulation. Most species are defined such as “Dungeness crab”, “salmon”, “rockfish”, “char”, “grayling”, and such. With the definition of these species, the bag limits are set per numbers of whole species and not per pound, legs, or the filets of that species.

This proposal is seeking the Board of Fish to define what a “shrimp” is to clarify if a person can retain shrimp as a whole or just the shrimp tails. Currently the limits are set on “shrimp” and the undefined term is being mistaken as meaning a shrimp tail. If this logic is used to other defined species, a resident in Southeast Alaska could retain 20 gallons of Dungeness crab or 20 gallons of Dungeness crab legs or claws. However, ADF&G set the resident limit in Southeastern Alaska to 20 Dungeness crab.

PROPOSED BY: East Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-F20-093)
