

PROPOSAL 178

5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

Permanently close drift gillnetting in the Upper Subdistrict within one mile of mean high tide north of the Kenai River and within one and one-half miles of mean high tide south of the Kenai River, as follows:

A permanent boundary line from one and one-half miles of mean high tide mark of the Kenai Peninsula Shoreline in the area of the Kenai and Kasilof sections of the Upper Subdistrict south of the Kenai River, and a one mile of the mean high tide mark of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline in that area of the Kenai and East Forelands Sections of the Upper Subdistrict north of the Kenai River will protect any open waters that may be created by a fleet reduction.

5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons

3) Central District, for drift gillnet: from the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later, until closed by emergency order, except that fishing with drift gillnets may not occur within

(A) two miles of the mean high tide mark on the eastern side of the Upper Sub-district until those locations have opened for fishing with set gillnets;

(B) one and one-half miles of the mean high tide mark of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline

(i) in that area of the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict south of the Kenai River, [IF FISHING WITH SET GILLNETS IN THAT AREA IS CLOSED] ***Remove***

(ii) the Anchor Point Section, if fishing with drift gillnets is open in the Anchor Point Section under 5 AAC 21.353;

(C) one mile of the mean high tide mark of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline in that area of the Kenai and East Forelands Sections of the Upper Subdistrict north of the Kenai River, [IF FISHING WITH SET GILL NETS IN THAT AREA IS CLOSED] ***Remove***

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? Eastside setnetters are actively working with the Alaska Legislature for a voluntary fleet reduction through a fairly compensated buyback of permits and locations. We are striving to create a more economically viable and sustainable set net fishery, by reducing the number of Upper Cook Inlet setnet permits on the Eastside by 45% and with a gear reduction of about 600 nets. With permanently closed waters we will allow more fish for in-river users while providing opportunity for harvest by user groups.

Current regulations allow a drift gillnet boat to come within 600 feet of a setnet if the setnets are open to fishing. There is a one and one-half mile boundary line in the Kenai and Kasilof section south of the Kenai River and a one mile boundary line in the Kenai and East Forelands Sections north of the Kenai river that Drift gillnet boats must remain outside of ONLY if fishing with the setnets is closed.

With a 45% permit reduction there will be more open water that a drift gillnetter could potentially have room to come in and fish while set nets are open. A migration of drifters inside the one and one-half mile boundary line would defeat the effort Eastside setnetters have made to allow more sockeye and kings to get to the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers.

PROPOSED BY: Ken Coleman

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