

PROPOSAL 110

5 AAC 33.331. Gillnet specifications and operations.

Require reporting and recovery of lost drift gillnet gear, as follows:

Gillnet operation – lost net reporting

5 AAC 33.331(#) A permit holder fishing in the Southeastern Alaska Area must report the loss of a gillnet, or portion of a gillnet, to the local ADF&G department office or enforcement in which they are fishing within 12 hours of the loss of the gillnet, or portion of the gillnet. For the purposes of this subsection, the report must be made directly to a local representative of the department in person or by telephone. The person must take every reasonable effort as safety allows to recover the lost gillnet if located;

What is the issue you would like the board to address and why? During the summer of 2019, a commercial drift gillnet fisherman lost his gillnet in district 6 on the north east side of Prince of Wales Island. The net drifted freely catching salmon as well as marine mammals until it became tangled on rocks in Snow Pass. The fisherman never attempted to recover his net. Other mariners and fishermen observed the net as it continued to fish. At this time, it became obvious that there was no lost net reporting requirement in Southeastern Alaska like other areas of the state. There is no cork ADF&G number marking requirements as well.

The East POW AC and local residents understand that nets will get damage and lost. However if a commercial drift gillnetter had regulation stating that they must report lost nets and recover them, many fish and marine mammals will not die and waste in these lost nets. Vessels will also not become entangled in them as well. Commercial drift gillnetters who saw the 2019 lost net stated they understood the need for this proposal.

This regulation will allow enforcement action to be taken against a person who carelessly uses the marine waters of Southeastern Alaska as their net dumping grounds. If enacted, the board should also consider a net cork ADF&G number marking requirement as well. This regulation will affect all drift gillnetters in Southeastern Alaska to prevent unwanted waste of salmon and marine mammals as well as a negative view of the gillnet fleet.

PROPOSED BY: East Prince of Wales Fish and Game Advisory Committee (EF-F20-090)
