

## **PROPOSAL 96**

### **5 AAC 27.365 Prince William Sound Herring Management Plan.**

Change herring management year dates for the Prince William Sound District and create a new food and bait fishery allocation, as follows:

5 AAC 27.365. Prince William Sound **District** Herring Management Plan.

(a) The purpose of the Prince William Sound **District** herring management plan in this section is to describe management strategies for all Prince William Sound **District** herring fisheries and to provide for an optimum sustained yield and an equitable allocation for all user groups.

(b) The management plan for herring fisheries in **the** Prince William Sound **District** assumes that all of these fisheries use a single stock of herring which may be harvested at the rate of zero to 20 percent of the spawning biomass. The management year for herring is **January 1 through December 31** [JULY 1 THROUGH JUNE 30]. Guideline harvest levels are established before the **sac roe fisheries** [FOOD AND BAIT SEASON] in the **spring** [FALL] and are based upon the final spawning biomass estimate from the previous year, cohort analysis, and projected recruitment. The minimum spawning biomass threshold is 22,000 tons, and no fishery may be opened if the estimated spawning biomass is below this threshold level. The department may allow, based upon age class strength, a harvest of herring at an exploitation rate between zero and 20 percent of the projected spawning biomass when that biomass is between 22,000 tons and 42,500 tons. The department may allow a harvest of herring at a maximum exploitation rate of 20 percent when the total projected spawning biomass is greater than 42,500 tons.

(c) The guideline harvest of herring is allocated by fishery as follows:

- (1) purse seine sac roe fishery: 58.1 percent;
- (2) gillnet sac roe fishery: 3.4 percent;
- (3) food and bait fishery: 16.3 percent;
- (4) spawn-on-kelp not in pounds: 8.0 percent; and
- (5) spawn-on-kelp in pounds: 14.2 percent.

(d) Harvest quotas for the spawn-on-kelp fisheries are derived as follows:

- (1) spawn-on-kelp not in pounds: one ton of spawn-on-kelp may be taken for every eight tons of herring allocated to this fishery;
- (2) spawn-on-kelp in pounds: the spawn-on-kelp in pounds harvest objective will be set based on the ratio of one ton of spawn on kelp for every 12.5 tons of herring allocated to this fishery; the commissioner, or an authorized designee, shall manage the fishery to achieve this harvest objective by restricting those persons holding a CFEC permit to participate in the fishery to a specified number of kelp blades annually based on the number of permit holders registered under 5 AAC 27.334(a) to fish with pounds, and to an equal portion of the guideline harvest of herring allocated in (c)(5) of this section based on the total number of permit holders.

**(3) 80 percent of the unharvested remainder of spring sac roe fisheries may be allocated to the fall food and bait fishery.**

**What is the issue you would like the board to address and why?** CDFU and ADFG collaborated to adopt new language into the Herring Management Plan to define a Prince William Sound District, change the season start and end dates, and add a new subsection that will allow unharvested Sac Roe herring to be harvested in the fall food and bait fishery.

Changing the season start date will help ADFG open the fishery when the harvest threshold is reached. The July 1 start date hampers ADFG's ability to open the fishery for the fall

food and bait fishery, because biomass estimates aren't available until late fall. Starting the season on January 1 will allow the department to open the sac roe fishery first based on a fall biomass estimate.

The rollover clause will allow unharvested sac roe to be harvested in a more valuable food and bait fishery. Commercial groundfish fishermen are paying exorbitant prices for bait. Allowing this resource to be harvested locally in Area E will alleviate some of the cost burden on the groundfish fleet.

Recently the Board and CFEC formed a Herring Revitalization Committee. This rollover clause is a simple but effective way to achieve the State's intent to revitalize our once thriving local herring fishery.

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

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

(EF-F24-116)

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