

**PROPOSAL 310**

**5 AAC 31.210 Shrimp pot fishing seasons for Registration Area E.**

Remove the Prince William Sound shrimp pot fishing area rotation, as follows:

We propose doing away with the tri annual rotation and instead opening all three areas each year each with their own separate harvest limits.

5 AAC 31.210. Shrimp pot fishing seasons for Registration Area E

(a) ...Fishing in this area will be [ROTATED ON A TRI-ANNUAL BASIS BETWEEN THE FOLLOWING WATERS] **divided into the following districts**

5 AAC 31.214. Shrimp pot guideline harvest level for Registration Area E

...The guideline harvest level for the commercial pot gear fishery in the waters described in 5 AAC 31.210(a) is 40 percent of the total allowable harvest for the area. **This GHl will be divided between the districts described in 5 AAC 31.210(a) annually based on the pot survey CPUE for each district.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** We would like the department to stop the rotation of commercial areas. The spot shrimp population in PWS is in trouble, with decreasing survey results and a large drop off in CPUE in both the commercial and noncommercial fishery. We believe this is in part due to the area rotation on a tri-annual basis that this regulation requires. Under current regulation, the department sets a total allowable harvest every year based on their population model for the entire Sound. It then allows that entire harvest to come from one of three small areas each year. This results in heavy fishing pressure on the less productive areas like area 3 which currently does not have 1/3 the shrimp biomass. Opportunity to best protect the resource is being missed when the department is using this system to set the harvest/ limit the same for the less productive southwestern part of the Sound as it does for the northern areas with robust shrimp populations. The shrimp population would be better protected by taking a small harvest in each area every year, instead of a large harvest in one area every three years.

We hope the department uses this opportunity to propose a more appropriate shrimp management plan with areas based on shrimp population densities and habitat, not the crude square boxes currently being used.

**Did you develop your proposal in coordination with others, or with your local Fish and Game Advisory Committee? Explain.**

**PROPOSED BY:** Cordova District Fishermen United (CDFU)

(EF-F24-141)

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