

RC40

Elizabeth V. Allen
617 Fir Avenue
PO Box 1875
Kenai, Alaska 99611
January 23, 2014

To: Board of Fisheries, State of Alaska

Subject: Comment on Proposal 233, Upper Cook Inlet Finfish – City of Soldotna request

Dear Board of Fisheries,

I have lived full time in Alaska (Kenai/Soldotna area) since 1976. I fish the Kenai a great deal every summer, both from the bank of the river and from my river boat. I especially like to fish from Centennial Campground, owned by the city of Soldotna.

It was with great interest that I viewed Proposal 233 – a request from the city of Soldotna, - which for me is essentially an aim to “privatize” fishing on the Kenai River. This “privatization” is for the benefit of boaters, and most especially, for Kenai River guide boats. This is patently illegal since the Kenai River is a navigable water and is under State jurisdiction.

If this proposal is allowed, I can see many private home owners along the Kenai following the City of Soldotna’s example. Home owners on the Kenai have actually tried many times to disallow fishing on the Kenai River in front of their estates - and failed each time. I am at a loss as to see how the city of Soldotna is an exception to the rules.

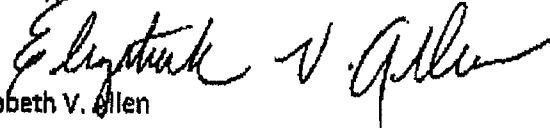
Regarding safety, I have lead many safety teams and been a part of many Risk Assessment Teams in my career, for the better part of 20 years, and can say with full confidence, no acceptable risk assessments have been done on this particular issue. Hearsay, and a few opinions here and there, do not constitute risk assessment.

Regarding legal liability for the City of Soldotna – there is none where active fishing is concerned, so this should be a moot point in your consideration of this proposal.

I would add one more comment regarding safety in this case, in the form of a question: Does the Board of Fisheries want to set safety precedent in this regard? - There are many bank fisherman with multiple injuries, as well as boating accidents and injuries that could rightly fall on the State Board of Fisheries, for not keeping them as safe elsewhere on the Kenai, as the board did/will do with regards to the City of Soldotna at Centennial Campground.

Please let us fisherman do what we always do – fish from the bank and the boats, keeping in mind all rights, responsibilities, and privileges that we share.

Sincerely,


Elizabeth V. Allen