

PROPOSAL 76

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

Establish mesh size requirements for Southeast Alaska Area sport fishing shrimp pots, as follows:

I recommend the board impose a minimum mesh size for sport shrimp pots in southeast Alaska, both netted and rigid, equal to the sport fish regulations already in place describing legal gear of shrimp pots in southcentral Alaska as follows. This is a direct copy and paste from southcentral sportfish shellfish regulations. Under this regulation, rigid sport shrimp pots must have a mesh opening of 7/8 inch square inside measurement.

Shrimp pot requirement:

- Two vertical sides of all shrimp pots must be made entirely of webbing big enough to allow a 7/8-inch round wooden dowel to go through without stretching or otherwise deforming the opening.
- The two vertical sides must touch each other and cannot be covered by anything.
- The other two sides, top, bottom, and tunnels may be composed of any material.
- The 7/8-inch size allows undersize and juvenile shrimp to escape.

A shrimp pot with no definable sides, such as a round pot, must have 50% of its vertical surface area covered with 7/8-inch webbing. The other 50% of its vertical sides, as well as its top and bottom, may be composed of any material.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? There are no restrictions in place regarding mesh size of shrimp pots for sport fishing in southeast Alaska to allow juvenile shrimp to escape.

Due to a trend in declining shrimp stocks and closures of several areas in southeast Alaska to sport and commercial use, it would seem to be a logical and responsible action to impose a minimum mesh size on sport shrimp pots to allow the escapement of juvenile shrimp. With no mesh restrictions in place, extremely young shrimp are harvested without a method for them to escape, facilitating the decline of this resource.

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