



Fisheries Update

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CONTACT:

Colton Lipka, Cook Inlet Commercial Fisheries
Management Coordinator
(907) 262-9368
ADF&G Office of the Commissioner
(907) 465-4100

2026 Commissioner Permits for experimental use of beach seine gear in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District

This update provides the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's (department) evaluation and decision on the issuing of Commissioner Permits for experimental use of beach seine gear in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District set gillnet fishery. In response to the Alaska Board of Fisheries' recent adoption of Proposal 192 (as amended), which establishes a commercial beach seine fishery in the Upper Subdistrict while in stock of concern for Kenai River late-run king salmon, the department has determined that issuing Commissioners Permits for the same gear type would exceed the commissioner's authority under AS 16.05.050(a)(9). This statute provides in relevant part:

*"[the commissioner has the power] to authorize the holder of an interim-use permit under [AS 16.43](#) to engage on an experimental basis in commercial taking of a fishery resource with vessel, gear, and techniques **not presently qualifying for licensing under this chapter** in conformity with standards established by the Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission;"*

Additionally, it is unclear what substantive new information would be gained that has not already been obtained from permits issued in 2024 and in 2025. Beach seines were shown to be effective at harvesting sockeye salmon while releasing non-target species. Unknown factors, such as mortality rates after release from beach seines, would not be obtained from experimental fishing under a Commissioner Permit.

Therefore, Commissioners Permits for the experimental use of beach seine gear in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District of Upper Cook Inlet will not be issued in 2026.