

PROPOSAL 75

5 AAC 24.370. Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan.

Amend the Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan, as follows:

[Remove] and **add** the language in 5 AAC 24.370. PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND MANAGEMENT AND SALMON ENHANCEMENT ALLOCATION PLAN. Under

(h) If the drift gillnet or purse seine gear group harvest value of enhanced salmon is **50 [45]** percent or less of the **[previous five-year]** average exvessel value comparison of the common property enhanced salmon stocks harvested **since inception starting in 2006**, as calculated by the department under (c) of this section, then in the year following this calculation the fishery shall be managed as follows:

(1) if the drift gillnet gear group harvest value is **50 [45]** percent or less, then in the year following the current calculations, the drift gillnet gear group shall have exclusive access to the Port Chalmers Subdistrict to harvest enhanced salmon returns from June 1 through July 30, during fishing periods established by emergency order; and

(2) if the purse seine gear group harvest value is **50 [45]** percent or less, then in the year following the current calculations, the purse seine gear group shall have exclusive access to the **[Esther Subdistrict] Port Chalmers Subdistrict** to harvest enhanced salmon returns from June 1 through July 20, during fishing periods established by emergency order.

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? (h) If the drift gillnet or purse seine gear group harvest value of enhanced salmon is 45 percent or less of the previous five-year average exvessel value comparison of the common property enhanced salmon stocks harvested, as calculated by the department under (c) of this section, then in the year following this calculation the fishery shall be managed as follows:

(1) if the drift gillnet gear group harvest value is 45 percent or less, then in the year following the current calculations, the drift gillnet gear group shall have exclusive access to the Port Chalmers Subdistrict to harvest enhanced salmon returns from June 1 through July 30, during fishing periods established by emergency order; and

(2) if the purse seine gear group harvest value is 45 percent or less, then in the year following the current calculations, the purse seine gear group shall have exclusive access to the Esther Subdistrict to harvest enhanced salmon returns from June 1 through July 20, during fishing periods established by emergency order. The current plan incorporates a five-year rolling average when determining allocation values which determine which user group is allowed to fish in the allocation shared districts.

The current enhanced salmon allocation plan includes a five-year rolling average for determining PWSAC enhanced salmon value percentages for which user group is allowed access to the shared enhanced salmon districts of the Port Chalmers Subdistrict and the Esther Subdistrict. The Port

Chalmers Subdistrict is a remote release chum fishery, and the Esther Subdistrict is the PWSAC hatchery that produces all the enhanced chum salmon in PWS.

The use of a five-year rolling average has resulted in denying the drift gillnet fleet their allotted 50% share of the PWSAC enhanced salmon value. Since the current enhanced salmon allocation plan was adopted in 2006 through 2022 the drift has been denied 65.4 million in PWSAC only value (COAR Report). That comes to an average of 3.85 million a year in lost revenue for the drift fleet. With the 65.4 million PWSAC enhanced salmon lost revenue and the 241.5 million VFDA enhanced salmon allocated to the seine fleet, the current plan has allocated 306.9 million dollars in enhanced salmon to the seine fleet over the drift fleet. This proposal requests that the five-year rolling average be replaced by an average since inception of the plan beginning in 2006. And reduce the plan to one shared fishing district by removing the Esther Subdistrict from the plan.

If the seine fleet were to gain access the Esther Subdistrict chum fishery while harvesting millions of VFDA enhanced pink salmon whose value is not included in the plan would be devastating for the drift and set net fisherman. VFDA is the largest and most successful pink hatchery in Alaska. The seine fleet would be allocated all the enhanced chums at the AFK Hatchery remote release, the Port Chalmers remote release and the Esther Hatchery chums returning to the Esther Subdistrict, along with all the enhanced pinks at Solomon Gulch Hatchery, AFK Hatchery, Cannery Creek Hatchery and shared access to the enhanced pinks at the Esther Hatchery. The drift fleet would have shared access to the Main Bay Hatchery and the Esther Hatchery enhanced pinks. The drift fleet does catch a small portion of enhanced red salmon on the Copper River returning to the Gulkana Hatchery which has been a bust for the last several years. And it's been discussed on shutting it down at PWSAC due to low returns. Basically, the seine fleet would have complete access to two remote release chum fisheries and one chum hatchery, three pink hatcheries and shared access to another pink hatchery while the drift fleet would have shared access to one red salmon and one pink hatchery.

The first enhanced salmon allocation plan adopted by the BOF in 1990 was not fair to the seine fleet or the drift fleet. It included all wild and enhanced salmon and the promise that there would be no re-allocation and any shortfalls would be made in new production. It was bound to fail, and it did. PWSAC could never keep up with new production, with falling prices and other damage caused by the oil spill the seine fleet kept falling short. The drift fleet was opposed to it mainly because of the Exxon Valdez oil spill that had occurred the year before because the seine fishery was damaged a lot more than the drift fishery, but the main reason was why would anyone include wild stocks in an enhanced salmon allocation plan? All that did was make the plan that much harder to fulfill its goals. I served on the BOF subcommittee that worked on the current plan. The product that came out of the subcommittee was to **include all enhanced salmon** and remove wild stocks from the plan. VFDA enhanced salmon was removed from the plan at 10:00pm the night before vote the next morning. Yet again a fair enhanced salmon allocation plan slipped away from the drift fleet.

The drift fishery has been in deep decline the last four years. All you must do is look at the CEFC data. It looks like seine fishery did before 2006 when the current plan was adopted.

The drift fleet does not want more than what they were promised from the beginning of the enhanced salmon program in Area E. They want a fair allocation plan that protects the fishery and delivers on what it claims to do. After 19 years it's time to acknowledge the developments in the fisheries that have occurred since this plan went into effect in 2006.

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