

## **PROPOSAL 187**

### **5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.**

Eliminate the one percent rule in the Central District drift gillnet fishery and create mandatory area restrictions based on escapement goals, as follows:

5 AAC 21.353(e) From **July 24** [AUGUST 1] through August **31** [15], there are no mandatory area restrictions to regular fishing periods, **except that if the department projects that the lower end of either the Kasilof or Kenai sockeye escapement goals will not be achieved, then the drift gillnet fishery will be restricted to Areas 1 and 3.** [EXCEPT THAT IF THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT SET GILLNET FISHERY IS CLOSED UNDER 5 AAC 21.310(b)(2)(C)(iii), OR THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT LESS THAN ONE PERCENT OF THE SEASON'S TOTAL DRIFT GILLNET SOCKEYE SALMON HARVEST HAS BEEN TAKEN PER FISHING PERIOD FOR TWO CONSECUTIVE FISHING PERIODS IN THE DRIFT GILLNET FISHERY, REGULAR PERIODS WILL BE RESTRICTED TO DRIFT GILLNET AREAS 3 AND 4.] In this subsection, "fishing period" means a time period open to commercial fishing as measured by a 24-hour calendar day from 12:01 a.m. until 11:59 p.m.

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** This would modify both of the 1% rules. Currently, the drift fleet has 2 (two) 1% rules. This proposal eliminates both; the 1% rule associated with the set net fleet and the 1% rule associated with the drift fleet in-season harvest. By early August, the drift fleet is around 200 active fishing vessels. By the second week in August, the drift fleet is around 100 active fishing vessels. It is unfair to expect a small portion of the fleet to have a Catch Per Unit of Effort (CPUE) based upon the entire drift fleet. There are surplus stocks of sockeye, chum and pink salmon available for harvest.

The Kenai River Late-Run sockeye salmon sonar passage rates changed to an August entry pattern from 1979 to 2018. In the 1980-1989 time frame, the August entry pattern past the sonar for Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon was 7%. In the 2010-2018 time frame, 32% of these sockeye entered in August. In 2006 and in 2018, 57% of the sockeye went past the river mile 19.5 sonar counter in August. In the 2014-2018 timeframe, on average 46%, or 637,585 sockeye, went by the sonar site in August. This August component is rarely harvested by any user group.

In 2018, the Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye run had a return failure of both the 1.3 and 2.3 age classes. We ask the Board of Fish and ADF&G to examine and discuss with the stakeholders what appropriate management measures are needed regarding this increasing August component. These adjusted management measures might include:

1. An increased harvest on this component in late July.
2. An increased harvest on this component in August.

August Component Comments:

1. Definite trend towards larger percentage and number of the August sockeye component
2. This August component percentage and numbers started with the 1987, 1988 and 1989 runs
3. In 1987, 1988 and 1989, it was the first time more than 2.2+ , 1.3 and 2.3 million sockeye passed the River Mile (RM) 19.5 sonar counter
4. Since 1987, there have been 26 out of 32 years that the number of sockeye has exceeded one million

5. Beginning in 1987, the Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye escapement goals have all been above 400,000 – 700,000 Bendix, or 600,000 to 1,000,000 DIDSON units
6. Since the 1987, 1988 and 1989 runs, harvests and yields have continued to decline
7. Older 1.3 (5), 2.2 (5), and 2.3 (6) age classes have declined
8. In 2018, the 1.3 (5) and 2.3 (6) age classes were missing as compared to the forecast
9. In the last 5 years (2014-2018), the adult returns were smaller in length and weight at age
10. The age structure of the returns and runs has changed
11. Spawning success has decreased as successive spawning occurs at the same locations
12. Structure of fry ages 0 and 1 (fall fry), age 1 fall fry numbers have increased

Additionally, the percentage of age 1 fall fry has increased significantly

Kenai River Sockeye Salmon Sonar Passage Data, 1979-2018

Year Total Run August August % Last Day

1979	412,979	17,114	4%	14-Aug
1980	667,470	24,327	4%	4-Sep
1981	575,847	8,645	2%	2-Aug
1982	809,174	19,572	2%	4-Aug
1983	866,453	92,614	11%	12-Aug
1984	481,470	18,600	4%	8-Aug
1985	680,897	33,626	5%	11-Aug
1986	645,906	0	0%	31-Jul
1987	2,245,610	369,780	16%	15-Aug
1988	1,356,958	138,245	10%	9-Aug
1989	2,295,575	317,624	14%	15-Aug
1990	950,357	125,523	13%	7-Aug
1991	954,841	146,377	15%	12-Aug
1992	1,429,867	217,960	15%	13-Aug
1993	1,134,923	205,617	18%	13-Aug
1994	1,412,050	662,379	47%	23-Aug
1995	884,922	167,066	19%	14-Aug
1996	1,129,274	212,699	19%	12-Aug

**PROPOSED BY:** United Cook Inlet Drift Association

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