

PROPOSAL 91 – 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.
Remove area restrictions imposed on the commercial drift gillnet fishery during July 9–15 and 16–31 time periods, as follows:

5AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan

(c) From July 1 through July 31st

(1) The regular weekly fishing periods are as described in 5AAC 21.320(b)(1).

(2) the fishing periods set forth in (1) of this subsection may be modified by emergency order;

(d) additional fishing time, based on in season salmon abundance, needed to meet the objectives of harvesting the surplus salmon and staying within the escapement goals will be allowed in one or more of the following areas.

(1) Expanded Kenai Section of the Upper Subdistrict;

(2) Expanded Kasilof Section of the Upper subdistrict’

(3) Anchor Point Section of the Lower Subdistrict’

(4) Drift Gillnet Area 1;

(5) Drift Gillnet Area 2;

(6) Central District

[DELETE THE ENTIRE EXISTING SECTIONS OF (c) AND (d)]

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Repeal of the regulations based on the Susitna sockeye stock of yield concern is necessary because the restrictions have been proven invalid by the data collected since their implementations. The data used to create the restrictions found in 5AAC 21.353 (c) and (d) have been proven wrong. In fact the wrong data has been used for decades and unfortunately or suspiciously the wrong data is still being used even after the corrections were determined by ADF&G in their 2006-09 escapement review. The current data clearly puts these restrictions in violation of not meeting the requirements of 5AAC 39.222. Policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries, especially (a)(2) in formulating fishery management plans designed to achieve maximum or optimum salmon production;(a)(c)(3) (M) procedures should be implemented to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of fishery management and habitat protection actions; and (a)(c)(3)(P) the best available scientific information on the status of salmon populations and the condition of the salmon’s habitats should be routinely updated and subject to peer review. (a)(d)(2) in response to the department’s salmon stock status reports, reports from other resource agencies, and public input, the board will review the management plan, or consider developing a management plan, for each affected salmon fishery or stock; management plans will be based on the principles and criteria contained in this policy and will

(A) contain goals and measurable and implementable objectives that are reviewed on a regular basis and utilized the best available scientific information;

(B) minimize the adverse effects on salmon habitat caused by fishing;

(C) protect, restore, and promote the long-term health and sustainability of the salmon fishery and habitat;

(D) prevent overfishing; and

(E) provide conservation and management measures that are necessary and appropriate to promote maximum or optimum sustained yield of the fishery resource;

The current restrictions are also in violation of State fisheries policy, Article 8 of the Constitution and the Magnuson Stevens Act all of which require the best scientific information available in formulating fishery management plans designed to achieve maximum or optimum salmon production.

The escapement data that was used to create the regulations has been found to have been grossly undercounting the escapement by an average of around three hundred percent. This is not sustainable and is an unnecessary and unacceptable monetary loss to the State and fishing industries, along with the loss of a high quality and natural sustainable food source. It makes no sense, especially in this time of huge budget deficits, to continue poor stewardship of the resource in management plans that literally waste millions of dollars and millions of harvestable surplus salmon and jeopardizes future salmon returns.

This proposal uses the reliable scientific data to repeal the unfounded restrictions that make it impossible to harvest the surplus salmon, by allowing the biologist to implement in-season abundance based management and still provide sufficient protection for all central and northern bound salmon stocks.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Advisory Committee

(EF-F16-120)
