

**PROPOSAL 138**

**5 AAC 21.335. Minimum distance between units of gear; 5 AAC 21.331. Gillnet specifications and operations.**

Allow use of a seine lead in the set gillnet fishery and define minimum distance between gear as follows:

In considering a minimum distance between gear 5 AAC 21.335(d) no part of a seine may be operated within 300 feet of a set gillnet. And considering the Lead's unknown effects upon salmon behavior, this Experiment to Be:

Allow for the use of a 105 Fathom Seine Lead in the set net fishery, within 300 feet of a set gillnet, wherever fishermen within 1200 feet on either side have given approval.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** Allow for the implementation of a 105 Fathom Fixed Seine Lead

Whenever possible, experimentation that may lead to new results should be encouraged in my opinion. The Board Process seems like a decent route to be sure stakeholders have a say in how new gear implementation may affect their fishing opportunity.

This particular Seine/Lead in this configuration would be used to explore what if any behavioral differences may exist amongst the various species of salmon upon interaction with the Lead. Larger schools of salmon MAY gather up against and flow around a Lead, returning more quickly to a near-shore travel, whereas larger individual fish or smaller groups MAY react by escaping into deeper water for a lengthier period of time. Interaction with a Lead MAY also heighten a salmon's future response to a gillnet. This could be especially important if the interaction occurred on an ebbing tide, when the fish may have been tailing against the current and been pushed into the net, leaving it ill-prepared to mount an escape.

It is anticipated that when dealing with so few openers a year, commercial operators are unlikely to be enthusiastic about the cost associated with building such a net, which could as easily direct fish of all species away from their gillnets, while only exploring a vague notion of fish behavior and some conservation of chinook, which are already reported as being caught infrequently at many beach locations.

For this reason, Fish and Game Managers themselves may wish to build such a Lead and place it within the Kasilof PU gillnet fishery to begin to evaluate any effects, thus perhaps providing the Department confidence to allow additional fishing opportunity within that fishery, which has seen limited fishing hours due to poor king returns.

A fixed Lead could perhaps also be positioned off-shore to divert salmon in closer to shore based PU fishermen.

**PROPOSED BY:** Nathan Hoff

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