

25 Fathoms Drift Gear, 12 Fathoms Set Net for Bristol Bay

The maximum length of gill net which may be used by Bristol Bay commercial fishermen this season has been set at 25 fathoms per drift gear license holder and 12½ fathoms per set net license holder, the Department of Fish and Game announced.

Darwin Biwer, Area Biologist

for Bristol Bay, said the gill net length restrictions are only for the emergency order period, which is June 16 - July 17 for the Nushagak District, and June 23 - July 17 for other districts in Bristol Bay.

Before and after the emergency period, the maximum allowable length of net will be

150 fathoms for drift nets and 50 fathoms for set nets.

Last year, the Board of Fish and Game adopted a sliding gear scale for the Bristol Bay commercial salmon fishery which determines the length of net each gear license holder may fish.

The length is based on the

forecasted red salmon harvest and the total fathoms of gill net registered by all commercial fishermen.

Biwer said that although commercial fishing license applications received prior to the April 15 deadline, have yet to be completed, the number of fathoms licensed to date has

already exceeded the level which would reduce the length of net to the minimum.

As of April 24, 205,650 fathoms of gill net gear had been registered for Bristol Bay. In 1972, 307,300 fathoms of net were registered.

During the emergency order period, gear license holders may combine their units of allowable gear to a maximum of 150 fathoms for drift nets and 50 fathoms for set nets.

However, each gear license holder who combines his gear with another must be physically present while the gear is being fished and must assist in the operation of that gear.