



Alaska Board of Fisheries Update: Board Addresses South Alaska Peninsula Salmon Management

The Board took action today on South Alaska Peninsula salmon fishery management by adopting Proposal 136 with substitute language found in [RC 190](#). This action reduces the first June opener to 68 hours for seiners, the 2nd opener to 66 hours and the final 2 openers at 88 hours. The plan institutes harvest cap triggers for the seine fleet and closes the Sanak Island section for June.

This action at the Board's AK Pen/AI/Chignik Finfish meeting at the Dena'ina Center this week follows an overflow of public input through the Board's robust public process – over 600 pages of on-time [written comment](#), 295 in-person [testimonies](#) filling 3 full days and numerous written reports and presentations by ADFG staff. Much of the testimony – even beginning at the January AYK meeting – centered around Proposal 140 submitted by the Fairbanks Advisory Committee.

Proposal 140 as written would've walked back South Peninsula salmon management to the plan instituted by the Board from 2001-2003, and would've reduced fishing time in June by over 70% compared to the current plan. AYK, Chignik and other groups united around this one proposal to limit Area M salmon harvests. Aleutians East Borough residents and fishermen in defense of Area M fisheries focused opposition to 140 and any proposals that would further restrict South Alaska Peninsula salmon fisheries.

Proposal 140 came before the Board and a motion was made to substitute with language from [RC 179](#), that was developed Saturday morning. That motion failed and subsequently Proposal 140 failed, both by votes of 3-4. Following the failure of 140, Proposal 133 was brought before the board. Proposal 133 as written would implement a chum harvest cap in the South Peninsula June salmon fishery. Sunday morning the 7-member board voted 3-4 to fail Proposal 133, with substitute language found in RC 191.

Sunday morning the Board adopted Proposal 136 with substitute language found in [RC 190](#), by a vote of 4-3, reducing the first June opener to 68 hours for seiners, the 2nd opener to 66 hours and the final 2 openers are at 88 hours; the proposal institutes harvest

trigger of 300,000 on June 18 to reduce the remaining openers to 44 hours and a trigger of 450,000 by June 23 to close the June fishery for the seine fleet. Harvest from purse seine, set gillnet, and drift gillnet gear accrues against the triggers. This proposal closes the Sanak Island section for June.

Proposals were submitted in April 2022, before the summer 2022 salmon season but after an abnormally high South Pen harvest of chum in June of 2021. Area M Seiners decided to address the issue and initiated an [innovative plan](#) in 2022 requiring 100% participation from the fleet. Area M Seiners are expected to continue and improve on the adaptive management action plan used in June of 2022 into the 2023 salmon season with advanced communications and cooperation. ADFG also began a 3-year genetic program in 2022 to [study](#) the stock composition of South Peninsula chum harvest.

ADFG reports from both the January AYK meeting and the AK Pen/AI/Chignik meeting point to extreme environmental factors as the cause of the struggling AYK stocks, not Area M fisheries. Still, AYK, Bristol Bay and Chignik stakeholders continue to point fingers at the Alaska Peninsula mixed-stock salmon fisheries as the cause of the crashing chum runs.

The Board has also taken action so far on the following proposals:

Proposal 98 to modify waters closed to subsistence fishing for salmon to increase access for subsistence users who are not commercial salmon fishery permit holders, was amended with substitute language found in [RC 137](#) and adopted by the Board 7-0.

Proposal 99 to prohibit retention of king salmon and establish closed areas in the King Salmon River and Ridgerunner Creek was amended with substitute language found in [RC 136](#) and adopted 7-0.

No action was taken on Proposals 100-102 based on the action taken on Proposal 99.

[Proposal 103](#) that would reduce the bag and possession limit for coho and sockeye salmon in the salt waters and freshwater drainages of Cold Bay, failed 1-6.

[Proposal 104](#) submitted by ADFG to repeal the closed water provisions for salmon fishing in Swanson Lagoon was adopted 7-0.

Proposal 131 to amend the Southeastern District Mainland Salmon Management Plan to allow commercial salmon fishing with set gillnet gear, and after July 11, purse seine gear concurrent to open commercial fishing periods for salmon in the Chignik Management Area and would remove the required sockeye salmon harvest, failed 0-7.

The Board failed Proposal 136 3-4.

Proposal 151 passed 4 to 3. Amend gillnet specifications and operations to allow offshore anchoring of a 25 fathom seine web lead.

The extended Board meeting continues through at least Monday to address additional South Peninsula and North Peninsula proposals and Chignik Management Area L proposals.

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