ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES
JANUARY 31–FEBRUARY 13, 2014
UPPER COOK INLET FINFISH

PROPOSAL 103 - 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to drop inriver goals from list of escapement goals, prioritize achieving the lower end over exceeding the upper end of an escapement goal, and require the department to utilize all prescriptive elements found in codified plans before going outside of codified plans to achieve established escapement goals, as follows:

The first modification is to drop "inriver goal" from the list of escapement goals since inriver goals are allocative in nature and the department should not be put in a position of trying to favor one allocation strategy over another without consultation of the board.

The second modification prioritizes lower goals over upper goals. This formalizes established practice.

The third modification requires the department to utilize, to the extent practicable, all prescriptive elements found in codified plans prior to going outside of the codified plans to achieve established escapement goals. The department should be required to use the tools spelled out in prescriptive plans and not normally go outside plans until all tools are utilized.

Corresponding changes in regulatory language are as follows:

(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, it is the intent of the board that, while in most circumstances the department will adhere to the management plans in this chapter **and utilize to the extent practicable, all prescriptive elements found in the codified plans**, no provision within a specific management plan is intended to limit the commissioner's use of emergency order authority under AS 16.05.060 to achieve established escapement goals for the management plans as the primary management objective. **Achieving the lower end of all escapement goals shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of any escapement goal.** For the purpose of this subsection, "escapement goals" includes [INRIVER GOAL,] biological escapement goal, sustainable escapement goal, and optimal escapement goal as defined in 5 AAC 39.222.

ISSUE: A complex of codified management plans now govern the salmon fisheries in Upper Cook Inlet and elements of one plan, on occasion, conflict with elements found in another. Major UCI fisheries are for mixed stocks and harvest salmon bound for more than one major river system. During its 2008 meeting for Upper Cook Inlet, the board developed specific regulatory language for the area at the request of the department to address occasions when achieving the objectives or implementing the prescriptive tools of one management plan conflicts with or compromises the department's ability to achieve the objectives of another plan. Additional clarifications are needed in this language.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Achievement of established escapement goals will be compromised.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Not applicable.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone will benefit from clear management direction.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Only those wishing to elevate sockeye harvest above all other management priorities.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-040)
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PROPOSAL 104 - 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan. Repeal the *Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan*, as follows:

[5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan.

(a) THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD RECEIVE LONG TERM-DIRECTION IN MANAGEMENT OF UPPER COOK INLET SALMON STOCKS AND SALMON SPECIES. DIVISIONS WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT MUST RECEIVE LONG-TERM DIRECTION IN ORDER TO ACCOMPLISH THEIR PROGRAMS. UPPER COOK INLET STAKEHOLDERS SHOULD BE INFORMED OF THE LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES OF THE BOARD OF FISHERIES (BOARD). THEREFORE, THE BOARD ESTABLISHES THE FOLLOWING PROVISIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF UPPER COOK INLET SALMON STOCKS:

(1) CONSISTENT WITH THE STATUTORY PRIORITY FOR SUBSISTENCE, THE HARVEST OF UPPER COOK INLET SALMON FOR CUSTOMARY AND TRADITIONAL SUBSISTENCE USES WILL BE PROVIDED FOR SPECIFIC SPECIES IN APPROPRIATE AREAS, SEASONS, AND PERIODS TO SATISFY SUBSISTENCE NEEDS; OTHER BENEFICIAL USES, TO THE EXTENT THEY ARE CONSISTENT WITH THE PUBLIC INTEREST AND OVERALL BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE OF ALASKA, WILL BE ALLOWED IN ORDER TO MAXIMIZE THE BENEFITS OF THESE RESOURCES;

(2) TO PROVIDE FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND ALLOCATION OF THE UPPER COOK INLET SALMON RESOURCES, THE HARVEST OF THE UPPER COOK INLET SALMON WILL BE GOVERNED BY SPECIFIC AND COMPREHENSIVE MANAGEMENT PLANS ADOPTED BY THE BOARD FOR SALMON STOCKS AND SPECIES, ON A COOK INLET BASIN WIDE BASIS, FOR DIFFERENT AREAS, AND DRAINAGES, AND FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF FISHERIES;

(3) IN ADOPTING THE SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT PLANS DESCRIBED IN (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION THE BOARD WILL CONSIDER:

(A) THE NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES FOR ALL SALMON STOCKS AND SALMON SPECIES THROUGHOUT THE COOK INLET BASIN;

(B) THE PROTECTION OF THE FISHERIES HABITAT BOTH IN THE

FRESH WATER AND THE MARINE ENVIROMENT THROUGHOUT THE COOK INLET BASIN; AND

(C) THE VARIOUS NEEDS AND DEMANDS OF THE USER GROUPS OF THE SALMON RESOURCES OF UPPER COOK INLET;

(4) IN THESE MANAGEMENT PLANS, THE BOARD MAY, AS APPROPRIATE, FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) THE NEED TO ALLOCATE THE HARVESTABLE SURPLUS AMONG COMMERCIAL, SPORT, GUIDED SPORT AND PERSONAL USE FISHERIES; AND

(B) THE NEED TO ALLOCATE THE HARVESTABLE SURPLUS WITHIN USER GROUPS;

(5) IN ABSENCE OF A SPECIFIC MANGEMENT PLAN, IT IS THE INTENT OF THE BOARD THAT SALMON BE HARVESTED IN THE FISHERIES THAT HAVE HISTORICALLY HARVESTED THEM, ACCORDING TO THE METHODS, MEANS, TIMES, AND LOCATIONS OF THOSE FISHERIES;

(6) CONSISTENT WITH 5 AAC 39.220(B), IT IS THE INTENT OF THE BOARD THAT, IN THE ABSENCE OF A SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN, WHERE THERE ARE KNOWN CONSERVATION PROBLEMS, THE BURDEN OF CONSERVATION SHALL, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, BE SHARED AMONG ALL USER GROUPS IN CLOSE PROPORTION TO THEIR RESEPCTIVE HARVEST ON THE STOCK OF CONCERN.

(b) REPEALED 6/13/99.

(c) IN THIS SECTION "UPPER COOK INLET SALMON STOCKS' MEANS THOSE SALMON THAT MOVE THROUGH THE NORTHERN AND CENTRAL DISTRICTS AS DEFINED IN 5 AAC 21.200(A) AND (B) AND SPAWN IN WATERS DRAINING INTO THOSE DISTRICTS.

(d) REPEALED 6/11/2005.

(e) NOTWITHSTANDING ANY OTHER PROVISIONS OF THIS CHAPTER, IT IS THE INTENT OF THE BOARD THAT, WHILE IN MOST CIRCUMSTANCES THE DEPARTMENT WILL ADHERE TO THE MANAGEMENT PLANS IN THIS CHAPTER, NO PROVISION WITHIN A SPECIFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN IS INTENDED TO LIMIT THE COMMISSIONER'S USE OF EMERGENCY ORDER AUTHORITY UNDER AS 16.05.060 TO ACHIEVE ESTABLISHED ESCAPEMENT GOALS FOR THE MANAGEMENT PLANS AS THE PRIMARY MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVE. FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS SUBSECTION, "ESCAPEMENT GOALS" INCLUDES INRIVER GOAL, BIOLOGICAL ESCAPEMENT GOAL, SUSTAINABLE ESCAPEMENT GOAL, AND OPTIMAL ESCAPEMENT GOAL AS DEFINED IN 5 AAC 39.222.]

ISSUE: Delete this plan as it is not used and is no longer useful.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Useless regulations remain in the book and people will try and use them for no good reason.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Ducker (HQ-F13-051)

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PROPOSAL 105 - 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to establish a harvest allocation between commercial set and drift gillnet fisheries in Upper Cook Inlet, as follows:

Managers should be guided by a harvest percentage for each fishery that continues to maintain a "historical" balance between gear types. Sockeye bound for the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers should be maintained on there long term harvest apportionments. The language for this proposal can be found in a similar set of management plan set out in 5 AAC 06.355 Bristol Bay Commercial Set and Drift Gillnet Sockeye Salmon Fisheries Management and Allocation Plan.

ISSUE: Inequity in current UCI plans that do not address reallocation between current historical commercial gillnet fisheries.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Disproportionate harvests of sockeye that will affect the normal, orderly, historical harvest of all salmon resources.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users who rely on a fair and equitable allocation of the surplus of stocks of salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Association (SOKI) (HQ-F13-260)

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PROPOSAL 106 - 5 AAC 21.363. Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan. Repeal management plan and replace with a flexible management plan, as follows:

Repeal the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan and replace it with the flexible management plan that used to be and that served the fish and the state so well before.

ISSUE: The Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan. The plan as written conflicts with itself in some areas. There will be continued over-escapement, reduced productivity, economic loss to the state, and inflexibility in the department's ability to manage.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Loss of revenue to the state, loss of flexibility in management, loss of productivity because of over-escapement.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. There would be increased harvest of surplus fish.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The state of Alaska since they would receive more raw fish tax and the department could manage as they are supposed to do.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one. Everyone would still have an opportunity to fish, which is what the state should guarantee.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-333)
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PROPOSAL 107 - 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section. Allow commercial set gillnet fishing to occur in areas where commercial drift gillnetting is allowed in the Central District of Upper Cook Inlet, as follows:

Whenever an area where setnetting is allowed is opened to drift gillnetting, that part of the setnet area that is open to drift gillnetting shall also be open to set gillnetting.

ISSUE: Proposed that whenever an area where setnetting is allowed is open to drift gillnetting, that part of the setnet area that is open to drift gillnetting shall also be open to set gillnetting. This is a question of equal protection under law.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Equal protection under law is guaranteed as an inherent right in Article 1 section 1 of Alaska's constitution. ADF&G practice of opening drift gillnetting in areas where set gillnetting is allowed, while not allowing setnetting to participate in the harvest, is irrational and arbitrary. For instance, around June 19 the drift fleet is often open to fish an area wide opening. At the same time the setnets on the east side of Kalgin Island are not allowed to fish, even though drift gillnetting is allowed along the east side of Kalgin Island. On June 1 the west side of Kalgin island begins fishing. On June 15 the western subdistrict begins fishing. On June 19 the drift fleet begins fishing in areas that include setnet areas along the east side of Kalgin Island. East side Kalgin Island setnets are not open until June 25.

The east side Kalgin island setnets are the doughnut hole of closure on an irrational and arbitrary basis.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No, this proposal addresses an irrational allocate inequality. Groups that are likely situated should be treated equally.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The people who have fishing operations along the east side of Kalgin Island would benefit if they were treated equally to other nearby or overlapping fishing group who are likely situation. There are about ten permits that fish on the east side of Kalgin Island.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Drift gillnetters who fish our sites while we are closed would be subject to honest competition.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? The East Side of Kalgin Island is being singled out for adverse treatment on an irrational and arbitrary basis. Equality can be gained by taking opportunity from everyone, but that is not an advantageous approach. Another approach would be to open setnetting on the east side of Kalgin Island at the same time as settnetting is opened on the west side of Kalgin Island.

PROPOSED BY: David Chessik (HQ-F13-320)
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PROPOSAL 108 - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons. Allow commercial salmon fishing in the Central District to remain open until closed by emergency order (EO), as follows:

Commercial salmon season will remain open until closed by emergency order.

ISSUE: The coho plan. There is not a conservation concern on cohos in Cook Inlet. The plan as is does not allow EO authority.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The department cannot manage for legitimate harvest of surplus coho.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? The quality of salmon will be enhanced. Fresh salmon will be available to the consumers late in the summer.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? U.S. consumers who will be able to buy fresh salmon in the fall. The few resident fisherman who will be able to fish longer.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one since there will not be many fishermen fishing and the department always has EO authority to protect the fishery when necessary.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-334)
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PROPOSAL 109 - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons. Allow commercial salmon fishing in Central District to remain open until closed by emergency order (EO), as follows:

The setnet fishery will close by emergency order.

ISSUE: Unnecessary commercial closure.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Underutilized salmon resource.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Allows harvest of underutilized salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Those few who participate.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one. The salmon resource at this time of year is not being utilized at even close to the biological exploitation rate.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-344)
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PROPOSAL 110 - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons. Allow commercial salmon fishing in the Central District to remain open until closed by emergency order (EO), as follows:

Close the Inlet by emergency order.

ISSUE: Closing fisheries while fish are present.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Waste and over-escapement.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? If fish are present, we should fish.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Commercial fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-367)
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PROPOSAL 111 - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons. Modify fishing seasons and remove restrictions on commercial set gillnet fishing in the Upper Subdistrict, as follows:

5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons.

(a) If an opening date specified in this section for a fishing season in any district, subdistrict, or section falls on a date during a closed weekly fishing period under 5 AAC 21.320. the fishing season will open the first day of the next open weekly period.

(b) Salmon may be taken only as follows:

(1) Northern District: from June 25 until closed by emergency order;

(2) Central District, for set gillnet:

(A) Western Subdistrict: from June 16 until closed by emergency order;

(B) Kalgin Island, Kustatan, and Chinitna Bay Subdistrict: from June 25 until closed by emergency order;

(C) Upper Subdistrict:

(i) Kasilof Section: From June 25 through August 15; [UNLESS CLOSED EARLIER BE EMERGENCY ORDER UNDER (III) OF THIS SUBPARAGRAPH; HOWEVER IF THE DEPARTMENT ESTIMATES THAT 50,000 SOCKEYE SALMON ARE IN THE KASILOF RIVER BEFORE JUNE 25, BOT ON OR AFTER JUNE 20, THE COMMISIONER MAY IMMEDIATELY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, OPEN THE FISHERY; FROM AUGUST 11 THROUGH AUGUST 15, THE FISHERY IS OPEN FOR REGULAR PERIODS ONLY];

(ii) Kenai and East Forelands Sections: from (JUNE 25) [July 8] through August 15; [, UNLESS CLOSED EARLIER BY EMERGENCY ORDER UNDER (III) OF THIS SUBPARAGRAPH; FROM AUGUST 11 THROUGH AUGUST 15, THE FISHERY IS OPEN FOR REGULAR PERIODS ONLY]; [

(iii) KENAI, KASILOF, AND EAST FORELANDS SECTIONS: THE SEASON WILL CLOSE AUGUST 15, UNLESS CLOSED EARLIER BY EMERGENCY ORDER AFTER JULY 31, IF THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT LESS THAN ONE PERCENT OF THE SEASON'S TOTAL SOCKEYE HARVEST HAS BEEN TAKEN PER FISHING PERIOD FOR TWO CONSECUTIVE FISHING PERIODS; FROM AUGUST 11 THROUGH AUGUST 15, THE FISHERY IS OPEN FOR REGULAR FISHING PERIODS ONLY; FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SUB-SUBPARAGRAPH, "FISHING PERIOD" MEANS A TIME PERIOD OPEN TO COMMERCIAL FISHING AS MEASURED BY A 24-HOUR CALENDAR DAY FROM 12:01 A.M. UNTIL 11:59 P.M.;]

(3) Central District, for drift gillnet: from the third Monday in June or June 19 whichever is later, until closed by emergency order, except that fishing with drift gillnets may not occur within

(A) two miles of the mean high tide mark on the eastern side of the Upper Subdistrict until those locations have been opened for fishing with set gillnets;

(B) one and on-half miles of the mean high tide mark of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline in that area of the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict south of the Kenai River, if fishing with set gillnets in that area is closed;

(C) one mile of the mean high tide mark of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline in that area of the Kenai and East Forelands Sections of the Upper Subdistrict north of the Kenai River, if fishing with set gillnets in that area is closed;

(4) Southern District:

(A) seine gear season: opened and closed by emergency order;

(B) set gillnet season: opened by emergency order, on or after June 1, and closed September 30;
(5) Kamishak Bay District: from June 1 until closed by emergency order;
(6) Outer District: open and closed by emergency order;
(7) Eastern District: open and closed by emergency order.

ISSUE: The board over the last several cycles has placed many onerous; arbitrary and unnecessary restrictions for the commercial fishery into management plans in order to put more late-run king and coho salmon into the Kenai River. After 27 years we now find that ADF&G could not even count these fish, but the department has produced a model which indicates that the goal has been within the range 12 times and over the range 15 years, and has never been below the escapement goal range. The escapements in 2003–2006 were the highest on record and all have failed to replace themselves i.e. overescapement! In addition, since there is no escapement monitoring of coho salmon closures in regulation to put more coho inriver is arbitrary and capricious and counter to the boards own findings and violates the Sustainable Salmon Fisheries Policy. In no other area of the state are restrictions put in regulation that restrict a fishery not for conservation but to make another fishery more successful without even considering biological consequences.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The board and fishing public will continue to see mismanagement from the department which they can hide behind the "Board" regulations caused the problem not their own incompetence. The failure of the department to follow the plans in 2012 is indicative of their incompetence, only to find that no actions were necessary and the king goal was exceeded.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, provides for more predictable fishery where regulations are clear directing for management for escapement goals without arbitrary obstacles which prevent the department from managing for escapement goals and distributing that escapement over the escapement goal range.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone benefits from achieving escapement goals.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Kenai River Sport Fishing and their anti-commercial fishing campaign.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No other solution exists.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Ducker (HQ-F13-054)
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PROPOSAL 112 - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons. Change the estimated number of sockeye salmon in the Kasilof River that allows the department to open the Kasilof Section of the Upper Subdistrict to set gillnetting on or after June 25, as follows:

Increase the trigger consistent with the increase in the Kasilof sockeye escapement goal:

(b)(2)(C)(i) Kasilof Section: from June 25 through August 15, unless closed earlier by emergency order under (iii) of this subparagraph; however if the department estimates that [50,000] **70,000** sockeye salmon are in the Kasilof River before June 25, but on or after June 20, the commissioner may immediately, by emergency order, open the fishery; from August 11 through August 15, the fishery is open for regular periods only;

ISSUE: The Central District set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof District can begin on or after June 20, rather than June 25, in years when large numbers of early timed Kasilof sockeye enter the river. However, the 50,000 sockeye trigger was never corrected for the increase in the Kasilof sockeye OEG from 150,000–300,000 to 160,000–390,000 at the last UCI Board meeting in 2011. **WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE?** Early closure of the fishery can be prematurely triggered with concomitant undesirable impacts commercial harvest of early run kings.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Not applicable.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Inriver fisheries in the Kasilof and Kenai rivers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? The incidence of early Kasilof setnet fishery openers will be reduced.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? This is essentially a housekeeping proposal to correct an oversight from the last board meeting.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-046)

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PROPOSAL 113 - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons. Change the estimated number of sockeye salmon in the Kasilof River from 50,000 to 60,000, which allows the department to open the Kasilof Section of the Upper Subdistrict to set gillnetting on or after June 25, as follows:

The trigger is 60,000 sockeye past the inriver sonar to open commercial fishing in the Kasilof Sub district before June 25th.

ISSUE: The board raised the escapement goal based on the department's assessment program but did not change the trigger that allows setnetters to open earlier than the 25 of June in the Kasilof sub district. The lower end of the goal was raised from 50,000 to 60,000 sockeye inriver. We feel this is a house keeping issue and the trigger should be raised to 60,000 to stay current with established procedures to liberalize commercial fishing in the Kasilof Subdistrict.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Over harvest of Chinook salmon. Our Chinook salmon stocks are being threatened and are at all-time low levels, so every day the commercial nets are out of the water more kings are able to return to the river of their origin.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. It will allow more Chinook salmon to enter the Kasilof River to spawn.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Chinook salmon and the sport fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? It may mean commercial fishermen in the Kasilof Sub district won't catch as many fish depending on run strength and timing.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Professional Guide Association (HQ-F13-204)
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PROPOSAL 114 - 5 AAC 31.320. Weekly fishing periods. Allow weekly fishing periods for the set gillnet fishery in the Central District to end at 10:00 p.m. instead of 7:00 p.m., as follows:

(a)(2) [7:00 P.M.] **10:00 p.m.**

ISSUE: Limited fishing periods. This proposal will allow a higher percentage of setnet fishermen an opportunity to fish a full twelve hour tide series.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Fishing on low returns will result in fewer openings and will give an unequal opportunity for set gillnet fishermen in the Central District.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, fish will not be pulled or round hauled with net. Full tide allows quality harvesting techniques. Easier on crews (safety) and equipment to work at the or slack of the tides.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All effected participants.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No other solutions.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen (HQ-F13-159)
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PROPOSAL 115 - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons. Change when the set gillnet fishery opens in the Kenai and East Forelands sections of the Upper Subdistrict from July 8 to July 1 and remove the reference that closes the fishery by emergency order (EO) under the "one-percent rule", as follows:

(C) (ii): Kenai and East Forelands Sections; from **July 1** [8] through August 15. [UNLESS CLOSED BY EMERGENCY ORDER EARLIER UNDER (iii) OF THIS PARAGRAPH; FROM AUGUST 11 THROUGH AUGUST 15, THE FISHERY IS OPEN FOR REGULAR PERIODS ONLY.]

ISSUE: The July 1 Historical Fishing Season opening date in the Kenai and East-Forelands Sections needs to be reinstated which would allow two regular 12-hour periods.

An inequity in available fishing time and harvest opportunity exists in the Kenai and East Forelands Sections. The Central District Drift gillnet opens June 19 with an earlier season opening date changed in 2005 from July 1. The Central District Drift harvests approximately 60% Kasilof bound sockeye through July 1 and by comparison six 12-hour openings before the Kenai and East Foreland Sections opened.

Kasilof sockeye salmon are the predominate stock harvested at this time frame; the ex-vessel value during the earlier openings are significantly higher. Sockeye salmon goals have been met and exceeded, including Kenai River late-run king salmon goals.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Sockeye harvests that were formerly available during the regular weekly fishing periods (two 12 hour openings) will continue to be lost.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Kasilof sockeye salmon are the predominate stock harvested at this time frame; the ex-vessel value during the earlier openings are significantly higher and are a high quality fish placed on the fresh market.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Setnet fishing families in the Kenai and East Forelands Sections. In addition, the July 1 opening provided income and valuable safety training time within the one or two regular 12-hour fishing periods.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? South K. Beach state area maybe by some percentage may occur.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? N/A.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (HQ-F13-236)

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PROPOSAL 116 - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons. Remove provision where the set gillnet fishery in the Kenai, Kasilof, and East Forelands sections of the Upper Subdistrict will close after July if less than one percent of the total season's sockeye is harvested in two consecutive fishing periods ("one-percent rule") and end fishing season on August 15, as follows:

Re-describe paragraph (iii) as follows:
Kenai, Kasilof, and East Forelands Sections: the season will close August 15.

Delete: [UNLESS CLOSED EARLIER BY EMERGENCY ORDER AFTER JULY 31, IF THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT LESS THAN ONE PERCENT OF THE FISHING SEASON'S TOTAL SOCKEYE HAS BEEN TAKEN PER FISHING PERIOD FOR TWO CONSECUTIVE FISHING PERIODS; FROM AUGUST 11 THROUGH AUGUST 15, THE FISHERY IS OPEN FOR REGULAR PERIODS ONLY; FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SUB-SUBPARAGRAPH, "FISHING PERIOD" MEANS A TIME PERIOD OPEN TO COMMERCIAL FISHING AS MEASURED BY A 24-HOUR CALENDAR DAY FROM 12:01 A.M. UNTIL 11:59 P.M.]

ISSUE: Subparagraph (iii) impedes sockeye salmon escapement goal management inseason on for both the Kasilof and Kenai Rivers. This provision negates inseason run timing and precludes the fact that significant numbers of sockeye salmon can be on the beaches at any time in August.

The department is directed to meet sockeye salmon escapement goals in regulation, and to manage and distribute escapements within the goal ranges in the Kasilof River sockeye BEG range and Kenai River sockeye SEG range. When escapement goals are met the eastside commercial set gillnet fisheries are arbitrarily prevented to fish on those salmon stocks under this 1% provision. The inriver sport coho fishery was extended through September. This proposal cleans up regulatory inconsistency since the Kenai coho conservation plan was repealed in 2005 and this provision should have been repealed along with it. The eastside set gillnet fishery exploitation rate on Kenai coho is minimal (3%) but still in regulation. (Fishing Seasons).

This provision undermines the full utilization of salmon stocks available in the commercial set gillnet fisheries along the eastside; and unnecessarily precludes the harvest and economic benefit opportunity made available to fishing communities. Major returns of pink salmon occur on even years in August and the preclusion of harvest has occurred unnecessarily.

Sockeye salmon goals have been met and underutilization of salmon resources have occurred.

Please note: Management plans already state unless closed by emergency order.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The Board of Fisheries directive to the department and commissioner to achieve established escapement goals in management plans as the primary management objective; this directive can be significantly undermined.

Diminished sustained yields can and have resulted when sockeye salmon spawning escapement goals are exceeded.

This provision will continue to needlessly impinge on escapement goal management; prohibit available surplus salmon stocks from being harvested and result in significant economic loss opportunity on surplus to escapement sockeye salmon.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. This proposal addresses sockeye run timing, harvest available, and escapement goal management and fishing operation plans would improve the

quality for the resource harvested. In addition, one to two million pounds of pink salmon is better utilized when harvested as product.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Management ADF&G, Commercial Fisheries Division and fishing family operations in the set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof, Kenai and East Forelands Sections who depend on these salmon resources.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one. The inriver sport coho fishery was extended through September. This proposal cleans up regulatory inconsistency since the Kenai coho conservation plan was repealed in 2005 and the 1% provision should be repealed as well. The eastside set gillnet fishery exploitation rate on Kenai coho is minimal (3%).

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Option 2: Adaptive fishery management plans are practiced throughout this state.

Change the Upper Subdistrict fishing season closing date as "until closed by emergency order" as practiced in other Central District fisheries.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (HQ-F13-235)

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PROPOSAL 117 - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons. Remove provision where the set gillnet fishery in the Kenai, Kasilof, and East Forelands sections of the Upper Subdistrict will close after July if less than one percent of the total season's sockeye is harvested in two consecutive fishing periods ("one-percent rule"); end fishing season on August 15; and allow regular fishing periods only from August 11–15, as follows:

Re-describe subparagraph (iii) as follows:

Kenai, Kasilof, and East Forelands Sections: the season will close August 15, unless closed earlier by emergency order [AFTER JULY 31, IF THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT LESS THAN ONE PERCENT OF THE SEASON'S TOTAL SOCKEYE HARVEST HAS BEEN TAKEN PER FISHING PERIOD FOR TWO CONSECUTIVE FISHING PERIODS]; from August 11 through August 15, the fishery is open for regular fishing periods only [; FOR PURPOSES OF THIS SUB SUBPARAGRAPH, "FISHING PERIOD" MEANS A TIME PERIOD OPEN TO COMMERCIAL FISHING AS MEASURED BY A 24-HOUR CALENDAR DAY FROM 12:01 A.M. UNTIL 11:59 P.M.;]

ISSUE: Sub subparagraph (iii) does not accurately account for the significant amount of sockeye that can be harvested in August particularly in the Kenai and East Foreland Sections. Since the sockeye run progresses from the lower beaches to the upper beaches, the current calculation of the 1% skews the data to look as if the sockeye run is over. Alaska Department of Fish and Game data shows that an average of 30% of the sockeye harvested in the Kenai and East Forelands occurs after August 1st.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The Kenai and East Foreland sections will continue to loose valuable harvest opportunity and the Department of Fish and Game will not have a valuable tool to control escapement goals when needed.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Allows for an even and orderly harvest of sockeye throughout the run which also contributes to more reliable processing.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Gives another tool for ADF&G for managing for escapement goals. It also gives set net families the opportunity to harvest sockeye when fish are still present.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Redefine how the 1% is calculated. Due to the fact that the sockeye run progresses from south to north, if the 1% language is to remain it should be calculated based solely on the Kenai and East Foreland Sections. These sections harvest an average of 30% of their catch from August 1. It is easier to just correct the language currently in regulation.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (HQ-F12-237)
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<u>PROPOSAL 118</u> - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons; 5 AAC 21.320. Weekly fishing periods; 5 AAC 21.331. Gillnet specifications and operations; and 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Open North-Kenai Beach (244-32) to commercial setnet fishing on July 1–7 for regularly scheduled 8-hour periods, fishing predominately during ebb tides, with setnet gear restricted to 29 meshes deep, as follows:

Open North-Kalifonsky Beach (244-32) on July 1 through July 7 for regular scheduled periods. After July 7 N-K Beach would go back to management as stated in the Upper Cook Inlet Management Plan, 5 AAC 21.310 (c)(ii).

ISSUE: Too late of opening date for North-Kalifonsky Beach (244-32). There are abundant Kasilof sockeye on this beach early in July. Prior to the Blanchard Line, N-K Beach was a traditional harvester of Kasilof sockeye.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Lost opportunity for N-K Beach harvesters.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, the sockeye harvested in this fishery, would be of the highest quality and in turn processors would have an excellent product to market.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Fishermen in 244-32 that have lost this historical fishery. Processors and businesses who would make money on the harvest and sale of this product.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Stat area 244-31.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? For years 244-32 has tried through the BOF process to get a part of this traditional fishery back, opening on June 25. Full regular periods after July 1. Fishing on or after July 5. At the 2011 BOF meeting, a proposal with a start date of July 1, failed on a 3-4 vote. With this proposal, fishing 29 mesh deep, mainly on the ebb, it is more restrictive and may have a chance of passing.

PROPOSED BY: Gary L. Hollier (HQ-F13-085)

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PROPOSAL 119 - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing seasons. Change how the department determines if less than one percent of the season's total sockeye salmon harvest has been taken in the Upper Subdistrict, as follows:

If the 1% rule is enacted it will be applied by sections separately. One section would be the Kasilof Section and the other would be a combination of the Kenai and East Foreland sections.

ISSUE: The 1% rule that closes the ESSN Fishery, based on the entire ESSN Fishery sockeye harvest.

I feel the 1% rule should be calculated on two areas, the Kasilof Section and the Kenai/East Foreland sections combined. The Kasilof Section opens June 25. The Kenai/East Forelands sections open July 8. Since 1999 the Kasilof Section has fished an average of 26 days per season. The Kenai/East Foreland Sections have fished an average 14 days.

In the Kenai /east forelands sections, in August there is a real potential to still harvest good numbers of sockeyes. These sections are unfairly impacted by data from the Kasilof Section, that is all but done with their sockeye harvest.

The 1% rule when enacted on even years results in a tremendous loss of harvest of high quality pink salmon. In 2012 they were worth 35 cents/pound.

Kenai coho stocks are stable, if not increasing in numbers. The ESSN Fishery has minimal impact on Kenai river coho.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Status quo.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes there are still quality sockeye to be harvested. These sockeye go unharvested when the 1% rule kicks in. Additionally there is a tremendous loss of harvest potential of high quality pink salmon.

In 2000 the ESSN fishery was paid 50 cents a pound for sockeye salmon. In 2012 the ESSN fishery was paid 35 cents a pound for pink salmon. Pink salmon are very important to the ESSN Fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Sections that are not closed based on harvest data only from their fishing sections.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Sections that would not close if they could use harvest data from the entire ESSN Fishery .

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Obviously getting rid of the entire 1% rule on the ESSN Fishery. Was tried at last cycle and did not pass.

PROPOSED BY: North K-Beach Fishermen (HQ-F13-086)

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PROPOSAL 120 - 5 AAC 21.320. Weekly fishing periods. Allow commercial salmon fishing in the Central District to remain open on Mondays and Thursdays until closed by emergency order (EO), as follows:

Commercial salmon fishing will remain open on Mondays and Thursdays until closed by emergency order.

ISSUE: Commercial fishermen continue to lose opportunity to catch pinks, chums, and cohos.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Millions of pinks, chums, and silvers get wasted.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Pinks rot in the rivers. The surplus should be harvested. The U.S. public is denied the opportunity to buy silvers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The few resident commercial fishermen who would fish on these fish, the consumer public, and the State of Alaska. This is revenue the state could use.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one. Two days a week will not impact silvers because they run continuously throughout the fall.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-335)

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PROPOSAL 121 - 5 AAC 21.320. Weekly fishing periods. Allow regularly-scheduled commercial fishing periods on Mondays and Thursdays, through July 18, as follows:

Regular Monday and Thursday openings will be held through July 18th.

ISSUE: Stock separation.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Undue restrictions on the fleet.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Regularity will improve quality.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Consumers, processors, commercial fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-377)

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PROPOSAL 122 - 5 AAC 31.320. Weekly fishing periods. Allow weekly fishing periods for the drift gillnet fishery in the Central District to be moved up to 36 hours when the NOAA forecast for Area 140, Cook Inlet north of Kamishak Bay and English Bay, is calling for winds above 23 knots, including small craft advisory, and gale or storm force winds, as follows:

(2) the fishing periods set forth in (1) of this subsection may be modified by emergency order **if the NOAA forecast for Area 140, Cook Inlet north of Kamishak Bay and English Bay is calling for winds above 23 kts, includes a small craft advisory, gale force winds or storm force winds, the regular fishing period can be rescheduled for 36 hours either earlier or later.**

ISSUE: Safety of Fishermen. This proposal seeks to provide flexibility to the management plan due to weather-related safety issues. We are asking the BOF to provide adjustments to the regular fishing periods. If the NOAA weather forecast for district "PKZ140-110300, Cook Inlet North of Kamishak Bay and English Bay" is for winds above 23 kts, includes a small craft advisory, gale force winds or storm force winds, then ADF&G has the authority to modify the weekly fishing periods up to 36 hours, either earlier or later, by emergency order.

This will provide for an orderly fishery for all involved. This proposal is intended to be allocatively neutral while providing a margin of safety that we feel is appropriate and necessary.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? High levels of personal safety will continue to be an issue.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Salmon quality is improved, less physical bruising of fish.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Fishermen, crew members, provides for an orderly fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Status Quo– unacceptable.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-153)
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PROPOSAL 123 - 5 AAC 21.320. Weekly fishing periods. Change regularly scheduled fishing periods in the Kalgin Island and Western subdistricts to 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Wednesday and Saturday, as follows:

The regularly scheduled fishing periods for Kalgin Island and Western subdistrict shall be from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday and Saturday.

ISSUE: This proposal recommends that regularly scheduled commercial setnet fishing periods for Kalgin Island and the Western Subdistrict be changed from Monday and Thursday to Wednesday and Saturday. The reason for this proposal is to align tender availability. Currently, when the drift fleet and Kalgin Island and Western Subdistrict have large catches simultaneously, there is not enough tender capacity to handle the volume. In 2012, fishermen on Kalgin Island had to pitch fish back into the water when they rotted on the scow due to a lack of tender boats.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Logistically, tender boats will continue to not be able to handle the delivery requirements when the drift fleet and these setnet areas have large catches on the same day.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Currently, often fish deliveries from the west side of Cook Inlet have to wait until the tenders have serviced the drift fleet, resulting in old fish and diminished quality. In 2012, many fish rotted and were wasted. The fishermen were not paid.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The processors, the tenders, the fishermen and the quality of fish would benefit.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? I don't know of anyone who would suffer.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? I considered other days, but I thought that Sunday might present a religious burden for some people. The offset between Monday and Thursday for the drift fleet, and Wednesday and Saturday for the Kalgin Island and Western Subdistrict seems the most efficient. I wondered if this idea might have application also for the west side of the Northern District or all of it.

PROPOSED BY: Kent Hermon (HQ-F13-321)
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PROPOSAL 124 - 5 AAC 21.330. Gear; 5 AAC 21.350. Closed waters; and 5 AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan. Correct errors in regulation regarding regulatory marker locations and fixed positions of area boundaries, as follows:

5AAC 21.330(b)(3)(C) waters along the east coast in the Central District

(i) within one mile of the mean high tide mark from the northern boundary of the district to the northern regulatory marker at the mouth of the Kenai River **(60° 34.24' N. lat., 151° 18.99' W. long.)** [(60° 34.09' N. LAT., 151° 19.30' W. LONG.)] then offshore on a bearing of 235° to a point one mile from the mean high tide mark;

(ii) from the latitude of the southern ADF&G regulatory marker at the mouth of the Kenai River **(60° 30.49' N. lat., 151° 16.80' W. long.)** [(60° 30.32' N. LAT., 151° 17.05' W. LONG.)] to the latitude of the northern ADF&G regulatory marker at the mouth of the Kasilof River **(xx° xx.xx' N. lat., xxx° xx.xx' W. long.)** and only within one and one-half miles of the mean high tide mark;

(iii) from the southern ADF&G regulatory marker at the mouth of the Kasilof River **(xx° xx.xx' N. lat., xxx° xx.xx' W. long.)** to the latitude of the ADF&G regulatory marker at the northern limit of the closed area at the mouth of the Ninilchik River **(60° 04.02' N. lat., 151° 38.90' W. long.)** and only within one and one-half miles of the mean high tide mark;

5 AAC 21.350(b)(1) within one statute mile of the terminus of any of the following salmon streams: Kasilof River **(north of the Kasilof River at xx° xx.xx' N. lat., xxx° xx.xx' W. long.; south of the Kasilof River at xx° xx.xx' N. lat., xxx° xx.xx' W. long.)**, Deep Creek, Stariski Creek, and Anchor River;

5 AAC 21.350(b)(3) Kenai River: waters enclosed by a line from the southern ADF&G regulatory marker at the mouth of the Kenai River **(60° 30.49' N. lat., 151° 16.80' W. long.)** [(60° 30.32' N. LAT., 151° 17.05' W. LONG.)] to the Coast Guard channel marker 1 KE located at 60° 31.30' N. lat., 151° 20.50' W. long. to the northern ADF&G regulatory marker at the mouth of the Kenai River **(60° 34.24' N. lat., 151° 18.99' W. long.)** [(60° 34.09' N. LAT., 151° 19.30' W. LONG.)]; and, in the area between a line bearing 235° from the northern ADF&G regulatory marker and the Kenai River mouth, those waters within one mile of the mean high tide mark and, in the area between the southern ADF&G regulatory marker and the Kenai River mouth, those waters within one and one-half miles of the mean high tide mark;

5 AAC 21.350(b)(4)(B) between the latitude of an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one statute mile north of the Ninilchik boat harbor entrance **at 60° 04.02' N. lat., 151° 38.90' W. long.** and the latitude of Anchor Point Light (59° 46.15' N. lat.) and extending offshore for a distance of one statute mile from mean lower low water;

5 AAC 21.366(a)(11) if the Chuitna River is closed to sport fishing, the commissioner shall close, by emergency order, the area from a point at the wood chip dock located approximately at **61° 02.77' N. lat., 151° 10.04' W. long.** [61° 02.56' N. LAT., 151° 14.36' W. LONG.], to the Susitna River to commercial king salmon fishing for the remainder of the directed king salmon fishery.

ISSUE: During the 2012 commercial salmon season, it was noted that the codified location of some commercial fishing regulatory markers in Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) appeared to denote

shore boundaries of closed waters north and south of the Kenai River that were measured using technology other than current global positioning system (GPS) devices. The location of these regulatory markers, as measured by GPS technology, does not agree with the codified location of these makers. The purpose of this proposal is to fix these errors so the codified language matches where the regulatory markers have been located for years, if not decades.

Note: Corrected coordinates have been provided for locations where GPS measurements have been obtained. For locations where updated coordinates have not yet been verified, these coordinates have been noted as **xxx° xx.xx'**, and will be obtained prior to the 2014 Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) meeting.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? There will continue to be disagreement between the codified language and the actual location of commercial fishing regulatory markers.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Commercial fishermen, department staff, and enforcement personnel.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-174)

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PROPOSAL 125 - 5 AAC 21.330. Gear. Allow selective harvest modules (SHM), under certain specifications and operations, to be used to commercially harvest salmon in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District, as follows:

(j) A CFEC permit holder may opt to fish a Selective Harvest Module (SHM) in place of any of his/her setnets. Definition: A SHM is a reefnet-like seine device not over 210 feet in length (measured perpendicular to MHW), not over 200 feet in width (measured parallel to MHW), and designed to release all kings alive. The SHM is designed to fish the same swath of water that a 210 foot setnet typically fishes. The SHM is made up of a 190 foot seine lead, which directs salmon into a 20 foot wide, 150 foot long seine. Tide current will propel salmon into the 150 foot long seine. The seine will be emptied by raising the web and a weighted line or lines. The fish will be "rolled" into a skiff similar to the way seine vessels load their boats. If kings are encountered they will usually be seen before reaching the skiff. They will therefore be rolled over the corkline, back into the ocean. Note: This proposal is designed to be a "place-holder." SHMs will be tested in 2013 and the results with diagrams and pictures will be presented to Advisory Committees as well as the Board of Fisheries in the fall of 2013. (j) A CFEC permit holder may opt to fish a Selective Harvest Module (SHM) in place of any of his/her setnets.

ISSUE: Incidental catch of king salmon.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Setnetters in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District may experience a smaller than historic harvest share of sockeye salmon due to management for king salmon. And the 50 year old ongoing conflict between sport and commercial fishers will continue. There is also a potential for exceeding the sockeye escapement goal. This same method might work to discriminate between pink and coho salmon. The possibility avails itself for a method of harvesting pink salmon, which have passed through the Upper Subdistrict underutilized for many years, without impacting coho salmon. Finally, a fortuitous potential for improving quality will be missed.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Gillnets can cause bruising. In some cases setnets are dragged onto a beach, salmon and all. Other times the sheer force of the tide or of the net stretches past the gillplate and mars the body of the fish. Caught salmon are suspended in the net where they sometimes become easy targets for spiny-finned dogfish and seals. Seine caught salmon often have excellent quality and the SHM will provide live caught quality that opens options for bleeding every fish and slush icing at the point of harvest. By making a significant portion of the Cook Inlet harvest a higher quality, the reputation of Cook Inlet salmon will raise and prices will follow.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Setnetters will likely benefit. I think everyone will benefit as fishery managers will again use the setnet fleet to obtain escapement goals. King salmon sport fishers will benefit as more kings reach the rivers. Recent years have seen an alarming trend for low ocean survival rates for central and western Alaska king stocks. The Board of Fisheries developed alternatives for use by gillnetters during the 2013 season on the Yukon River. These alternatives allowed beach seines or dipnets to be used so that king salmon conservation could be maximized. SHMs could be similarly authorized for the same reason.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Drift fishers and Personal Use (PU) dipnetters certainly benefitted as setnetters were idled in 2012. If SHMs reestablish setnet harvests to traditional levels, the recent windfall gains in drift and PU fisheries may return to setnetters.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Salmon traps: Rejected because they would require a change in state law and because they were perhaps not as attractive to the casual observer as mountains and whales. Beach seines: Rejected because beach seines are dragged, fish and all, onto the beach. By the time kings are released they would have suffered oxygen depletion and other injuries from being drug through shallow water. In any case the quality of beach seine caught fish would be inferior to SHM caught fish. I considered replacing three setnets with one, larger SHM, but rejected the idea because setnet sites are established with nets 600 feet apart and with some Shore Fishery leases. Larger SHMs would displace some setnetters who only have a single beach net. For the initial tests I plan to only fish beach SHMs on flood tides to avoid getting caught with the tide going out on fish that are still in a SHM. I also considered creating very large co-op SHMs, designed to be fished by multiple families. I rejected that because it is too socialistic. Setnetters are fiercely independent and the ones who are willing to work hard should not be forced to unite with those who take a more leisurely attitude with their fishing. Also, the very inefficiency of the numerous small nets is a boon for jobs.

PROPOSED BY: Brent G. Johnson (HQ-F13-071)
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<u>PROPOSAL 81</u> - 5 AAC 21.331. Gillnet specifications and operations; 5 AAC 21.332. Seine specifications and operations; and 5 AAC 27.410. Fishing seasons for Cook Inlet Area. Establish various management measures to address decline in returning king salmon to Cook Inlet, including requiring net gear be certified as avoiding king salmon interception and closing commercial herring fisheries. *(The finfish aspects of this proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet meetings The king and Tanner crab aspects of this proposal will be considered during the Statewide King and Tanner Crab meeting.)*

This proposal will also be addressed in the Statewide King and Tanner Crab Meeting.

Solutions;
1. Require all commercial salmon setnet gear to be certified as avoiding king salmon interception.

2. Close all commercial herring and crab fisheries identify critical habitat areas for these stocks and protect them until they return to their historic natural levels.

3. Begin increasing all freshwater salmon escapement goals until each systems water nitrogen/phosphorus levels return to their historic natural levels from the resulting rotting salmon.

Our ocean nitrogen/phosphorus levels are currently at a 50 year low. This marine energy is needed to fuel our marine food chains.

4. Require all salmon aquaculture projects to be certified as not promoting or advancing one stock at the expense of other stocks.

ISSUE: The problem is a lack of returning king salmon to all of Cook Inlet and statewide rivers and streams.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Our king salmon returns will continue declining until the state is forced to close all of our salmon fisheries for years into the future to rebuild them.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?
1. Yes, if adopted my proposal would not allow commercial set nets to fish until they are certified by the state as avoiding king salmon. This solution would place the king interception problem where it should have always been, on the individuals who are inefficiently and wastefully harvesting their fisheries target.

2. Yes, if adopted my proposal would begin to reverse the negative effects which have resulted from excess commercial harvest of our herring and crab stocks. Our herring and crab stocks are

currently at all-time lows thus providing our predatory fish stocks greatly reduced feed along with reduce survival prospects.

3. Yes, if adopted my proposal would begin to reverse the current negative marine food chain effects, which have resulted from maximizing commercial harvests. This water nutrient increase would be achieved by actually allocating salmon to decompose within our freshwater environments.

4. Yes, if adopted my proposal would prevent anyone from advancing one fish stock while harming other fish stocks.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All fisheries and users would eventually benefit from the proposed changes because eventually we would arrive at a healthier marine environment, which would generate more fish for everyone. There could be some temporary harvest reductions by some fisheries users but eventually these users would reap the benefits of the changes within my proposal. My proposal would cause fisheries users to benefit by requiring them to actively working to reduce their negative impacts on non-target fish stocks and other user groups.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? It is possible that some fisheries users could suffer in the short-term because they may not be able to harvest like they were allowed to in the past. In the long-term these same fisheries users would eventually benefit as the marine environment would again become healthy, thus generating much more surplus fish stocks to be harvested by all users.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? There are many theoretical solutions to our statewide problems involving returning king salmon. I have specifically rejected them because they do not focus on the marine food chain and user groups conflicting and impacting each other.

I am convinced that the reason we have stable sockeye salmon runs and unstable king salmon runs, is because for a short time in their lives kings and sockeyes feed on the same marine prey. That prey is euphausiids (crab larvae) and juvenile king salmon & sockeye salmon both feed on them. Both salmon begin their lives by feeding on zooplankton like euphausiids. Juvenal kings feed on euphausiids until they reach about (16 inches) in length but they require older euphausiids greater than 17 mm in size. Sockeyes feed on younger euphausiids which are less than 5 mm in sizes. After juvenile kings reach (16 inches) they stop feeding on euphausiids and begin exclusively feeding on things which consume euphausiids like herring and capelin. Sockeye's however continue feeding mainly on very small (3–5 mm) plankton and zooplankton like euphausiids, while juvenile kings are feeding mainly on (>17 mm) euphausiids. It is this king salmon dietary leap which allows kings to then grow to their much greater size. These king salmon feeding characteristics then become the focus of my proposal.

With sockeye salmon exclusively feeding on (35 mm) euphausiids and juvenile king salmon exclusively feeding on (>17 mm) euphausiids, this creates a feeding conflict. This feeding conflict can be created as fisheries managements manipulate and promote only specific stock type and numbers. As fisheries managers begin to manage for (only maximum sockeye production), that action can have consequences of setting into motion an unusual but intense

feeding factor within our ocean. This feeding factor can then specifically target (3–5 mm T. spinifera, euphausiids). These are in fact the same crab larva which juvenile king salmon will seek out later but after they have grown and reached a length greater than 17 mm. Juvenal kings less than 16 inches in length need euphausiids greater than 17 mm in length or they will starve to death. This is the primary marine feed these juvenile kings survive on during this early time in their life. The unfortunate part is that fisheries managers can expand some stocks without expanding others living beside them. This can create a supreme feeding machine with billions of sockeye's and pollock living in the same waters as kings. Together these vastly superior numbers of (small crab larvae feeders) then sweep the ocean for all euphausiid larva near the (3–5 mm) length, thus leaving little (if any) larva to grow larger for juvenal king salmon to feed on. These juvenile kings then have little to nothing to feed on as they attempt to build reserves to allow them to make their jump to feeding on herring or capelin. Because this strategic (>17 mm) euphausiid elements is therefore missing, many of these juvenile king salmon then (starve to death) and therefore never become adults. Ninety-five percent of a sockeye salmons diet focuses on these young 3–5 mm T. spinifera, euphausiids. Ninety-five percent of a juvenile king salmon's diet focuses on the older (>17 mm) euphausiids, which have managed to escape massive sockeye and pollock feedings. King salmons diets eventually switch over to small fish but the question is how do these juvenal kings get to that (switch-over point) if they cannot forage enough crab larva larger than 17 mm? Our latest marine sciences are now showing a dramatic reduction in the North Pacific marine production of crab larva. This science is telling us that we are now seeing that our (>17 mm) production of euphausiids is currently at about 1% of what it used to be historically. We still have good production levels of smaller (35 mm) euphausiids, which are feeding our sockeye and pollock stocks but 99% of the main diet of juvenile king salmon is (now completely missing). All users groups should display shock when they hear that an element like this has gone missing within our marine environment. Currently our ADF&G is not displaying shock, they are claiming that our missing kings are part of a natural marine cycle. I am claiming that it is not natural; it has been constructed by fisheries mismanagement.

Our fisheries managers continue to manage our fisheries as if we still have sufficient euphausiid resources to feed our current juvenile king salmon. Because these mangers do not understand the needs of our juvenile kings, they then claim that the resulting lack of returning adult kings salmon is a "Natural Lack Of King Salmon Abundance". There is nothing "natural" about this Lack Of King Salmon. If you follow the bread crumb trail you find it leading back to a lack of (greater than 17 mm crab larva), and that lack is the direct results of fisheries mis-management. If we just assume that these juvenile kings somehow find enough (>17 mm crab larva) to survive on into adulthood, then you must consider their chances of finding enough herring or capelin to survive on as adults. Unfortunately these smaller fish also feed exclusively on the same (>17 mm T. spinifera, euphausiids) and because we now only have about 1% of what we used to have in these euphausiids, these small fish are also now faced with the same dramatic lack of feed like juvenal king salmon. This dramatic lack of adequately sized marine food then demands closer examination. That examination needs to focus on the ocean production of plankton, zooplankton, euphausiids, herring, capelin and juvenile kings.

NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS F/NWC-91, Salmon Stomach Contents, From the Alaska Troll Logbook Program 1977–84, By Bruce L. Wing , October 1985. Type, Quantity, And Size

Of Food Of Pacific Salmon (Oncorhynchus) In The Strait Of Juan De Fuca, British Columbia, Terry D. Beachami.

Interannual variations in the population biology and productivity of *Thysanoessa spinifera* in Barkley Sound, Canada, with special reference to the 1992 and 1993 warm ocean years. R. W. Tanasichuk*, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Pacific Biological Station, Nanaimo, British Columbia V9R 5K6, Canada.

PROPOSED BY: Don Johnson (HQ-F13-065 (a))
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PROPOSAL 126 - 5 AAC 21.331. Gillnet specifications and operations and 5 AAC 21.333. Requirements and specifications for use of 200 fathoms of drift gillnet in the Cook Inlet Area. Prohibit permit stacking in the commercial set and drift gillnet fisheries in Upper Cook Inlet, as follows:

The Board of Fisheries should prohibit the practice of permit stacking in the Upper Cook Inlet area.

ISSUE: The Alaska Board of Fisheries has, during the past two cycles, deliberated and subsequently adopted a series of commercial salmon fishery proposals dealing with the practice commonly called "permit stacking". While at times it seemed clear that a purpose such as keeping an active permit in the family while a permit holder is serving their country in the military was the justification, at other times it appeared likely that allowing permit stacking would bring long-time latent permits back into a fully utilized, fully allocated fishery. It is our belief that bringing latent permits back into the fishery would be the long-term effect of continued permit stacking in the Upper Cook Inlet area. Through this proposal we are asking the board to prohibit the practice of permit stacking in the Upper Cook Inlet area.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Upper Cook Inlet salmon fisheries are fully utilized and fully allocated. Stock status of various species of salmon in Upper Cook Inlet is in question. Permit stacking has increased the fishing power of the gear group where this practice occurs. This increase of fishing power will further complicate already complex management strategies and allocation disputes.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Preventing unintentional increases in management complexity or allocation conflicts resulting from adoption of permit stacking proposals.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Upper Cook Inlet salmon fisheries are complex and conflicts over the allocation of the fishery resource are well documented. Management of the salmon fisheries of Upper Cook Inlet will benefit.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? It is primarily those individuals and groups who intend to activate latent permits that will suffer.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Approximately 25% of the total commercial permits issued for the Upper Cook Inlet area can be considered long-term latent. We see no other way to keep a proportion of these from reentering the fishery without the prohibition of permit stacking.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-229)

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PROPOSAL 127 - 5 AAC 21.333. Requirements and specifications for use of 200 fathoms of drift gillnet in the Cook Inlet Area. Allow one individual to hold two limited entry drift gillnet permits and fish both at the same time from the same vessel, as follows:

5 AAC 21.333. Requirements and specifications for use of 200 fathoms of drift gillnet in the Cook Inlet Area.

(a) Except as specified in (e-g) of this section, **one person holding two permits or** two Cook Inlet drift gillnet CFEC permit holders may concurrently fish from the same vessel and jointly operate up to 200 fathoms of drift gillnet gear under this section.

(b) Before operating drift gillnet gear **individually or** jointly under this section, **one person holding two permits or** both permit holders shall register with the department office in Anchorage, Soldotna, or Homer.

(c) When **one person holding two permits or** two Cook Inlet drift gillnet CFEC permit holders fish from the same vessel and **individually or** jointly operate additional drift gillnet gear under this section, the vessel must display its ADF&G permanent license plate number followed by the letter "D" to identify the vessel as a dual permit vessel. The letter "D" must be removed or covered when the vessel is operating with only one registered drift gillnet CFEC permit holder on board the **vessel**. The permanent license plate number and letters must be displayed

(1) in letters and numerals 12 inches high with lines at least one inch wide;
(2) in a color that contrasts with the background;
(3) on both sides of the hull; and
(4) in a manner that is plainly visible at all times when the vessel is being operated.

(d) When **one person holding two permits or** two permit holders jointly operate gear under this section, each permit holder is responsible for ensuring that the entire unit of gear is operated in a lawful manner.

(e) The **individual or** joint operation of additional drift gillnet gear under this section is not allowed when drift gillnet gear is restricted to any of the following areas:

(1) Chinitna Bay Subdistrict;
(2) repealed 5/21/2011;
(3) repealed 5/21/2011;
(4) Kasilof River Special Harvest Area as described in 5 AAC 21.365.

(f) A vessel with two registered CFEC permit holders on board, when transmitting through any area where the legal limit of gillnet gear is less than 200 fathoms, may have on board up to 200 fathoms of gillnet gear as long as no portion of the gear is deployed into the water.

(g) Repealed 5/21/2011.

Editor's note: The department office in Anchorage is located at 333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, Alaska. The department office in Soldotna is located at 43961 Kalifornsky Beach

Road, Suite B, Soldotna, Alaska. The department office in Homer is located at 3298 Douglas Place, Homer, Alaska.

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to allow a single person to hold two limited entry permits and fish both at the same time, current stacking of permits on a vessel is problematic.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Currently, two permit holders can fish on a single vessel at the same time, providing they fish with four (4) shackles of gear. The gear reduction is two shackles, 600 feet of gear that is not being fished. The current system of two separate individuals fishing reduced gear is working. The objectives of achieving a gear reduction in the drift fleet could be better achieved by allowing an individual fisherman to hold and fish two limited entry permits at the same time, if they choose.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-105)

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PROPOSAL 128 - 5 AAC 21.333. Requirements and specifications for use of 200 fathoms of drift gillnet in the Cook Inlet Area; 5 AAC 21.334. Identification of gear; and 5 AAC 21.345. Registration. Amend references to registration requirements for set and drift gillnetting in Upper Cook Inlet, as follows:

5 AAC 21.333(b) Before operating drift gillnet gear jointly under this section, both permit holders shall register with the department office in Anchorage, Soldotna, or Homer. **The permit holders may register in person or electronically on the department's website.**

5 AAC 21.334(c)(4) buoy sticker identification tags and replacement tags are available **and may be obtained** at the ADF&G office in Soldotna from Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**, and on the department's website** [ONLY];

5 AAC 21.345(a) A CFEC setnet permit holder shall register for a registration area described in (b) of this section before fishing, by completing a registration form available from the department and returning it to the department office in Anchorage, Soldotna, or Homer, [OR] by mailing it to the department office in Soldotna**, or by completing an electronic registration form available on the department's website**. A CFEC setnet permit holder may not fish in more than one registration area during a registration year.

ISSUE: There are various registration requirements for both setnetters and drift gillnetters in the UCI management area. In the Northern District Area, Upper Subdistrict Area, and Greater Cook Inlet Area, setnetters may mail in their registration or complete them in person at one of three different ADF&G offices (Anchorage, Homer, or Soldotna). Setnetters in the Upper Subdistrict, however, are required to purchase buoy stickers from only the Soldotna ADF&G office. Registration requirements for drift gillnetters who intend to "D-boat" fish (fish utilizing dual permits), may be completed in person at Anchorage, Homer, or Soldotna ADF&G offices.

This proposal seeks to allow commercial fishermen an opportunity to register electronically or to purchase their buoy stickers online. Electronic registration is allowed in other areas of the state and should be allowed wherever it is available and feasible. Internet Technology staff with the State of Alaska have ensured department staff that electronic registration, as well as purchase of buoy stickers, can be accommodated. It is anticipated that electronic registration will be set up and available for the 2014 season.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? If electronic registration and purchase of buoy stickers is not allowed, then fishermen will be required to visit ADF&G offices in person to complete this process. It is an extra expense to them in time and effort, as well as taking up department staff time that could be spent on other tasks.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Commercial fishermen who must register would benefit from the option to register electronically. It would save them time and money from making a trip to an ADF&G office and would allow them to register 24-hours a day, not just Monday–Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Another solution considered was to not require setnetters to register every year if they did not intend to switch areas where they fish. A significant percentage of fishermen have fished in the same area for many years. Currently, they must register every year, even when not changing the area where they fished the previous year.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-175)

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PROPOSAL 129 - 5 AAC 21.333. Requirements and specifications for use of 200 fathoms of drift gillnet in the Cook Inlet Area. Remove registration requirement for joint operation of drift gillnet gear, as follows:

5 AAC 21.333(b) **Repealed** [BEFORE OPERATING DRIFT GILLNET GEAR JOINTLY UNDER THIS SECTION, BOTH PERMIT HOLDERS SHALL REGISTER WITH THE DEPARTMENT OFFICE IN ANCHORAGE, SOLDOTNA, OR HOMER].

ISSUE: Since 2008, drift gillnetters have had the option of fishing up to 200 fathoms of gear as long as two permit holders were on board the vessel at the same time (commonly referred to as "D-boat fishing"). To help track D-boat fishing, a registration requirement was added to the management plan so the department might be able to predict how many boats in the drift fleet might be fishing as D-boats. Beginning with the 2013 season, salmon fish tickets will include a section that will show if fish were harvested while D-boat fishing. This change in the fish tickets should help remove confusion about where fishermen and fish buyers are to record D-boat fishing activities, and allows the department to determine when and where D-boats have been fishing.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The registration requirement will remain part of regulation and commercial fishermen will remain subject to legal prosecution for failure to register even though this information is not being used for management purposes.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Drift gillnet fishermen who fish 200 fathoms of gear with two permit holders.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-176)

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<u>PROPOSAL 130</u> - 5 AAC 21.345. Registration. Require CFEC setnet permit holders registered in the Upper Subdistrict to fish in only one section (Kasilof or Kenai) for the entire season, as follows:

Setnet permit holders, in Cook Inlet, must register for a registration area they intend to fish for the season. (5 AAC 21.345) if they chose to register in the upper subdistrict area (5 AAC 21.200 (b)(2). They then must get buoy sticker identification tags at the Soldotna ADF&G office (5 AAC 21.334 (c) (4). At that time they would have to declare what section (Kasilof or Kenai/East Forelands) they want to fish in. They are locked into fishing that section for the entire season.

ISSUE: Cook inlet setnetters that fish in two different sections in the ESSN Fishery. Fishermen fish in one area (Kasilof Section) until the peak of the fishery, then move into, or back to the Kenai Section.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? This practice will continue.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Fishermen who fish in a single statistical area.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Fishermen who move to different statistical areas inseason.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: North-Kalifonsky Beach Fishermen (HQ-F13-083)

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PROPOSAL 79 - 5 AAC 21.350. Closed waters. Close waters to commercial fishing within one statute mile of the terminus of any anadromous fish stream in Cook Inlet as measured from mean lower low tide, not mean high tide. *(This proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meetings.)*

(A) within one statute mile of the terminus, at [MEAN HIGH TIDE] **lower low water**, of the Kustatan River and the Drift River;
(B) within one statute mile **of the terminus, at mean lower low water** of the Big River **and Bachatna Creek:**
(C) within [500 YARDS] **one statute mile** of the terminus, at mean [HIGH TIDE] **lower low water**, of any anadromous fish stream;
(D) within [900 FEET] **1,000 yards** of the stream bed or channel of any anadromous fish stream throughout the intertidal portion of that stream out to the lower low water mark.

ISSUE: Current regulations listing closed waters for commercial fishing on the west side of Cook Inlet are not consistent with restrictions around other stream mouths and may allow commercial harvest too close to the mouths of four important coho salmon producing streams. All one statute mile and other fishing closures around all west side Cook Inlet river mouths should be designated from mean lower low water.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has failed to identify an adequate coho escapement goal for any west side Cook Inlet streams. Sportfish participation has increased dramatically in the last decade and these systems cannot continue to support commercial harvest at their mouths without threatening sustainability.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No. Product quality would not change.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Commercial users and thousands of sport users would benefit from additional salmon passage into west side Cook Inlet rivers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? A small number of drift gillnet fisherman that target these west side Cook Inlet coho stocks in August.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Do not allow any commercial drift gillnet fishing from McArthur River to Drift River. This may be seen as too restrictive.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Glassmaker (HQ-F13-228)
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PROPOSAL 131 - 5 AAC 21.350. Closed waters. Close waters within one statute mile of the Little Susitna River to commercial fishing, as follows:

Add the Little Susitna River to the list of streams that already have a one mile closed waters in the Northern District.

5 AAC 21.350. Closed Waters.

(a) Salmon may not be taken in any of the waters listed in this section.
(c) Northern District
(1) within one statue mile of the terminus of any of the following salmon streams: **Little Susitna River**, Swanson Creek, Bishop Creek, Three-mile Creek, Chuit River, Nikolai Creek, McArthur River.

ISSUE: Currently there is no one mile Closed Waters zone for commercial fishing for the Little Susitna River.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The Little Susitna River has not made its coho salmon Escapement Goal (EGs) for the last four years. If actions are not taken to protect coho bound for the Little Susitna this trend of not making EGs may continue.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. If proposal is adopted it would allow more coho bound for the Little Susitna to enter into the river.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Commercial Fisherman, Sport Fisherman and Little Susitna Salmon stocks. Last year the ADF&G closed sport fishing for coho on the Little Susitna. They also closed the Northern District commercial setnet fishery and put restrictions on the Drift Gillnet fishery based on low returns of coho on the Little Susitna. Putting a one mile closed water regulation would help the commercial fisheries stay open by allowing more coho into the Little Susitna to make its EGs. It would also be a benefit for sport fishermen who like to fish the Little Susitna River but can't because when the EGs is not made, the fishery gets shut down.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Commercial fisherman who like to fish within one mile of the mouth of the Little Susitna River.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-067)
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PROPOSAL 132 - 5 AAC 21.350. Closed waters. Close waters within one statute mile of the Little Susitna River to commercial fishing, as follows:

5 AAC 21.350. Closed Waters. (a) Salmon may not be taken in any of the waters listed in this section.

(c) Northern District

(1) within one statue mile of the terminus of any of the following salmon streams: **Little Susitna River**, Swanson Creek, Bishop Creek, Three-mile creek, Chuit River, Nikolai Creek, McArthur River.

ISSUE: Please adopt a one statute mile closed waters area around the terminus of the Little Susitna River. Currently one mile closed waters areas are in place around most important salmon producing streams in Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? For four consecutive years, 2009–2012, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has failed to meet the Little Susitna River coho salmon escapement goal. During 2011 and 2012 there have been increasing emergency restrictions and closures to the Little Susitna River sport fishery in efforts to attain the Little Susitna River coho salmon escapement goal. These restrictions and closures have had an enormous negative impact on thousands of sport anglers, and many related businesses. In 2012, the sport fishery was closed to bait use the entire year, then the Little Susitna River was closed to sport coho salmon fishing on the August 10 (approximately half of the sport season). Also in 2012 the Central District commercial driftnet fishery was restricted for one regular period in August, the General Subdistrict Northern District commercial setnet fishery was closed through the end of the season starting August 9, and the entire Northern District commercial setnet fishery was closed starting August 16 through the end of the season all in an effort to achieve the Little Susitna River coho salmon goal and other Northern District coho salmon goals. Even with emergency actions in 2011 and 2012 the Little Susitna River coho goal was still not attained either year. It has now been more than a full life cycle of coho salmon that ADF&G has failed to attain the Little Susitna River coho salmon escapement goal despite restrictive actions that have affected thousands of people. This qualifies Little Susitna River coho salmon for Stock of Concern designation by the Alaska Board of Fisheries. Having missed the escapement goal for a full life cycle of coho salmon there is a high likelihood that Little Susitna River coho salmon stock will experience lingering low productions problems. Throughout Upper Cook Inlet a strategy has been used restricting commercial fishing to areas one mile away from the terminus of important salmon spawning streams. Picture Upper Cook Inlet as long tunnel-shaped gauntlet style fishery. Little Susitna River is located near the Northern end of Upper Cook Inlet fisheries and salmon bound for this stream are subject to harvest for nearly the entire length of the inlet. Therefore, if a one mile stream mouth closed waters area is appropriate anywhere in the Upper Cook Inlet, it may be most appropriate around the mouth of Little Susitna River, as salmon bound for this stream are subject to more and more commercial harvest as they swim past a near maximum number of nets on their spawning migration.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Hundreds of commercial users and thousands of sport users would benefit from additional salmon passage into and additional salmon production from Little Susitna River. All users would enjoy a lower likelihood of inseason emergency restrictions or closures necessary to attain adequate little Susitna River coho salmon spawning escapement numbers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Two registered Northern District setnet sites are within one mile of Little Susitna River and additional setnetters may sometimes fish this area. Consistent with commercial salmon harvests near other stream mouths, these people would have to fish one mile from Little Susitna River.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? A larger closed waters area around Little Susitna River terminus was considered, but rejected for consistency with other Northern District stream mouth closed waters areas.

A shorter seasonal one mile closed waters area around Little Susitna River terminus was considered. Rejected, because in June and early July the king salmon stock has similar escapement problems as evidenced by progressively longer inseason emergency closures to the Little Susitna River king salmon sport fishery for four consecutive years from 2009–2012. Additionally, Little Susitna River sockeye salmon, returns after mid-July, have dropped from previous lower river weir counts in the thousands of fish, to 236 sockeye passing ADF&G's Little Susitna River weir in 2012.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission (HQ-F13-118)

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PROPOSAL 133 - 5 AAC 21.355. Reporting requirements. Require the number of commercially-harvested king salmon to be recorded by length (under 20" and over 20") on fish tickets, as follows:

Provide an area on commercial harvest tickets and require fish purchasers to record commercially harvested kings under 20" separately.

ISSUE: Currently, sport caught king salmon are recorded in two different groups - above 20" and under 20". UCI commercial gillnet fish harvest tickets do not differentiate by size. This makes assessing harvest records difficult, and does not provide a complete picture as to UCI king salmon harvests.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? We will continue to gather incomplete information regarding king salmon harvest.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Understanding the role that jack king salmon play in the life cycle of this resource is very important to our world class king salmon fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users and our resource will benefit from improved harvest data.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No other solutions. Detailed and accurate data is the building block for a health fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Todd Smith, Megan Smith, Amber Every, Travis Every (HQ-F13-088)
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PROPOSAL 134 - 5 AAC 21.368. Big River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to include all waters of the Kalgin Island Subdistrict and reduce fishing time from three days a week to two days a week, as follows:

The Big River Management plan would be amended to include all waters of the Kalgin Island subdistrict, and to reduce fishing time from three days a week to two days a week.

ISSUE: Proposed that the Big River Management Plan be amended to include the east side of Kalgin Island.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Currently the west side of Kalgin Island is open to set gillnet fishing from June 1, Monday, Wednesday and Friday along with the Kustatan subdistrict. On June 15 the Western subdistrict is open to set gillnet fishing. On June 19 the drift fleet is open to fishing in waters that include the east side of Kalgin Island. Set gillnet fishing on the east side of Kalgin Island is opened starting June 25. There are about ten permits that fish the east side of Kalgin Island, who are being asked to bear the burden of conservation while waters all around are open to fishing for other groups. This was probably not specifically intended by the Board of Fish.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No, the purpose of this proposal is to address happenstance management where a small group of fishermen are not included in participation when waters are open all around.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? A few fishermen who have sites on the east side on Kalgin Island would benefit.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? If the board reduced the fishing time to two days a week, then the fishermen on the west side of Kalgin Island and Kustatan subdistrict would lose fishing time.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? The fish circle the island, and there is no scientific or biological basis to treat the Kalgin Island subdistrict unequally on an arbitrary basis. I considered asking for the east side of Kalgin Island to be included on the current schedule of three days a week, but I didn't see that as politically possible.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Hermon (HQ-F13-318)
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<u>PROPOSAL 135</u> - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Modify management plan to remove provisions 5 AAC 21.353(a)(2)(A), (B), and (C) in the management plan, as follows:

(a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure adequate escapement of salmon into the Northern District drainages and to provide management guidelines to the department. The department shall manage the commercial drift gillnet fishery to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho salmon in order to provide sport and guided sport fishermen a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon stocks over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions. The department shall manage the Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery as follows:

(1) weekly fishing periods are as described in 5 AAC 21.320(b);

(2) the fishing season will open the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later, [AND] **<u>until September 1. After September 1, the fishing may be closed by emergency order, except as provided below:</u>**

[(A) FROM JULY 9 THROUGH JULY 15,

(i) FISHING DURING THE FIRST REGULAR FISHING PERIOD IS RESTRICTED TO THE EXPANDED KENAI AND EXPANDED KASILOF SECTIONS; ADDITIONAL FISHING TIME IS ALLOWED ONLY IN THE EXPANDED KENAI AND EXPANDED KASILOF SECTIONS OF THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT;

(ii) FISHING DURING THE SECOND REGULAR FISHING PERIOD IS RESTRICTED TO THE KENAI AND KASILOF SECTIONS OF THE UPPER AND DRIFT GILLNET AREA 1;

(iii) AT RUN STRENGTHS GREATER THAN 2,300,000 SOCKEYE SALMON TO THE KENAI RIVER, THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, ONE ADDITIONAL 12-HOUR FISHING PERIOD IN THE KENAI AND SECTIONS OF THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT AND DRIFT GILLNET AREA 1;

(B) FROM JULY 16 THROUGH JULY 31,

(i) AT RUN STRENGTHS OF LESS THAN 2,300,000 SOCKEYE SALMON TO KENAI RIVER, FISHING DURING ONE REGULAR 12-HOUR FISHING PERIOD WILL BE RESTRICTED TO THE EXPANDED KENAI AND EXPANDED KASILOF SECTIONS OF THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT;

(ii) AT RUN STRENGTHS OF 2,300,000–4,600,000 SOCKEYE SALMON TO THE KENAI RIVER, FISHING DURING ONE REGULAR 12-HOUR FISHING PERIOD PER WEEK WILL BE RESTRICTED TO EITHER OR BOTH THE EXPANDED AND EXPANDED KASILOF SECTIONS OF THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT OR DRIFT GILLNET AREA 1;

(iii) AT RUN STRENGTHS GREATER THAN 4,600,000 SOCKEYE SALMON TO THE KENAI RIVER, THERE WILL BE NO MANDATORY RESTRICTIONS DURING REGULAR FISHING PERIODS;

(C) FROM AUGUST 16 UNTIL CLOSED BY EMERGENCY ORDER, DRIFT GILLNET AREAS 3 AND 4 ARE OPEN FOR FISHING DURING REGULAR FISHING PERIODS;]

(D) from August 11 through August 15, there are no mandatory area restrictions to regular periods, except that if the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery is closed under 5 AAC 21.310(b)(2)(C)(iii), regular fishing periods will be restricted to Drift Gillnet Areas 3 and 4.

(b) For the purposes of this section,

(1) "Drift Gillnet Area 1" means those waters of the Central District south of Kalgin Island at 60° 20.43' N. lat.;

(2) "Drift Gillnet Area 2" means those waters of the Central District enclosed by a line from 60° 20.43' N. lat., 151° 54.83' W. long. to a point at 60° 41.08' N. lat., 151° 39.00' W. long. to a point at 60° 41.08' N. lat., 151° 24.00' W. long. to a point at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 25.70' W. long. to a point at 60° 20.43' N. lat., 151° 28.55' W. long.;

(3) "Drift Gillnet Area 3" means those waters of the Central District within one mile of mean lower low water (zero tide) south of a point on the West Foreland at 60° 42.70' N. lat., 151° 42.30' W. long. ;

(4) "Drift Gillnet Area 4" means those waters of the Central District enclosed by a line from 60° 04.70' N. lat., 152° 34.74' W. long. to the Kalgin Buoy at 60° 04.70' N. lat., 152° 09.90' W. long. to a point at 59° 46.15' N. lat., 152° 18.62' W. long. to a point on the western shore at 59° 46.15' N. lat., 153° 00.20' W. long., not including the waters of the Chinitna Bay Subdistrict.

(c) Expanded Kenai Section: all waters enclosed by a line from a point located on the shore at 60° 40.35' N. lat., 151° 23.00' W. long., west to a point located at 60° 40.35' N. lat., 151° 26.33' W. long., south to a point at the latitude of the Blanchard line located at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 33.76' W. long., and east to a point on the beach at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 16.94' W. long.;

(E) Expanded Kasilof Section: all waters enclosed by a line from a point on the beach at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 16.94' W. long., west to a point at the Blanchard Line located at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 33.76' W. long., south to a point located at 60° 04.02' N. lat., [151° 46.60'] 151° 49.00' W. long., and east to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at 60° 04.02' N. lat., 151° 38.90' W. long.

(c) The commissioner may depart from the provisions of the management plan under this section as provided in 5 AAC 21.363(e).

ISSUE: This proposal seeks the Board of Fish to remove section 5 AAC 21.353.(a)(2)A, B and C in their entirety. All area descriptions are proposed to be moved to a new section to be used as needed to practice adaptive management in season based on salmon movements, run timing and other factors. The current area restrictions not are based on run timing and run locations. In the mixed stock fisheries of Cook Inlet, these runs are highly variable from year to year in both salt and fresh water.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The fish entry and run patterns vary from year to year. The area restrictions have been used in a prescriptive manner. UCIDA believes these area descriptions should be used as needed as an adaptive management tool. All these time "window" and area restrictions have assumed two events:

First, that there are specific times that certain salmon stocks move through the Central District:
Second, that there are specific places that certain salmon stocks move through the Central District.
Both of these assumptions have proved to be unfounded. For the last 4 years, genetic sampling along Anchor Point and the Northern Test Boat transects, and the drift fleet catches each demonstrate that northern bound stocks occur at 4%–6% of the catch at all locations and on all July dates.
There are no special times or areas identified to date that facilitate a higher probability of moving northern stocks through the Central or Northern Districts.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Provides for an orderly fishery and quality seafood products.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-126)
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<u>PROPOSAL 136</u> - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Modify management plan to change dates of drift fishery to June 19–September 1 and run-strength trigger points for late-run Kenai River sockeye salmon; remove area restrictions in July; and modify provisions affecting additional fishing periods, as follows:

[(a) THE PURPOSE OF THIS MANAGEMENT PLAN IS TO ENSURE ADEQUATE ESCAPEMENT OF SALMON INTO THE NORTHERN DISTRICT DRAINAGES AND TO PROVIDE MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES TO THE DEPARTMENT. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MANAGE THE COMMERCIAL DRIFT GILLNET FISHERY TO MINIMIZE THE HARVEST OF NORTHERN DISTRICT AND KENAI RIVER COHO SALMON IN ORDER TO PROVIDE SPORT AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERMEN A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO HARVEST THESE SALMON STOCKS OVER THE ENTIRE RUN, AS MEASURED BY THE FREQUENCY OF INRIVER RESTRICTIONS.] The department shall manage the Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery as follows:

(1) weekly fishing periods are as described in 5 AAC 21.320(b);

(2) the fishing season will open the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later, and

(A) [FROM JULY 9 THROUGH JULY 15,] **<u>from the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later, through September 1</u>**

[(i) fishing during the first regular fishing period is restricted to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections; additional fishing time is allowed only in the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict;

(ii) fishing during the second regular fishing period is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict and Drift Gillnet Area 1;]

[(iii)] **(i)** at run strengths [GREATER] **less** than [2,300,000] **2,000,000** sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open one additional 12-hour fishing period; [in the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict and Drift Gillnet Area 1;

(B) from July 16 through July 31,

(i) at run strengths of less than 2,300,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open additional fishing periods [FISHING DURING ONE REGULAR 12-HOUR FISHING PERIOD WILL BE RESTRICTED TO THE EXPANDED KENAI AND EXPANDED KASILOF SECTIONS OF THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT;]

(ii) at run strengths of [2,300,000–4,600,000] **2,000,000–4,000,000** sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, [FISHING DURING ONE REGULAR 12-HOUR FISHING PERIOD PER WEEK WILL BE RESTRICTED TO EITHER OR BOTH THE EXPANDED KENAI AND EXPANDED KASILOF SECTIONS OF THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT OR DRIFT GILLNET AREA 1;] the commissioner may, by emergency order, open additional fishing periods.

(iii) at run strengths greater than [4,600,000] **4,000,000** sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, [THERE WILL BE NO MANDATORY RESTRICTIONS DURING REGULAR FISHING PERIODS] **the commissioner shall, by emergency order, open additional fishing periods;**

[(C)] **(B)** from August 16 until closed by emergency order, [DRIFT GILLNET AREAS 3 AND 4 ARE OPEN FOR FISHING DURING] regular fishing periods **will occur and the commissioner may, by emergency order, open additional fishing periods;**

[(D) FROM AUGUST 11 THROUGH AUGUST 15, THERE ARE NO MANDATORY AREA RESTRICTIONS TO REGULAR PERIODS, EXCEPT THAT IF THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT SET GILLNET FISHERY IS CLOSED UNDER 5 AAC 21.310(B)(2)(C)(III), REGULAR FISHING PERIODS WILL BE RESTRICTED TO DRIFT GILLNET AREAS 3 AND 4.]

[(b)] **(C)** For the purposes of this section, and for an orderly fishery to occur, the following areas may be used, if appropriate:

[(1) "DRIFT GILLNET AREA 1" MEANS THOSE WATERS OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT SOUTH OF KALGIN ISLAND AT 60° 20.43' N. LAT.;

(2) "DRIFT GILLNET AREA 2" MEANS THOSE WATERS OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT ENCLOSED BY A LINE FROM 60° 20.43' N. LAT., 151° 54.83' W. LONG. TO A POINT AT 60° 41.08' N. LAT., 151° 39.00' W. LONG. TO A POINT AT 60° 41.08' N. LAT., 151° 24.00' W. LONG. TO A POINT AT 60° 27.10' N. LAT., 151° 25.70' W. LONG. TO A POINT AT 60° 20.43' N. LAT., 151° 28.55' W. LONG.;]

[(3)] **(i)** "Drift Gillnet Area [3] **1**" means those waters of the Central District within one mile of mean lower low water (zero tide) south of a point on the West Foreland at 60° 42.70' N. lat., 151° 42.30' W. long. ;

[(4) "DRIFT GILLNET AREA 4" MEANS THOSE WATERS OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT ENCLOSED BY A LINE FROM 60° 04.70' N. LAT., 152° 34.74' W. LONG. TO THE KALGIN BUOY AT 60° 04.70' N. LAT., 152° 09.90' W. LONG. TO A POINT AT 59° 46.15' N. LAT., 152° 18.62' W. LONG. TO A POINT ON THE WESTERN

SHORE AT 59° 46.15' N. LAT., 153° 00.20' W. LONG., NOT INCLUDING THE WATERS OF THE CHINITNA BAY SUBDISTRICT.]

(ii) Expanded Kenai Section: all waters enclosed by a line from a point located on the shore at 60° 40.35' N. lat., 151° 23.00' W. long., west to a point located at 60° 40.35' N. lat., 151° 26.33' W. long., south to a point at the latitude of the Blanchard line located at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 34.55' W. long., and east to a point on the beach at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 16.94' W. long.;

(iii) Expanded Kasilof Section: all waters enclosed by a line from a point on the beach at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 16.94' W. long., west to a point at the Blanchard Line located at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 34.55' W. long., south to a point located at 60° 04.02' N. lat., 151° 49.00' W. long., and east to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at 60° 04.02' N. lat., 151° 38.90' W. long.;

(c) The commissioner may depart from the provisions of the management plan under this section as provided in 5 AAC 21.363(e).

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to make three regulatory changes: First, return the weekly fishing periods to Mondays and Thursdays, from June 19, or the third Monday in June, whichever is later, through September 1; Second is to adjust the three tiers (sizes of the Kenai returns) to better describe small, moderate and large returns; Third, to place all current area restrictions into "as needed" sections so adaptive management can be practiced. Remove the area restrictions during July 9 through July 15 and during July 16 through July 31.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The current closures are based on the assumption that there are specific areas and times when the introduced hybrid northern king and coho stocks can be avoided. The recent genetic sampling work does not support specific time or area restrictions on the drift fleet. Pike predation, diseases, parasites, hook & release mortality, habitat degradation, crowding on small streams (overfishing) and water quality issues in the Mat-Su Valley must be solved in Northern Cook Inlet.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? During this time period the department is using the drift CPUE to make as assessment of run timing and run size. This changes the management plan to what was in place for over 25 years.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Processors and drift fishermen, allows for orderly fishery, spreads harvests over a longer period. Currently 25% of the drift fleet occurs on one or two single days, quality suffers and ex-vessel values drop. Economically, fewer dollars are achieved by these harvests due to fish quality issues.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? 1. Maintain existing restrictions. Rejected this solution because lack of salmon in the Mat-Su Valley is the result of increased and expanding pike predation, diseases, parasites, impaired water quality, lack of fry and smolt releases, blocked culverts and depressed spawning successes due to catch and release management practices. The king and coho stocks of Northern Cook Inlet are hybrids resulting from the introduction of Green

River, Washington, Kodiak Island, Bear River (Seward) and Southeast salmon stocks into the Fire Lake, Fort Richardson and Big Lake Hatcheries from the mid-1960's thru 1993. These king and coho stocks there now are not native to this area and are experiencing a 20-plus year population decline, 1996–2016, as expected when non-native species are introduced into a new environment.

Since the hatchery stockings of these exotic hybrids ended in 1996 in the Mat-Su Valley, there has been a predictable and steady decline in these populations as parasites, diseases and predators (pike, Dolly Varden), competitors all adjust to these hybrid introductions. Impaired waters, hydrocarbons and turbidity in the Little Susitna River, perched/blocked culverts (486 presently), spawning failures due to hook and release practices, water temperatures above 13°C, lower water flows and floods have all added to these declining salmon populations.

Production is the issue, not salmon harvests. Existing restrictions have caused a disorderly fishery in Northern Cook Inlet resulting in salmon price and quality drop. Existing restrictions also allow for sockeye over escapement.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-127)

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<u>PROPOSAL 137</u> - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Modify management plan to remove area restrictions and change expanded corridor area, as follows:

(b) For the purposes of this section,

[(1) "DRIFT GILLNET AREA 1" MEANS THOSE WATERS OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT SOUTH OF KALGIN ISLAND AT 60° 20.43' N. LAT.;

(2) "DRIFT GILLNET AREA 2" MEANS THOSE WATERS OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT ENCLOSED BY A LINE FROM 60° 20.43' N. LAT., 151° 54.83' W. LONG. TO A POINT AT 60° 41.08' N. LAT., 151° 39.00' W. LONG. TO A POINT AT 60° 41.08' N. LAT., 151° 24.00' W. LONG. TO A POINT AT 60° 27.10' N. LAT., 151° 25.70' W. LONG. TO A POINT AT 60° 20.43' N. LAT., 151° 28.55' W. LONG.];

(3) "Drift Gillnet Area 3" means those waters of the Central District within one mile of mean lower low water (zero tide) south of a point on the West Foreland at 60° 42.70' N. lat., 151° 42.30' W. long.;

[(4) "DRIFT GILLNET AREA 4" MEANS THOSE WATERS OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT ENCLOSED BY A LINE FROM 60° 04.70' N. LAT., 152° 34.74' W. LONG. TO THE KALGIN BUOY AT 60° 04.70' N. LAT., 152° 09.90' W. LONG. TO A POINT AT 59° 46.15' N. LAT., 152° 18.62' W. LONG. TO A POINT ON THE WESTERN SHORE AT 59° 46.15' N. LAT., 153° 00.20' W. LONG., NOT INCLUDING THE WATERS OF THE CHINITNA BAY SUBDISTRICT.]

(C) Expanded Kenai Section: all waters enclosed by a line from a point located on the shore at 60° 40.35' N. lat., 151° 23.00' W. long., west to a point located at 60° 40.35' N. lat., 151° 26.33' W. long., south to a point at the latitude of the Blanchard line located at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 33.76' W. long., and east to a point on the beach at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 16.94' W. long.;

(E) Expanded Kasilof Section: all waters enclosed by a line from a point on the beach at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 16.94' W. long., west to a point at the Blanchard Line located at 60° 27.10' N. lat., 151° 33.76' W. long., south to a point located at 60° 04.02' N. lat., [151° 46.60'] **151° 49.00'** W. long., and east to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at 60° 04.02' N. lat., 151° 38.90' W. long.;

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to place all restricted area descriptions into a "menu" status to be used as necessary. The second purpose is to move the SW corner of the expanded corridor Southwest approximately one nautical mile. Also to remove mandatory drift gillnet areas from plans and describe these areas as a list of areas to be used if ADF&G see the need for restricted areas to meet escapement objectives.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The current area restrictions occur without a biological foundation. Provides for an orderly fishery.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Provides for an orderly fishery. Areas to be used as a part of adaptive management practices. By describing these area restrictions in regulation, fishermen are allowed to plot these areas ahead of the commercial openings.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? By having the areas defined, it allows fishermen to remain in compliance. Allows fishermen to plot these restricted areas into modern video plotters ahead of actual fishing periods. Allows fishermen to achieve a higher level of compliance. Moving the Southwest corner of the Expanded Kasilof section from 151° 38.90' W to 151° 41.00' W to accommodate current patterns at this location. At the present SW corner, the flood tides will push a drifting vessel west out of the current western boundary of the expanded section. Moving the SW corner of the Expanded Kasilof section west about one nautical mile should account for the unusual tidal movements in this area.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? None.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-128)

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PROPOSAL 138 - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Restrict drift gillnet fishery to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof sections from June 19–August 10.

From June 19–August 10 all drift fishing will be restricted to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict. It is time for the board to try something that will fix the problem. Concerning the thought that enough Kenai sockeye salmon may not be harvested under such regulations -- If this type management works in Bristol Bay where there are less commercial permit holders per number of salmon harvested, then shouldn't it work in Cook

Inlet? Fact: the 2012 season proved the drift fleet can harvest significant numbers of salmon in the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections when the drift fishery harvested the vast majority of all commercially caught salmon in Upper Cook Inlet. Why not at least see what the results of such management would be during a time when the drifters have the benefit of nearly all the 2012 Upper Cook Inlet commercial salmon harvest to see them through if they, somehow, harvested less than their long-term average? Setnetters, personal use fishermen, and sport fishermen could all harvest a more equitable share of Kenai River sockeye salmon, if needed, for management purposes. Even without further regulation change, each of these user groups would harvest more Kenai sockeye salmon if more salmon were swimming by in the areas they were fishing.

If any management issue should arise, the department would still have the Commissioner's emergency order authority under which to make adjustments.

ISSUE: Stock of Concern Susitna River Sockeye Salmon, pending Stock of Concern Little Susitna River Coho Salmon, pending Stock of Concern Jim Creek Coho Salmon, loss of reasonable harvest opportunity for Northern Personal Use, sport, guided sport, and commercial users. Enough already.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Management by the Department of Fish and Game, that prioritizes resource harvest in the Central District drift fishery above reaching department established and board approved Sustainable Escapement Goals for Northern salmon stocks will continue. This is a determent to the resource and long-term determent to the majority of Alaskans who depend on that resource.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Smaller daily harvests on a more frequent basis should help improve salmon quality after harvest.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Anyone who depends upon or harvests Northern District salmon stocks could benefit from their return to more robust spawning, population, and yield levels. All user groups would benefit from a lower likelihood of inseason restriction or closure based on escapement levels of Northern District salmon stocks. Other user groups would likely benefit by harvesting some of the salmon that were not caught by the drift fleet.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Drifters would catch less salmon bound for drainages other than those along the Kenai Peninsula, but any Kenai and Kasilof River sockeye salmon would still have to swim through the large Expanded Kenai or Kasilof Sections and be subject to drift harvest before reaching those rivers. Allocations of Kenai and Kasilof River sockeye salmon amongst user groups would change in a manner that may be unpredictable but that already happens, to some extent, on an annual basis.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Attempt some change closer to status quo. Rejected because this is a long-term festering problem, and the right thing needs to be done to resolve the issue. Time to move on.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-079)
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PROPOSAL 139 - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Restrict drift gillnet fishery to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof sections, as follows:

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

(B) from July 16 through July 31,

at run strengths of less than 2,300,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during both regular 12-hour weekly fishing periods will be restricted to the Expanded Kenai and/or the Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict;

(i) at run strengths of 2,300,000–4.600,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during one regular 12-hour weekly fishing period will be restricted to either or both the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict or Drift Area 1, and the other regular 12-hour weekly fishing period will be restricted to the Expanded Kenai and/or the Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict;

(ii) at run strengths great than 4,600,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during one regular 12-hour fishing period will be restricted to the Expanded Kenai and/or Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict;

(iii) all additional fishing time in sections i, ii, and iii will be allowed only in the Expanded Kenai Section, Expanded Kasilof Section or both.

ISSUE: The sustainability of Northern Cook Inlet (NCI) salmon is at risk because of over-exploitation by mixed stock commercial fisheries targeting more robust salmon runs bound for the Kenai Peninsula. Most Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) commercial fisheries are currently managed primarily to maximize the harvest from the dominant Kenai and Kasilof sockeye salmon stocks to the detriment of many smaller and often less productive stocks of NCI. Escapement goals are either non-existent or grossly inadequate for northern stocks. Rather than adjusting commercial harvests to meet established escapement goals (Susitna sockeye salmon); the goals have been reduced or redefined. Several sport fisheries affecting major NCI coho salmon stocks have been largely closed or restricted during recent years. Benefits of these sport closures have often not been sufficient to avoid falling below minimum escapement goals because harvest rates are generally not great enough to offset the downturn in natural productivity and/or commercial harvest impacts (Little Susitna River coho salmon escapement goal missed four consecutive years). Since Susitna River sockeye salmon were designated a stock of concern in 2008, fishery yields have not substantially improved; multiple indicators show a continuing decline in run size and escapement; historical escapement goals that were not being met were replaced with less-constraining standards (post-season value only) and new escapement goals are not being consistently met.

The very serious steady decline of NCI salmon as measured by escapement, harvest and inriver fishery closures and restrictions, demands the development of a regulatory based recovery program as defined by the Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Elements of such a recovery/conservation plan must feature increased harvests within the Expanded Kenai and Kasilof Sections (initially adopted by the 2011 BOF) and significantly reduced deployment of the drift fleet on an area-wide mixed stock basis.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Management of the mixed stock Central District commercial fishery has long recognized that associated NCI stocks and species cannot consistently support exploitation rates that are appropriate for the more productive Kenai Peninsula sockeye. If meaningful stock specific harvest strategies are not applied to the Central District Drift Fishery, the conservation concerns identified above will likely worsen.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Harvesters, transporters and processors are often over taxed to maintain product quality while fishing two 12-hour area-wide weekly periods during modest to large Kenai River sockeye salmon runs. Smaller daily harvests over a longer period from the Expanded Kenai and Kasilof Sections will provide both harvesters and processors the opportunity to improve or maintain product quality.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Management strategies that insure that NCI salmon remain healthy and provide sustainable yields will be benefit all users of these salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? The drift fishery would expect to be less efficient when fishing in the Expanded Kenai and Kasilof Sections versus fishing traditional area-wide mixed stock areas. Extra time (days) to harvest within the Expanded Sections, however, should more than offset differences in harvest rates between the respective areas. In 2012, the drift fishery enjoyed a banner harvest while fishing heavily in the Expanded Sections primarily because the eastside setnet fishery was closed to protect Kenai River Chinook salmon.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Confining the drift harvest totally within the Expanded Kenai and Kasilof Sections during July 16 through July 31 was considered a viable option but rejected at this time. Greater use of the relatively new Expanded Sections should be implemented in a cautious incremental fashion to allow the drift fishery reasonable opportunities to harvest surplus Kenai sockeye while also assuring adequate protection to NCI runs.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission (HQ-F13-094)
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<u>PROPOSAL 140</u> - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Amend management plan to restrict drift gillnet fishery to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof sections, as follows:

The following is suggested wording for the changes we would like to see made to 5 AAC 21.353 (a)

(B) from July 16 through July 31,

<u>(i) at run strengths of less than 2,300,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during both regular 12-hour weekly fishing periods and any additional fishing time shall be restricted to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict;</u>

[(i) AT RUN STRENGTHS OF LESS THAN 2,300,000 SOCKEYE SALMON TO THE KENAI RIVER, FISHING DURING ONE REGULAR 12-HOUR FISHING

PERIOD WILL BE RESTRICTED TO THE EXPANDED KENAI AND EXPANDED KASILOF SECTIONS OF THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT;]

(ii) at run strengths of 2,300,000-4,600,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during one regular 12-hour weekly fishing period shall be restricted to either or both the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict or Drift Gillnet Area 1, and the other regular 12-hour weekly fishing period and any additional fishing time shall be restricted to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict;

[(ii) AT RUN STRENGTHS OF 2,300,000 - 4,600,000 SOCKEYE SALMON TO THE KENAI RIVER, FISHING DURING ONE REGULAR 12-HOUR FISHING PERIOD PER WEEK WILL BE RESTRICTED TO EITHER OR BOTH THE EXPANDED KENAI AND EXPANDED KASILOF SECTIONS OF THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT OR DRIFT GILLNET AREA 1;]

(iii) at run strengths greater than 4,600,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during the two normal weekly 12-hour periods shall be restricted to either or both of the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict and/or Drift Gillnet Area 1, and any additional fishing time shall be restricted to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict;

[(iii) AT RUN STRENGTHS GREATER THAN 4,600,000 SOCKEYE SALMON TO THE KENAI RIVER, THERE WILL BE NO MANDATORY RESTRICTIONS DURING REGULAR FISHING PERIODS;]

ISSUE: The Northern District of Cook Inlet currently has seven (7) declared stocks of concern: six king salmon stocks and the Susitna/Yentna sockeye stocks. We have been told by Fish and Game that if 2013 returns are similar to those of 2012, perhaps another four king salmon stocks and at least one coho salmon (Little Susitna) stock would be eligible for declaration as stocks of concern. Northern District king salmon stocks are not affected by this management plan, however, both sockeye and coho stocks are directly impacted by the way the Central District drift fleet is managed in their fishery.

All Northern District sockeye and coho stocks are mixed in with the other sockeye and coho stocks moving through Cook Inlet, creating a major mixed stock fishery. The Northern District fish tend to move north through Cook Inlet by traveling up the center of the inlet. Whenever the drift fleet is allowed to fish in Drift Gillnet Area 1, as defined in the management plan, after July 15, significant numbers of northern-bound sockeye and coho are intercepted and harvested along with the targeted Kenai/Kasilof fish stocks.

We are asking the Board of Fisheries to more conservatively regulate the Central District drift fleet by restricting the areas open to drift fleet fishing after July 15. By reducing commercial fishing efforts in the areas where the northern-bound sockeye and coho stocks are moving, more fish will survive to spawn in Northern District river systems.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The Susitna/Yentna sockeye stock was originally declared a stock of concern at the 2008 Upper Cook Inlet Board of Fisheries meeting and currently remains a stock of concern. As required by regulation, an action plan was

developed by ADF&G to address this concern and to bring the stocks back to a healthy status. Since that time, the Susitna/Yentna sockeye stocks have continued to show a significant downward trend in returns, even when using a modified enumeration plan ADF&G claimed would more accurately reflect the true numbers of returning sockeye.

Unfortunately, this new enumeration plan is not generally used for inseason management of this Northern District stock and the actual escapement numbers are not tabulated until after the season has closed. The index numbers ADF&G uses to establish Susitna/Yentna sockeye escapements were some of the lowest recorded in 2012.

The Central District Drift Gillnet Management Plan states, *"(a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure adequate escapement of salmon into the Northern District drainages and to provide management guidelines to the department. The department shall manage the commercial drift gillnet fishery to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho salmon in order to provide sport and guided sport fishermen a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon stocks over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions."*

The Little Susitna coho returns have failed to make minimum escapements for the past four consecutive years. Up until about five to six years ago, this system supported the second largest coho sport fishery in Alaska. The sports fishing season on the Little Susitna River was closed early in 2011 and about halfway through the 2012 season in an effort to protect what few fish were making it into the river system, but failed to reach even the minimum escapement number by several thousand fish both years. Since this river has one of only three coho escapement goals in the Northern District, we feel it's fair to assume other systems are in jeopardy as well, with at least one of the other two systems with an escapement goal on the brink of qualifying as a stock of concern for coho.

If this trend of intercepting and overharvesting Northern District sockeye and coho in the Central District drift fishery is allowed to continue as it has, Northern District sockeye and coho stocks will crash and tens of millions of dollars in revenue will be lost each year by both the sport fishing industry in the Northern District and the commercial fishery in the Central District as well.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? By protecting additional numbers of northern-bound sockeye and coho salmon and allowing the stocks to improve escapement and spawning numbers and rebuild to healthy and sustainable numbers, the resource itself will benefit significantly. With increased production from healthy Northern District sockeye and coho stocks, all user groups should also benefit from increased harvestable numbers of fish.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? In the short term, the drift fleet will have to work a little harder to catch their fish in the expanded corridor, but should still catch adequate numbers of Kenai/Kasilof sockeye. Since these are the stocks most often mentioned by commercial fishers as

potentially suffering from "overescapement," concentrating the drift fleet's efforts in a Bristol Bay-like terminal fishery should benefit those stocks while protecting northern-bound fish.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? We considered additional time and area restrictions for the drift fleet but felt these additional restrictions would be too much. The proposed restrictions itemized above should allow adequate protection for the northern-bound stocks while also allowing the drift fleet reasonable fishing opportunity to harvest their targeted Kenai/Kasilof sockeye stocks.

PROPOSED BY: Howard Delo (HQ-F13-313)

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PROPOSAL 141 - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Modify management plan to provide reasonable opportunity for Northern District set gillnetters to harvest all salmon stocks, as follows:

(a)…. "…The department shall manage the commercial drift gillnet fishery to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho salmon in order to provide sport and guided sport fishermen a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon stocks over the entire run, as measure by the frequency of inriver restrictions **and also to provide a reasonable opportunity for Northern District setnetters to harvest salmon of all stocks.**

ISSUE: Provide reasonable opportunity for Northern District setnetters to harvest salmon.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The Northern District setnetters will continue to be left out of consideration of the passage of salmon from the Central District to the Northern District.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, by providing opportunity to Northern District setnetters to provide timely fresh salmon to niche markets.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Northern District setnetters, all northern Cook Inlet fishers, and Northern District stocks.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Potentially, the Central District drift fishery.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? This language is simply instructing the department to consider Northern District setnetters having a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon when managing the Central District drift fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Northern District Setnetter's Association (HQ-F13-136)

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PROPOSAL 142 - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Amend management plan to provide Northern Cook Inlet Management Area subsistence users

and personal use dipnetters a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon by restricting commercial gillnet fishing to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof sections of the Upper Subdistrict from June 19 through August 10, as follows:

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. (a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure adequate escapement of salmon into the Northern District drainages and to provide management guidelines to the department. The department shall manage the commercial drift gillnet fishery to minimize the harvest of Northern District and Kenai River coho salmon in order to provide sport and guided sport fishermen a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon stocks over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions, **and to provide Northern Cook Inlet Management Area subsistence users and personal use dipnetters a reasonable opportunity to harvest the salmon resource.** The department shall manage the Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery as follows:
From June 19–August 10 all drift fishing will be restricted to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict.

Although the stated purpose of the management plan is to ensure adequate escapement of Northern District salmon and provide a reasonable opportunity for harvest by northern users, as currently configured, and managed by the Department of Fish and Game, during many years it accomplishes neither objective. This is especially obvious when various Northern District salmon escapement goals are missed on an annual basis, and when one user group (Northern Management Area dipnetters) is not allowed a single day of harvest opportunity on some years. Therefore, reasonable harvest opportunity for Northern dipnetters should be identified within the plan, and the area where commercial driftnet fishing is allowed should be adjusted to accomplish the stated purpose of the plan.

If a salmon management escapement issue should arise, the department could still adjust regulations using the commissioner's emergency order authority. However, stipulations need to be in place so department actions do not jeopardize meeting minimum escapement levels for any northern salmon stock, or totally eliminate all salmon harvest opportunity for Northern Management Area dipnetters.

ISSUE: Lack of dipnetting opportunity in waters of the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area. During the 2012 season even though there was a Cook Inlet return of over five million sockeye salmon, the Fish Creek dip net fishery did not open for even one day, because of low Fish Creek sockeye salmon escapement. In addition, subsistence fishermen in the Yentna River fishery had difficulty catching adequate numbers of subsistence salmon. Not only was there insufficient fish to provide a reasonable harvest opportunity for each of these user groups, but even minimum sockeye salmon escapement goal numbers were not attained through the Fish Creek Weir and the Judd Lake Weir. In addition, ADF&G also failed to attain adequate coho salmon escapement numbers at Little Susitna River (for the fourth consecutive year) and at Jim Creek (for third consecutive year), and both coho salmon sport fishing opportunities and the Northern District commercial setnet fishery were closed inseason by emergency order.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Management by the Department of Fish and Game, that prioritizes excessive salmon harvest in the Central District drift fishery above

reaching department-established and board approved Sustainable Escapement Goals for northern salmon stocks will continue. The chronic failure to attain adequate northern salmon spawning escapements will continue, and northern user groups will continue to be more severely restricted or more frequently closed for the remainder of the season by emergency order. This is a determent to the salmon resource and long-term determent to the majority of Alaskans who depend on that resource. Northern Dipnetters, in particular, have carried more than their fair share of the conservation burden, especially during years when Northern Dipnetters are prohibited from even a single day or participation, while all other user groups are allowed to harvest salmon.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Even the poorest quality dip net harvested salmon would have some level of quality, while under current regulations, during years with no harvest opportunity, there is zero quality of dip net harvested salmon from northern waters. Smaller daily commercial drift harvests from the Expanded Kenai and Kasilof Sections, on a more frequent basis, should help improve commercial salmon quality, as well.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Northern Management Area dipnetters and subsistence users would be identified in the plan to provide a reasonable salmon harvest opportunity. Anyone who depends upon or harvests Northern District salmon stocks could benefit from management that provides more adequate salmon spawning escapement levels. Northern sport, guided sport, and commercial setnetters would be less likely to see restrictions and closures caused by excessive drift gillnet harvests of salmon bound to Northern District waters.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Drifters would catch less salmon bound for drainages other than those along the Kenai Peninsula, but ADF&G genetic and harvest data documents drifters would still have a reasonable opportunity to harvest a share of harvestable surplus salmon from these stocks in the Expanded Kenai and Kasilof Sections. In addition, all Kenai and Kasilof River sockeye salmon would still have to swim through the large Expanded Kenai or Expanded Kasilof Sections where these fish would be subject to drift gillnet harvest before any significant harvest by all other user groups. Therefore, drifters could still have the most generous salmon harvest opportunity of all Upper Cook Inlet user groups.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

(a) A proposal asking for adjustment of the Fish Creek sockeye salmon personal use fishery is also being submitted.
(b) An additional proposal to allow harvest of Yentna River subsistence salmon by dip net will be submitted.

PROPOSED BY: South Central Alaska Dipnetters Association (HQ-F13-157)

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<u>PROPOSAL 143</u> - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Require drift permit holders to register to fish one of the two specific Central District drift fisheries, as follows:

Drift permit holders are required to register to fish in one of two specific Central District fisheries for the duration of a season as follows:

(A) From July 19–August 10 drift permit holders who register to fish on an area-wide basis may fish up to one 12-hour period on Mondays. Additional fishing time is only allowed after July 15 at run strengths larger than 4,600,000 sockeye salmon to Kenai River, and is only allowed in Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict.

(B) From July 19–August 10 permit holders who register to fish within the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kenai Sections of Upper Subdistrict will be restricted to fishing those waters during regular fishing periods. All additional fishing time is only allowed within the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof sections.

ISSUE: A summary of the plan's purpose is to: ensure adequate salmon escapement into Northern District drainages, and to minimize harvest of Northern District and Kenai River Coho to provide a reasonable harvest opportunity for sport and guide sport fishers, see point (a). During years of average or large sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River and this plan accomplishes neither purpose as evidenced by the Susitna River sockeye salmon stock of concern designation since 2008 (with no improvement) and possible pending stock of concern designations for Little Susitna River Coho salmon and Jim Creek Coho salmon. Under inadequate conservation provisions provided under this plan the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) has failed to attain the Little Susitna River Coho salmon escapement goal four consecutive years. Severe restriction and early closure of the Little Susitna River Coho salmon sport fishery occurred in 2011. Even more severe restriction and closure of the sport fishery followed in 2012, along with restriction of the Central District drift fishery and early closure of the Northern District setnet fishery. The Little Susitna River Coho goal was still not attained. Alaska Department of Fish and Game has failed to attain the Jim Creek Coho salmon goal for three consecutive years despite early closures of the sport fishery in both 2011 and 2012 along with restriction to the drift fishery, and early closure of the Northern District setnet fishery in 2012.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Stock of concern Susitna River Sockeye will likely not improve. Other Northern sockeye stocks (Fish Creek, Little Susitna River, Jim Creek) may continue to see sporadic attainment of an escapement goal or overall declines in escapement levels. Sixty-six percent of all Upper Cook Inlet Coho salmon stocks with established escapement goals could shortly be designated stocks of concern. Both commercial and sport users in Northern Cook Inlet waters and drainages will continue to shoulder an unreasonable amount of the conservation burden. The Northern District's only personal use fishery will likely never open during many years. While Northern subsistence users will be allowed to continue fishing, even subsistence harvests will be sub-par and/or require additional fishing time or opportunities to catch the same amount of depleted resource.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, product quality should improve if the board were to adopt this proposal. While individual commercial catches in the Expanded Kenai and Kasilof catches may be smaller on a daily basis, this allows the crew more time to better care for the

catch, and reduces fish crushing by large catches. Smaller more consistent catches over an increased number of days also provides a steadier workload for fish processors, and avoids infrequent large slugs of fish that cause processing delays and loss of freshness.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users would benefit from more consistent attainment of Northern salmon spawning escapement goals and subsequent improved product from Northern district salmon stocks. As identified in the plan's purpose statement, sport and guided sport fishermen would benefit from a more reasonable opportunity to harvest Northern and Kenai River Coho salmon over the entire run with less frequent inseason restrictions. Northern District setnetters would likely have more reasonable commercial catches. Northern Cook Inlet personal use fishers would have a higher likelihood of having at least some harvest opportunity, rather than being closed the entire season. Northern Cook Inlet subsistence harvesters could likely catch traditional salmon numbers, with less need for additional fishing time or opportunity.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Drift permit holders would experience changes in their fishing pattern and lower catches of Northern bound salmon stocks (as purposed by the present plan) to provide for conservation and for more reasonable harvest opportunity of other users.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? (a) A Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan that allowed more drift gillnetting beyond the Expanded Kenai and Kasilof Sections was considered. Rejected, because the proposed change better ensures the likelihood of achieving the plan's stated purposes. Using the best available science, ADF&G's past history of managing the fishery, it is apparent that allowing more than one day per week of drift gillnetting on an area wide basis (or even with the plan's current restrictions) results in consecutive years of missed salmon escapements for Northern salmon stocks, and the stock of concern crisis situations currently before the board. The proposed option should also allow for a more steady pulse of salmon to migrate North through the duration of the season. Such a change would benefit ADF&G managers with more accurate run projections, and better distributed spawning of all stocks, some of which arrive at different time periods during the season.

(b) A plan that restricted all drift gillnetting to the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections would have a higher likelihood of annually passing adequate salmon numbers North for both conservation and reasonable fishing opportunities. Such a plan would more closely mirror successful management in the Bristol Bay fishery which has greatly reduced conservation problems mixed stock fishery issues. The proposed option would allow a less drastic change of the drift fishing pattern, while still ensuring an improved likelihood of attaining the plan's stated purpose.

(c) Drift permit holders and setnet permit holders may have other ideas of how to fish time within the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections that may be agreeable.

PROPOSED BY: Tony Russ (HQ-F13-047)

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<u>PROPOSAL 144</u> - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Amend management plan to provide reasonable subsistence, personal use, and commercial

setnetting harvest opportunity and manage the drift gillnet fishery so that any commercial drift fishing opportunity outside the Expanded Kenai and Expand Kasliof sections is based on abundance of Northern District sockeye and coho salmon, as follows:

(a) the purpose of this management plan is to ensure adequate escapement of salmon into Northern District **and West Cook Inlet** drainages and to provide management guidelines to the department. The department shall manage the commercial drift gillnet fishery to minimize the harvest of **Upper Cook Inlet** [NORTHERN DISTRICT AND KENAI RIVER] Coho salmon in order to provide sport and guided sport fishermen a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon stocks over the entire run, as measured by frequency of inriver restrictions, **and provide reasonable subsistence, personal use, and commercial set netting harvest opportunity during the months of July and August.** The department shall manage the Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery as follows:

(2) **the fishing season will open the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later, and the department shall manage drift gillnetting beyond the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict based on the abundance of Northern District sockeye and Coho salmon counted through the weirs on Fish Creek, Little Susitna River, Larson, Chelatna, and Judd Lakes, or other Northern District and West Cook Inlet salmon abundance indices as the department deems appropriate**, and

(iii) **at runs strengths greater than 4,600,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing time outside the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections will be based on projection to achieve midpoints of at least four of the six Northern District escapement goals specified in point (2).** [THERE WILL BE NO MANDATORY RESTRICTIONS DURING REGULAR FISHING PERIODS.]

ISSUE: The Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan's salmon harvest options cause failures in attaining Northern District salmon escapement goals, and greatly contribute to the number of inseason restrictions and closures placed on Northern District user groups, who therefore, must shoulder a growing and unreasonable share of the conservation burden caused by excessive drift gillnet fishing in areas far beyond the Kasilof and Kenai Rivers.

The plan should restrict or prohibit vast-area drift gillnet openings in Upper Cook Inlet, where other salmon stocks and user groups' reasonable harvest opportunities can be severely impacted by excessive drift gillnetting.

The plan should focus drift gillnetting (based on harvesting abundant surplus Kasilof and Kenai River sockeye salmon) closer to the rivers where those stocks are destined. Such a harvest pattern would more closely follow classic management of a mixed-stock salmon fishery. It would be consistent with the mixed-stock harvest strategy employed in Bristol Bay, that maximizes harvest of robust salmon stocks in discrete areas, thereby, maintaining adequate abundance and yields of smaller salmon stocks, which then provide reasonable harvest opportunities for user groups more dependent upon them.

As currently configured, harvest options within the plan that allow drift gillnetting in the middle of Cook Inlet, are mostly based on abundance levels of Kenai and Kasilof River sockeye salmon.

To ensure adequate escapement of salmon into Northern District drainages, and to provide sport and guided sport fishermen a reasonable opportunity to harvest Northern District and Kenai River coho salmon over their entire run, as written in the plan's mission statement: this plan must base fishing by the drift fleet (at least beyond the Expanded Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Sub district) on the abundance levels of Northern District bound salmon stocks with consideration toward the likelihood of achieving midpoints of Northern salmon escapement goals. In addition to meeting escapement goal minimums, the plan must allow a sufficient number of northern bound salmon to reach northern waters, so other user groups may have a reasonable harvest opportunity.

Therefore, passing enough northern bound salmon to ensure meeting midpoints of established northern escapement goals would go a long way towards providing northern users a more reasonable harvest opportunity.

Since the Upper Cook Inlet drift fleet is highly mobile, with permit holders allowed to fish larger nets, provided ample amounts of fishing time during most seasons, and first in-line to harvest salmon surpluses with a demonstrated ability (2012) to harvest most or all available salmon surpluses, the drift gillnet Plan must ensure adequate salmon escapements and reasonable harvest opportunity for all other user groups, with northern subsistence, commercial and personal use fishermen, and west Cook Inlet and Eastside setnetters and sport users all provided reasonable harvest opportunity.

For all the reasons listed above, and from a management perspective, the Drift Gillnet fishery may be best utilized to selectively (rather than indiscriminately) harvest a reasonable portion of Upper Cook Inlet's harvestable salmon surpluses.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Documented Northern salmon escapement failures (at stock of concern level) will continue and may worsen. Most Alaskans and nonresidents who harvest northern and western Cook Inlet salmon stocks may continue to lose reasonable harvest opportunity, and be saddled with a growing share of the conservation burden for these stocks.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All Cook Inlet user groups who harvest salmon bound for Northern District and West Cook Inlet waters could see improved salmon spawning escapement levels on a more regular basis and, therefore, likely higher production levels from some of these stocks, which currently have ADF&G documented chronically low escapement levels. All harvesters of these stocks other than drift gillnetters would likely see a more reasonable harvest opportunity, as currently defined in the plan, with less likelihood of inseason restriction or closure.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? The point of this proposal is to ensure adequate salmon escapements into Northern District and West Cook Inlet waters, and to allow all user groups a

reasonable salmon harvest opportunity, therefore, the drift fishery harvest of Northern District and West Cook Inlet salmon stocks should decrease if this proposal is adopted.

Whereas, drift gillnetters would maintain their first primary opportunity to harvest all salmon stocks migrating through the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections, and whereas, drift gillnetters are more mobile, allowed to fish larger areas with larger nets, and whereas, drift gillnetters may sometimes be better used to selectively harvest more abundant Kenai and Kasilof River sockeye salmon than other commercial users, and whereas, drift gillnetters may likely be allowed additional fishing time in the Expanded Kenai and Expanded Kasilof Sections to more discretely harvest abundant Kenai and Kasilof River sockeye salmon stocks, and whereas, drift gillnetters would likely continue to harvest the largest share of Upper Cook Inlet salmon, in comparison to harvest by any other Upper Cook Inlet user group,

Therefore, if adopted this proposal would maintain drift gillnet salmon harvest at a more than reasonably high level.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED: A companion proposal was written to manage Northern District commercial fisheries partially based on sockeye salmon abundance counted through Fish Creek weir and Coho salmon abundance counted through Little Susitna River and Fish Creek weirs.

It is appropriate to manage harvest of Northern District salmon stocks based on salmon abundance counted through Fish Creek and Little Susitna River weirs, since these weirs provide the most timely sockeye and coho salmon escapement assessment for Northern District stocks with established escapement goals. This earliest-obtained escapement data provides the Department maximum abundance-based flexibility for managing late-run Northern District sockeye and early-run Upper Cook Inlet coho salmon stocks migrating through Upper Cook Inlet waters.

Alaska Outdoor Council believes in management utilizing the best available science, and supports use of the Little Susitna River coho salmon goal and Fish Creek coho salmon goal in precautionary department management decisions for early-run coho salmon stocks throughout Upper Cook Inlet, or until the department develops more appropriate coho salmon escapement goals for additional coho stocks / management units.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Outdoor Council (HQ-F13-310)

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PROPOSAL 145 - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Amend management plan to add a section about mixed-stock salmon management, using the long-term commercial harvest report as a tool to reduce harvest of salmon stocks by the drift gillnet fishery in the Central District, as follows:

Develop a new paragraph: adding a section on mixed stock management using the long term commercial harvest report, as a tool to reduce the over harvest of mixed stock in the Central District by the drift fleet until after the 28 of July. After that point most of the Northern District

salmon stocks have moved through the Central District. This report can be found at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game web site (www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/SP13-03.pdf. This report contains the annual Cook Inlet salmon harvest from 1954 to 2011 by fishery identification numbers. The data would provide valuable information to manage mixed stock fishery. Some of the current "mixed stocks" harvested are more than 50% below the long term average (58 years). Escapement goals are extremely limited in the Central and Northern District of Cook Inlet for cohos, chums, and pinks; with only three cohos goals in upper Cook Inlet. Current management strategies provide extremely limited inseason protections for mixed stock fishery.

ISSUE: Cook Inlet Central District commercial fishery is executed extensively on mixed stocks that pass through the Central District. There is not sufficient escapement goals and/or inseason indicators to provide for the current year returns forecast for all salmon species. The only avenue open to the department is to average the previous five years commercial harvest. This can, and does, lead to unchecked over harvest of weak stocks moving through the Central District.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? At this time, the Northern District has seven of the eleven stocks of concerns in the Susitna River system with six other streams on the verge of the stock of concern status. There needs to be extensive studies completed to determine the size of the returns of the remaining species returning to the Northern District. There is not enough data to establish coho, chum and pink escapement goals in the Susitna River systems or in Turnagan Arm tributaries of the Northern District. There are escapement goals for coho salmon on the Little Susitna River and two streams in the Kick Arm. These escapement goals do not provide for inseason management of the mixed stock commercial fishery in the Susitna River drainage and other Northern District streams.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Alaskans will be assured that all five species of salmon are sustainable, and that the returns will be strong enough to allow harvest of their personal salmon needs.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? There may be some reduction of commercial harvest and sports harvest while stocks are returned to a healthy status.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Extensive studies are still needed to determine genetics and return data. This still needs to completed over the next four or five years to determine home water of each species that require escapement goals. Something must be done now to ensure the long term viability of these salmon stocks while these studies are conducted.

PROPOSED BY: Joseph Wright (HQ-F13-206)

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<u>PROPOSAL 146</u> - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Develop an inseason harvest estimate, as follows:

Develop an inseason harvest estimate based on the data from the annual Forecast and Harvest report. This report can be found at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game web site (www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/SP13-03.pdf This report contains the annual Cook Inlet salmon harvest from 1954 to 2011 by fishery identification numbers. The data would provide valuable information to manage mixed stock fishery. Some of the current mixed stocks harvests are 50% or more below the long term average. Escapement goals are very limited in the Central and Northern District of Cook Inlet for cohos, chums, and pinks; with only three cohos goals in upper Cook Inlet. Current management strategies provide extremely limited inseason protections for mixed stock fishery.

ISSUE: Cook Inlet Central District commercial fishery is executed extensively on mixed stocks that pass through the Central District. There is not sufficient escapement goals and/or inseason indicators to provide for the current year returns forecast for all salmon species. The only avenue open to the department is to average the previous five years commercial harvest. This can, and does, lead to unchecked over harvest of weak stocks moving through the Central District.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? At this time, the Northern District has seven of the eleven stocks of concerns in the Susitna River system with six other streams on the verge of the stock of concern status. There needs to be extensive studies completed to determine the size of the returns of the remaining species returning to the Northern District. There is not enough data to establish coho, chum and pink escapement goals in the Susitna River systems or in Turnagan Arm tributaries of the Northern District. There are escapement goals for coho salmon on the Little Susitna River and two streams in the Kick Arm. These escapement goals do not provide for inseason management of the mixed stock commercial fishery in the Susitna River drainage and other Northern District streams.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Alaskans will be assured that all five species of salmon are sustainable, and that the returns will be strong enough to allow harvest of their personal salmon needs.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? There may be some reduction of commercial harvest and continue sports harvest while stocks are returned to a healthy status.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Extensive studies are needed to determine genetics and return data, needs to complete over the next four or five years to determine home water of each species that require escapement goals.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce Knowles (HQ-F13-137)

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PROPOSAL 147 - 5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan. Amend management plan to reduce sport fish bag limit to two coho salmon in all sport fisheries on the west side of Cook Inlet and restrict drift gillnet fishing to the Expanded Kenai and

Expanded Kasilof sections, if sport fishing for coho salmon is restricted or closed in the Little Susitna River, as follows:

5 AAC 21.353. Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan.

(a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure adequate escapement of salmon into the Northern District drainages and to provide management guidelines to the department. The department shall manage the commercial drift gillnet fishery to minimize the harvest of [NORTHERN DISTRICT AND KENAI RIVER] coho salmon in order to provide sport and guided sport fishermen a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon stocks over the entire run, as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions. The department shall manage the Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery as follows:

(E) if coho salmon sport fishing is restricted or closed in the Little Susitna River then:

(i) All West Side of Cook Inlet sport fisheries shall have a reduced coho bag limit of two fish.

(ii) Drift gillnet fishing shall close in all areas outside the expanded Kenai and Kasilof sections for remainder of the season.

ISSUE: Many of the most important coho salmon sport fisheries in Upper Cook Inlet occur on the West Side of Cook Inlet in a portion of the Northern Cook Inlet Management area. These should be recognized for management purposes in the drift fishery management plan.

Due to the recent low abundance of Upper Cook Inlet coho salmon stocks, it is reasonable to believe west side Cook Inlet coho stocks may be being over-exploited as in other areas of Upper Cook Inlet. Without adequate data for west side Cook Inlet coho stocks, these runs should be managed more conservatively during times of documented low coho abundance elsewhere in Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? West side coho salmon stock may be over exploited in times of low abundance. If trend continues, this may lead to a long term reduction in coho salmon production from lack of adequate spawning escapements.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No. Product quality would not change.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users could benefit from sustained yield from west side Cook Inlet coho stocks.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? West Side coho anglers could have a reduced coho bag limit for likely half of their season, resulting in a possible 16% seasonal reduction in their overall harvest. A small number of drift gillnet fisherman that target these west Side Cook Inlet coho stocks in August.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? It would be preferable to use a coho salmon escapement goal from the west side of Cook Inlet for inseason management. The Little Susitna

has an established coho salmon escapement goal with in season management ability, therefore it provides the best available option to monitor west side Cook Inlet coho stocks.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Glassmaker (HQ-F13-226)
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PROPOSAL 148 - 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to include a biological escapement goal (BEG) of 160,000–340,000 sockeye salmon and clarify intent of provision regarding meeting lower end of optimum escapement goal (OEG) over exceeding upper end of OEG, as follows:

(b) [The Kasilof River sockeye salmon biological escapement goal (BEG) range is 160,000–340,000.] Achieving the lower…
sockeye salmon (Add) , **if necessary.**

ISSUE: The Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement goal has a biological escapement goal (BEG) range of 160,000–340,000 salmon.

The 160,000–390,000 optimal escapement goal (OEG) encompasses the BEG. The OEG range was put in with an additional 50,000 fish with the board intent to achieve the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye escapement goal, if necessary: partially described in provision (b).

However, the board's intent and record clearly affirms the board directive that the department shall manage to the BEG range. The upper OEG placed in order to achieve the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement goal, if necessary.

In actual fact, this proposal is a housekeeping proposal. The Department of Fish and Game received information of the record and acknowledged management relative to the BEG was the board intent but not described in 5 AAC 21.365; therefore, confusion over management use of the OEG resulted.

Secondly, The board intent in 2002 and change occurred when the Kasilof River sockeye salmon biological escapement goal (BEG) range was 150,000–250,000. The OEG was 300,000. The BEG goal became 160,000–340,000 that added 90,000 fish to the former BEG in 2011. 50,000 fish on top of the upper BEG range then added has 140,000 sockeye above the former upper range goal under the OEG range which raises the concern further over the OEG currently placed in regulation.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The biological escapement goal (BEG) range will not be managed for nor described in Kasilof River Sockeye Management Plan. However, the BEG is described in Commercial Fisheries Kasilof River sockeye forecast. Confusion and conflict in regulations will continue and arbitrary use of the OEG occurrences on forecasted Kenai River late-run sockeye returns of over 2.3 million. Management and distribution of sockeye salmon within the BEG range can be ignored. The OEG's intent was biological in nature to achieve the lower end of the Kenai River sockeye salmon escapement.

Instead, allocation consequences, and unnecessary conflict development will continue. Departmental decisions inseason over Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement levels by

management with allocation consequences. Misinformation provided to the public-at-large will continue.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Managing to the correct goal improves planning.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? None.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? N/A.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (HQ-F13-240)

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PROPOSAL 149 - 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan. Direct the department to manage late-run Kasilof River sockeye salmon to achieve a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 160,000–340,000; remove the optimum escapement goal (OEG) of 160,000–390,000; and remove some provisions in the management plan, as follows:

5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

(a) This management plan governs the harvest of Kasilof River salmon excess to spawning escapement needs. It is the intent of the Board of Fisheries that Kasilof River salmon be harvested in the fisheries that have historically harvested them, including the methods, means, times, and locations of those fisheries. **(The primary purpose of this plan are to;)** [OPENING IN THE AREAS HISTORICALLY FISHED MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH ESCAPEMENT OBJECTIVES FOR UPPER COOK INLET SALMON AND WITH THE UPPER COOK INLET SALMON MANAGEMENT PLAN (5 AAC 21.363]

(b) Achieve the [LOWER END OF THE KENAI RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON ESCAPEMENT GOAL SHALL TAKE PRIORITY OVER NOT EXCEEDING THE UPPER END OF THE] Kasilof River[OPTIMAL] escapement goal range of 160,000 to (**340,000)** sockeye salmon.

(c) The commercial set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section shall be managed as follows:

(1) Fishing will be opened as described in 5 AAC 21.310(b)**(2)** for regular weekly fishing periods, as specified in 5 AAC 21.320;

(2) From the beginning of fishing through July 7,

[(A) THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, OPEN ADDITIONAL FISHING PERIODS OR EXTEND REGULAR WEEKLY FISHING PERIODS TO A MAXIMUM OF 48 HOURS OF ADDITIONAL FISHING TIME PER WEEK;

(B) THE FISHERY SHALL REMAIN CLOSED FOR AT LEAST ONE CONTINUOUS 36-HOUR PERIOD PER WEEK TO BEGIN BETWEEN 7:00 PM THURSDAY AND 7:00 A.M. FRIDAY;]

(3) beginning July 8, the set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section will be managed as specified in 5 AAC 21.360; in addition to the provisions of 5AAC 21.360, the commissioner may, by emergency order, limit fishing during the regular weekly periods and any extra fishing

periods to those waters within one-half mile of shore, if the set gillnet fishery in the Kenai and East Forelands Sections are not open for the fishing period; if the commissioner determines that further restrictions are necessary to aid in achieving the lower end of the Kenai River escapement goal, the commissioner may, in an emergency order under this paragraph further restrict fishing to within 600 feet of the high tide mark in the Kasilof Section;

[(4) AFTER JULY 8, IF THE KASILOF SECTION SET GILLNET FISHERY IS RESTRICTED TO FISHING WITHIN THE FIRST ONE-HALF MILE OF SHORE, THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, OPEN THE KRSHA DESCRIBED IN

(F) OF THIS SECTION TO BOTH SET AND DRIFT GILLNET FISHING USING ONLY ONE GILLNET, FOR FISHING PERIODS NOT TO EXCEED 48 HOURS IN DURATION WITHOUT ONE PERIOD OF 24 CONSECUTIVE HOURS OF CLOSURE; THE PROVISIONS IN (F)(1) – (8) OF THIS SECTION APPLY DURING THESE OPENINGS;

(5) AFTER JULY 15, IF THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT THE KENAI RIVER LATE-RUN SOCKEYE SALMON RUN STRENGTH IS PROJECTED TO BE LESS THAN 2,300,000 FISH AND THE 390,000 OPTIMAL ESCAPEMENT GOAL FOR THE KASILOF RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON MAY BE EXCEEDED, THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, OPEN FISHING FOR AN ADDITIONAL 24 HOURS PER WEEK IN THE KASILOF SECTION WITHIN ONE-HALF MILE OF SHORE AND AS SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 21.360(C).].

(d) The personal use fishery will be managed as specified in 5 AAC 77.540(b) and (c).

(e) Repealed 6/4/2008.

(f) The commissioner may, by emergency order, open the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area (KRSHA) to the taking of salmon by gillnets when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed [365,000] (**340,000)** fish. It is the intent of the Board of Fisheries (board) that the KRSHA should rarely, if ever, be opened under this subsection and only for conservation reasons (**if the Kenai sockeye or king salmon goal is in jeopardy**) [BEFORE THE COMMISSIONER OPENS THE KRSHA, IT IS THE BOARD'S INTENT THAT ADDITIONAL FISHING TIME BE ALLOWED IN THE REMAINDER OF THE KASILOF SECTION FIRST, AND SECONDLY THAT THE MANADATORY CLOSURES SPECIFIED IN REGULATION BE REDUCED IN DURATION, IF NECESSARY TO MEET THE ESCAPEMENT GOALS CONTAINED WITHIN THIS AND OTHER MANAGEMENT PLANS]. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River, excluding waters of the Kasilof River upstream of ADF&G regulatory markers located near the terminus of the river and waters open to set gillnetting under 5 AAC 21.330(b)(3)(C)(ii) and (iii). The following apply within the special harvest area when it is open:

(1) set gillnets may be operated only within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark;

(2)a set gillnet may not exceed 35 fathoms in length;

(3) drift gillnets may not be operated in waters within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark;

(4) no more than 50 fathoms of drift gillnet may be used to take salmon;

(5) a permit holder may not use more than one gillnet to take salmon at any time;

(6) a person may not operate a gillnet outside the special harvest area when operating a gillnet in the special harvest area;

(7) there is no minimum distance between gear, except that a gillnet may not be set or operated within 600 feet of a set gillnet located outside of the special harvest area; and

(8) a vessel may not have more than 150 fathoms of drift gillnet or 105 fathoms of set gillnet on board.

[(g) THE COMMISSIONER MAY DEPART FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN UNDER THIS SECTION AS PROVIDED IN 5 AAC 21.363(E).

(h) FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "WEEK" MEANS A CALENDAR WEEK, A PERIOD OF SEVEN CONSECUTIVE DAYS BEGINNING AT 12:01 A.M. SUNDAY AND ENDING AT 12:00 MIDNIGHT THE FOLLOWING SATURDAY.]

ISSUE: The board over the last several cycles has placed many onerous, arbitrary and unnecessary restrictions for the commercial fishery into this management plan in order to create a stable and predictable inriver fishery. Evidently no one ever told KRSA that salmon are anything but stable and predictable, especially when they are not managed for escapement goals. It is time to end this Hollywood inspired management regime and return to the basics of managing for MSY as the law requires. The current BEG is 160,000 to 340,000 and the conflicting OEG should be eliminated. In no other area of the state are restrictions put in regulation that restricts a fishery without a need for conservation. Exceeding MSY biological escapement goal to make another fishery more successful without even considering biological consequences is unacceptable and illegal. This proposal also removes language that is not used or is unnecessary.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The sockeye, coho, and king runs will continue to cycle between a few big returns and many more poor returns, which did not occur before the board began this Disney management program for KRSA. We will continue to see a 2 week long Board meeting every three years with many emergency meetings in between all because we are not managing for a biological goal (MSY) whether SEG or BEG.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Mark Ducker (HQ-F13-052)

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<u>PROPOSAL 150</u> - 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan. Modify management, including changing effective dates and reference for Kasilof River sockeye salmon from optimal escapement goal (OEG) to biological escapement goal (BEG), as follows:

[(b) DELETE]

(c) (2)[7] 15 [(A) DELETE (B) DELETE]

(c) (3) [BEGINNING]….after….. [8] 16 [THE SET GILLNET FISHERY IN THE KASILOF SECTION WILL BE MANAGED AS SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 21.360 (c); IN ADDITION TO THE PROVISIONS OF 5 AAC 21.360 (c)]

(4) [300,000] 250,000 [OPTIMAL] Biological…..[24-]…[AND AS SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 21.360 (c)]

[(f)(1)(2)(3)(4)(5)(6)(7)(8) DELETE]

ISSUE: Inoperable plan.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? New and expanding fishery will continue. Historical fisheries will be decimated. Poor maximized utilization of fishery. Poor quality. Disorderly fishery. Violation of SSF policies.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Commercial Fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No other solutions.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen (HQ-F13-158)

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PROPOSAL 151 - 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan. Modify management plan after July 15 such that the trigger point for Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon run strength is changed from 2,300,000 to 2,000,000 and the 24-hour restriction on additional fishing time is removed, as follows:

5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

(a) This management plan governs the harvest of Kasilof River salmon excess to spawning escapement needs. It is the intent of the Board of Fisheries that Kasilof River salmon be harvested in the fisheries that have historically harvested them, including the methods, means, times, and locations of those fisheries. Openings in the areas historically fished must be consistent with escapement objectives for upper Cook Inlet salmon and with the Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 21.363).

[(b) ACHIEVING THE LOWER END OF THE KENAI RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON ESCAPEMENT GOAL SHALL TAKE PRIORITY OVER NOT EXCEEDING THE UPPER END OF THE KASILOF RIVER OPTIMAL ESCAPEMENT GOAL OF 160,000 TO 390,00 SOCKEYE SALMON.]

(c) THE COMMERCIAL SET GILLNET FISHERY IN THE KASILOF SECTION SHALL BE MANAGED AS FOLLOWS:

(1) FISHING WILL BE OPENED AS DESCRIBED IN 5 AAC 21.310(B)(2) FOR REGULAR WEEKLY FISHING PERIODS, AS SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 21.320;

(2) FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE FISHING SEASON THROUGH JULY 7,

(A) THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, OPEN ADDITIONAL FISHING PERIODS OR EXTEND REGULAR WEEKLY FISHING PERIODS [TO A MAXIMUM OF 48 HOURS OF ADDITIONAL FISHING TIME PER WEEK;

(B) THE FISHERY SHALL REMAIN CLOSED FOR AT LEAST ONE CONTINUOUS 36-HOUR PERIOD PER WEEK TO BEGIN BETWEEN 7:00 P.M. THURSDAY AND 7:00 A.M. FRIDAY;]

(3) beginning July 8, the set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section will be managed as specified in 5 AAC 21.360(c); in addition to the provisions of 5 AAC 21.360(c), the commissioner may, by emergency order, limit fishing during the regular weekly periods and any extra fishing periods to those waters within one-half mile of shore, if the set gillnet fishery in the Kenai and East Forelands Sections are not open for the fishing period; if the commissioner determines that further restrictions are necessary to aid in achieving the lower end of the Kenai River escapement goal, the commissioner may, in an emergency order under this paragraph further restrict fishing to within 600 feet of the high tide mark in the Kasilof Section;

(4) after July 8, if the Kasilof Section set gillnet fishery is restricted to fishing within the first one-half mile of shore, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open the KRSHA described in (f) of this section to both set and drift gillnet fishing using only one gillnet, for fishing periods not to exceed 48 hours in duration without one period of 24 consecutive hours of closure; the provisions in (f)(1) - (8) of this section apply during these openings;

(5) after July 15, if the department determines that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon run strength is projected to be less than [2,300,000] **2,000,000** fish and the 390,000 optimal escapement goal for the Kasilof River sockeye salmon may be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open fishing for [AN] additional [24] hours per week in the Kasilof Section within one-half mile of shore and as specified in 5 AAC 21.360(c).

(d) The personal use fishery will be managed as specified in 5 AAC 77.540(b) and (c).

(e) repealed 6/4/2008.

(f) The commissioner may, by emergency order, open the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area (KRSHA) to the taking of salmon by gillnets when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 365,000 fish. It is the intent of the Board of Fisheries (board) that the KRSHA should rarely, if ever, be opened under this subsection and only for conservation reasons. Before the commissioner opens the KRSHA, it is the board's intent that additional fishing time be allowed in the remainder of the Kasilof Section first, and secondly that the mandatory closures specified in regulation be reduced in duration, if necessary to meet the escapement goals contained within this and other management plans. The Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is defined as those waters within one and one-half miles of the navigational light located on the south bank of the Kasilof River, excluding waters of the Kasilof River upstream of ADF&G regulatory markers located near the terminus of the river and waters open to set gillnetting under 5 AAC 21.330(b)(3)(C)(ii) and (iii). The following apply within the special harvest area when it is open:

(1) set gillnets may be operated only within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark;

(2) a set gillnet may not exceed 35 fathoms in length; (3) drift gillnets may not be operated in waters within 600 feet of the mean high tide mark;

(4) no more than 50 fathoms of drift gillnet may be used to take salmon; (5) a permit holder may not use more than one gillnet to take salmon at any one time;
(6) a person may not operate a gillnet outside the special harvest area when operating a gillnet in the special harvest area;
(7) there is no minimum distance between gear, except that a gillnet may not be set or operated within 600 feet of a set gillnet located outside of the special harvest area; and
[(8) A VESSEL MAY NOT HAVE MORE THAN 150 FATHOMS OF DRIFT GILLNET OR 105 FATHOMS OF SET GILLNET ON BOARD.]
(g) The commissioner may depart from the provisions of the management plan under this section as provided in 5 AAC 21.363(e).
(h) For the purposes of this section, "week" means a calendar week, a period of seven consecutive days beginning at 12:01 a.m. Sunday and ending at 12:00 midnight the following Saturday.

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to set the same, less than 2,000,000 fish, in both management plans. Coordinate Kasilof and Kenai late-run sockeye plans (5 AAC 21.360 and 5 AAC 21.365).

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Two different goals will be in effect.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Allows for an orderly fishery, removes unnecessary regulations and allows for adaptive fishery management.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Commercial fishermen.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Removing the entire section directs ADF&G to achieve escapement goals and apply adaptive management strategies by the use of emergency orders.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-099)
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PROPOSAL 152 - 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to allow department to manage Kasilof River sockeye salmon primarily for commercial uses based on abundance and meet a spawning escapement goal of 150,000–250,000 sockeye salmon, as follows:

5 AAC 21.365 Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan.

(a) **The department shall manage the Kasilof River sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses based on abundance.**

(b) **Meet a spawning escapement goal range of 150,000 to 250,000 sockeye salmon.**

ISSUE: Simplify the Kasilof River Salmon Management plan to allow the local management biologist to manage for the spawning escapement goals. The current plan doesn't work and grossly over-escapes the Kasilof basically every year, whether the run is large or small. Great economic harm is inflicted to the users. A large part of the harvestable surplus is wasted.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The Kasilof will continue to over-escape. Harvestable surpluses will be lost. Economic harm will continue.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? This allows harvest to be spread more evenly over the entire run. Harvest will be on fresher salmon further away from the river and contain a higher oil content.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users, the resource, the managers, the local economies by harvesting the surplus and maintaining future high returns from managing biologically for maximum sustained yield.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one. The resource is healthy and not being fully utilized.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None. No other solution will solve the problems.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-345)
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PROPOSAL 153 - 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to allow set gillnets to be operated and restrict drift gillnets within 1,200 feet of the mean high tide mark in Kasilof River Special Harvest Area, as follows:

(f)
(1) a set gillnet may be operated only within 1,200 feet of the mean high tide mark;
(f)
(3) drift gillnets may not be operated in waters within 1,200 feet of the mean high tide mark;

ISSUE: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association opposes the use of the Kasilof Special Harvest Area. However, if opened in a rare event situation, a commercial fishing inequity of area exists in the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area.

Instead of within the 600 feet of the mean high tide mark, it should be at least within 1,200 feet of the mean high tide mark. In addition, the numbers of stakes have increased in the terminal area and created less of an area to operate gear, along with an increased risk for equipment damage and gear loss.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Set gillnet area is only 6.6% within the Terminal Harvest Area. Drift gillnet area 93.4%. On low tides set gillnets go dry in knee deep

mud and nearly impossible to pick, set, or retrieve a net. Drift gear allowed 50 fathoms and set 35 fathoms. A 25% gear difference advantage along with the available area to operate. Historical harvest allocation of set gillnet within the Kasilof Section reallocated to drift fleet that normally operates seaward of a mile and half.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Not applicable. Fish harvested in the terminal area have had a reputation for poor quality.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Setnetters who choose to fish in the terminal area (closed waters).

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Drifters who choose to operate boats near shore.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Allocation of surplus harvest away from the traditional fisheries is a serious concern. We oppose any measure that would undermine the traditional fisheries in the Kasilof Section.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (HQ-F13-241)

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PROPOSAL 154 - 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to open the set gillnet fishery in the South K-Beach statistical area (244-10) when the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area is opened, as follows:

New subsection would open the South K-Beach District (244-10), whenever it is necessary to harvest in the Kasilof Terminal area.

ISSUE: Inequitable Fishery.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Management plan will continue to subvert Kasilof historical fishery.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? South K-Beach Fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those fishermen who have not normally targeted historically on the Kasilof run.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No other solutions.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen (SOK-I) (HQ-F13-243)

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PROPOSAL 155 - 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan. Modify management plan to change effective dates and require 36-hour closure periods ("windows") take place after July 1, as follows:

(c)(2) Change 7th to July 18th. (B) Modify the date for the 36 hour restriction to not take place until after July 1st. (3) Modify date to the July 18th (4) Modify date to July 18th (5) Modify date to July 18th.

ISSUE: Inequities in the restriction for allocation and conservation that does not apply until after June 30th.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Loss of harvest opportunity to harvest Kasilof stocks of sockeye.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, this time of year allows fresh market prices for the fishermen and processors.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The fishing community.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Increasing hours allowable to harvest but considered this as not being consistent with run strength.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Association (SOKI) (HQ-F13-263)
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PROPOSAL 156 - 5 AAC 21.365. Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan. Establish an additional 24-hour window in the Kasilof area prior to July 7, limit extra fishing periods in the Kasilof area after July 7 when the Kenai area is closed, and limit use of the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area, as follows:

The solution to both problems is to incorporate precautionary restrictions in the Kasilof Salmon Management Plan designed to avoid excessive harvest of Kasilof late-run kings and also to allow more Kenai late-run sockeye to transit the Kasilof setnet area. These include:

- An additional Tuesday 24-hour window in the Kasilof area prior through July 7.
- Limitations on extra fishing periods in the Kasilof area after July 7 when the Kenai area is closed.
- Limitations on use of the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area.

Corresponding changes in regulatory language include:

(c)(2) from the beginning of the fishing season through July 7,

(A) the commissioner may, by emergency order, open additional fishing periods or extend regular weekly fishing periods to a maximum of 48 hours of additional fishing time per week;

(B) the fishery shall remain closed for at least one continuous 36-hour period per week to begin between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday **and for a 24-hour closure on Tuesday from 12:00 a.m. until 11:59 p.m.**;

(3) beginning July 8, the set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section will be managed as specified in 5 AAC 21.360(c) ; in addition to the provisions of 5 AAC 21.360(c) , the commissioner may, by emergency order, limit fishing during the regular weekly periods and any extra fishing periods to those waters within one-half mile of shore[, IF THE SET GILLNET FISHERY IN THE KENAI AND EAST FORELANDS SECTIONS ARE NOT OPEN FOR THE FISHING PERIOD]; if the commissioner determines that further restrictions are necessary to aid in achieving the lower end of the Kenai River escapement goal, the commissioner may, in an emergency order under this paragraph further restrict fishing to within 600 feet of the high tide mark in the Kasilof Section;

(4) after July 8, if the Kasilof Section set gillnet fishery is restricted to fishing within the first one-half mile of shore, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open the KRSHA described in (f) of this section to both set and drift gillnet fishing using only one gillnet, for fishing periods not to exceed [48] **24** hours in duration without one period of 24 consecutive hours of closure; the provisions in (f)(1) - (8) of this section apply during these openings;

ISSUE: Recent research and genetic analysis of east side setnet harvest has shown that the Kasilof River supports a substantial population of late-run king salmon. Like king populations throughout UCI, the Kasilof run is likely suffering from a period of record low returns. However, run strength is not assessed inriver nor have escapement goals been identified. Current plans do not provide adequate protection for Kasilof late-run kings particularly during years of large Kasilof sockeye returns and prior to July 8 when management of the east side setnet fishery is regulated by the Kenai late-run sockeye management plan. Between June 25 and July 7, the setnet fishery in the Kasilof section is regulated by the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan which does not include adequate protection for kings.

In addition, heavy commercial fishing in the Kasilof section during early July intercepts substantial numbers of Kenai bound king and sockeye salmon. This delays return of significant numbers of sockeye to the Kenai and reduces fishing opportunity for the setnet fishery in the Kenai section. It also offsets king escapement benefits of restrictions of the setnet fishery in the Kenai section.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Kasilof late-run king salmon will continue to be overfished relative to maximum yield and production levels. Kasilof setnet holders will continue to take a disproportionate share of the commercial sockeye harvest.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Not applicable.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone will benefit from sustainable king management. Inriver sport and personal use fisheries in the Kasilof and Kenai rivers will benefit from delivery of additional fish to the river.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Catches of sockeye by the commercial setnet fishery in the Kasilof and Kenai sections will be more evenly distributed at the expense of the Kasilof permit holders.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Limitations on emergency order restrictions were considered but rejected because the additional fishing time is needed to harvest large runs. Emergency Order limitations are less effective for inriver fishery benefits.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-045)

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PROPOSAL 157 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to remove references to Northern District coho, late-run Kenai River king, Kenai River coho salmon stocks; add language that states the department shall manage common property fisheries for a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources; and change plan to manage late-run Kenai River sockeye salmon for a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 750,000–900,000, as follows:

(a) The department shall manage the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses based on abundance. [THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALSO MANAGE THE COMMERCIAL FISHERIES TO MINIMIZE THE HARVEST OF NORTHERN DISTRICT COHO, LATE-RUN KENAI RIVER KING, AND KENAI RIVER COHO SALMON STOCKS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE PERSONAL USE, SPORT, AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERMEN WITH A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO HARVEST SALMON RESOURCES]. Replace this wording with: **The department shall also manage the common property fisheries with a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources.**

(b)

(1) meet the **spawning** [OPTIMUM] escapement goal [OEG] range of **750,000–900,000 sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19.**

(b)

(3) distribute, **as practical,** the escapement of sockeye salmon evenly within the **spawning escapement** [OEG] range, in proportion to the size of the run.

ISSUE: This management plan, after multiple years of use, is simply not working. This plan unduly restricts local managers to the point that it is impossible to manage for escapement goals and inevitably creates over-escapement, loss of the harvestable resource, on both large and small returns. This plan creates economic loss and hardship on the users, communities and biological harm to the resource and future returns.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Continued over-escapement, economic harm, and waste of the harvestable surplus and reduced future salmon returns. Continued conflict between management plans.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. This will improve quality by allowing the managers to manage on a real-time basis. Spreading the harvest out more evenly and further away from the

river for the entire run. This allows for more harvest of bright salmon with a higher oil content which commands a higher demand and price.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users, the resource, the manager, the local economics by harvesting the surplus and maintaining future high returns resulting from managing biologically for maximum sustained yields.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Only those who want to continue conflicting, dysfunctional management plans that are proven to produce future low returns and poorer quality product.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None. Remaining status quo will only continue to waste the harvestable surplus and produce small returns and poorer quality product.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-341)
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PROPOSAL 158 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to remove references to Northern District coho, late-run Kenai River king, Kenai River coho salmon stocks and add language that states the department shall manage common property fisheries for a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources, as follows:

Delete from management plan wording: [THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALSO MANAGE THE COMMERCIAL FISHERIES TO MINIMIZE THE HARVEST OF NORTHERN DISTRICT COHO, AND KENAI RIVER COHO SALMON STOCKS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE PERSONAL USE, SPORT, AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERMEN WITH A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO HARVEST SALMON RESOURCES]. Replace with this wording: **The department shall also manage the common property fisheries with a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources.**

ISSUE: Unnecessary language in the management plans that restricts the flexibility for the managers to manage for real time abundance based management. The commercial harvest of all Northern District coho is less than 8%, and is less than 3% of the Kenai River coho. Waste of the harvestable resource, of various salmon species, are negatively harming the resource and users.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Continued conflict and unnecessary restrictions resulting in un-harvested salmon surpluses.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Salmon will be managed in real time abundance based management that will allow more salmon to be harvested earlier when their oil content and quality are higher.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The resource and all user groups from biological MSY management.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Only those people who continually want more salmon allocated to them at the expense of negatively affecting the resource and other user groups.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-342)

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PROPOSAL 159 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Modify management plan to change optimum escapement goal (OEG), inriver goals, and run-strength trigger points for late-run Kenai River sockeye salmon; and modify restrictions on the sport fishery when run strength is below 2,000,000 sockeye salmon, as follows:

(b) The Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon commercial, sport, and personal use fisheries shall be managed to

(1) meet an optimum escapement goal (OEG) range of [700,000] **750,000**–[1,400,000] **1,050,000** late-run sockeye salmon;

(2) achieve inriver goals as established by the board and measured at the Kenai River sonar counter located at river mile 19; and

(3) distribute the escapement of sockeye salmon evenly within the OEG range, in proportion to the size of the run and brood supply in Skilak and Kenai Lakes.

(c) Based on preseason forecasts and inseason evaluations of the total Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon return during the fishing season, the run will be managed as follows:

(1) at run strengths of less than [2,300,000] **2,000,000** sockeye salmon,

(A) the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of [900,000–1,100,000] **750,000–1,050,000** sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19; and

(B) subject to the provisions of other management plans, the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will fish regular weekly fishing periods, as specified in 5 AAC 21.320, through July 20, unless the department determines that the minimum inriver goal will not be met, at which time the fishery shall be [closed or] restricted as necessary; the commissioner may, by emergency order, allow extra fishing periods of no more than 24-hours per week, [EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN 5 AAC 21.365];

(2) at run strengths of [2,300,000 to 4,600,000] **2,000,000**–**4,000,000** sockeye salmon,

(A) the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of [1,000,000–1,200,000] **850,000–1,050,000** sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19; and

(B) subject to the provisions of other management plans, the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will fish regular weekly fishing periods, as specified in 5 AAC 21.320, through July 20, or until the department makes a determination of run strength, whichever occurs first; if the department determines that the minimum inriver goal will not be met, the fishery shall be [CLOSED OR] restricted as necessary; the commissioner may, by emergency order, allow extra fishing periods of no more than 51-hours per week, except as provided in 5 AAC 21.365;

(C) the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will be closed for one continuous 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for a 24-hour closure on Tuesday from 12:00 a.m. until 11:59 p.m.;

(3) at run strengths greater than [4,600,000] **4,000,000** sockeye salmon,

(A) the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of [1,100,000 –1,350,000] **850,000 – 1,100,000** sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at river mile 19; and

(B) subject to the provisions of other management plans, the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will fish regular weekly fishing periods, as specified in 5 AAC 21.320, through July 20, or until the department makes a determination of run strength, whichever occurs first; if the department determines that the minimum inriver goal will not be met, the fishery shall be [CLOSED OR] restricted as necessary; the commissioner may, by emergency order, allow extra fishing periods of no more than 84-hours per week, except as provided in 5 AAC 21.365;

(C) the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery will be closed for one continuous 36-hour period per week, beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday.

(d) The sonar count levels established this section may be lowered by the board if noncommercial fishing, after consideration of mitigation efforts, results in a net loss of riparian habitat on the Kenai River. The department will, to the extent practicable, conduct habitat assessments on a schedule that conforms to the Board of Fisheries (board) triennial meeting cycle. If the assessments demonstrate a net loss of riparian habitat caused by noncommercial fishermen, the department is requested to report those findings to the board and submit proposals to the board for appropriate modification of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon inriver goal.

(e) Repealed 6/11/2005.

(f) Repealed 6/11/2005.

(g) Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River as specified in 5 AAC 77.540.

(h) Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the optimal escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream, as follows:

(1) fishing [WILL] **may** occur seven days per week, 24 hours per day; and

(2) the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is [THREE] **two** sockeye salmon, unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye salmon exceeds [2,300,000] **2,000,000** fish, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit as the commissioner determines to be appropriate;

(3) **if the department determines that the late-run sockeye return is less than 2,000,000 fish and** if the projected inriver run of sockeye salmon above the Kenai River sonar counter located at river mile 19 is less than [900,000] **800,000** fish and the inriver sport fishery harvest is projected to result in an escapement below the lower end of the optimal escapement goal **of 750,000**, the commissioner [MAY] **shall**, by emergency order, decrease the bag and possession limit, as the commissioner determines to be appropriate, for sockeye salmon in the sport fishery [ABOVE THE KENAI RIVER SONAR COUNTER LOCATED AT RIVER MILE 19];

(i) For the purposes of this section, "week" means a calendar week, a period of time beginning at 12:00:01 a.m. Sunday and ending at 12:00 midnight the following Saturday.

(j) The commissioner may depart from the provisions of the management plan under this section as provided in 5 AAC 21.363(e).

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to realign the OEG and inriver goals at the three tiers for the Kenai River Late-Run sockeyes and provide for some commercial fishing opportunities when the Kenai River Late-Run sockeye return is below 2,000,000.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Commercial fishing industry may not economically survive when the Kenai River Late-Run sockeye return is below two million.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Maintains harvest opportunities for all users. Kenai River Late-Run sockeye available to the leisure time fishermen are as follows:

Run Size	OEG	Inriver Minimum	Sockeyes available to sport fishermen
Less than 2,000,000	750,000–1,050,000	1,050,000–750,000	300,000 [1]
2,000,000–4,000,000	750,000 – 1,050,000	1,050,000–850,000	300,000 [2]
over 4,000,000	750,000–1,050,000	850,000–1,100,000	350,000 [3]

1. 1,050,000 (OEG & Inriver) can be fished down to 750,000 making available 300,000 sockeyes (1,050,000–750,000).
2. 1,050,000 (OEG & Inriver) can be fished down to 750,000 making available 300,000 sockeyes (1,050,000–750,000).
3. 1,100,000 Inriver can be fished down to 750,000 sockeyes making available 350,000 sockeyes (1,100,000–750,000).

Asking the BOF to anchor the sport fishery inriver allocations to the lower boundary of the OEG.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-125)

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PROPOSAL 160 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to establish a single optimum escapement goal (OEG) for late-run sockeye salmon and direct the department to manage for this OEG, as follows:

Revise the Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan and other Management Plans affected, by reestablishment of management for the spawning escapement goal range within a single OEG range, as measured at river-mile 19 (sonar station). To meet and distribute escapements evenly within the spawning escapement goal range within the OEG.

ISSUE: Management of the commercial, sport, and personal use fisheries based on tiers on Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon.

Since 1999, Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon abundance based goals tiers have operated under forecasted returns and changed inseason. Inseason management before July 20 and after July 20 differs, shifts to different tiers and different management provisions. Consequently, the final spawning escapement goal, yields, and resource harvest levels are impacted.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Regardless of annual run strength, the level of escapement is to be maintained in order to achieve the spawning goal objective that produces maximum sustained yields. The distribution on escapements relative to the department's ability to place escapements evenly in the established goal range has been problematic in the current tiers.

Instead, tier management intended as adaptive inseason management on run strengths relative to escapement levels has transitioned over time and no longer practicable in the achievement of meeting and distributing escapements within the biological objectives of the defined SEG goal range.

Directives to the department to manage to within 200,000 fish of inriver OEG goals are nearly impossible objectives and impracticable with 500,000 fish within the SEG range of 700,000–1.2 million. The department's charge is to meet and distribute within the SEG range in order to maintain and sustain yields.

The department's SEG range incorporates escapements between 700,000 – 950,000 which have produced the highest recruitment historically and yet the department's ability to place escapements in that range under the current tiers is limited.

5 AAC 39.222. Policy for the Management of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries clearly outlines the issue: "to ensure management programs and decision-making procedures are to clearly distinguish, and effectively deal with biological and allocation issues." Clearly, balance between biological and allocation won't be "ensured".

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Kenai River sockeye salmon resources; stability in plans promote improvements to quality and products produced.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Clearly defined escapement goals benefit: regulators, fishery managers, stakeholders, and public. Maintaining fishery resources benefits the state, the resource, and resource users.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? N/A.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (HQ-F13-230)

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PROPOSAL 161 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to change the upper end of the three inriver goals (tiers) for Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon to 1,500,000, as follows:

- We propose aligning inriver and escapement goals to avoid continuing confusion.
- Standardize the upper end of the inriver goal for each tier at 1.5 million which is equal to the upper end of the SEG (1.2 million) plus 300,000 sockeye which is the current maximum sport harvest above the sonar.
- The lower end of inriver goals for each tier should be retained as is in order to continue to ensure that escapements are distributed throughout the goal range and large runs are shared among fisheries.

Goal	Run size (millions)	Current		Proposed	
		Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
SEG		700,000	1,200,000	Same	
OEG		700,000	1,400,000	Same	
Inriver [a]	< 2.3	900,000	1,100,000	900,000	**1,500,000[b]**
	2.3 – 4.6	1,000,000	1,200,000	1,000,000	**1,500,000[b]**
	> 4.6	1,100,000	1,350,000	1,100,000	**1,500,000[b]**

[a] *Inriver goals are measured at the sonar counter*
[b] *Proposed change*

ISSUE: Interpretation and application of inriver goals and the optimum escapement goal in the Kenai late-run sockeye salmon management plan continues to be a source of confusion. The current inriver goals are also based on old data which substantially underestimates the numbers of sockeye that are currently harvested in the sport fishery above the sonar.

The plan identifies an OEG of 700,000–1,400,000. This is consistent with the SEG of 700,000–1,200,000 with an allowance at the top end in place since 1999 in recognition that large escapements continue to provide large returns. Inriver goals are designated for three run size tiers in order to distribute escapements throughout the range and share the bounty of large runs among fisheries.

One problem is what to do when the inriver goal range is being exceeded but numbers are still within the escapement goal range. Inriver goal ranges are relatively narrow (only 200,000 fish wide) and can be difficult to hit given uncertain run forecasts and wide variation in run timing. It is unclear which goal should drive management when both cannot be achieved. Exceeding

inriver goals can trigger out-of-plan actions that conflict with the intent of management plans for other stocks including Kenai kings and Susitna sockeye. Inriver goals are themselves allocative targets designed to distribute harvest among commercial and inriver fisheries. However, out-of-plan actions inevitably impact the allocation balance among commercial drift, commercial setnet, personal use, and sport fisheries. This places the department in the no-win situation of having to decide between one set of allocative targets and similarly allocative out-of-plan actions. Allocation decisions are why the board gets paid the big bucks.

Another problem is that the sport fishery has demonstrated the capability of harvested a much higher number of sockeye above the sonar than was estimated when the inriver goal ranges were originally established. There are only 150,000 fish between the upper end of the SEG and the top tier as measured at the sonar. However, in recent years as many as 300,000 are harvested by the sport fishery above the sonar. As a result, we are effectively managing for a lower SEG than has been identified.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? When the inriver goals are exceeded but numbers are still within the escapement goal, the department will continue to be challenged to make allocative decisions about when to follow the sockeye management plan provisions for emergency order restrictions and windows, and when to go outside the plan.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Not applicable.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone will benefit from additional clarity provided by the proposed revision. Kenai River personal use and sport fisheries will avoid effective reductions in king and sockeye allocation due to out-of-plan actions in the east side setnet fishery triggered by sockeye inriver goals. Central District drift gillnet fisheries may realize expanded fishing opportunity in the Kenai/Kasilof corridor to access large runs of Kenai sockeye in order to control escapements.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? The commercial fishery will continue to harvest the large majority of sockeye consistent with their designated priority. There is plenty of setnet fishing time in the Kenai late-run sockeye plan (108 hours per week at runs over 4.6 million) to continue to harvest this stock at among the highest levels in the state. However, commercial harvest of sockeye will no longer be prioritized over other UCI management objectives in years when large forecast errors or abnormal sockeye run timing make it difficult to manage for both inriver and escapement goals.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? The addition of more language to the plan was considered to clarify the relative priorities of inriver goals. However, the plan is already complicated and the streamlined goals were deemed to be a more effective solution.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-041)

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PROPOSAL 162 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to manage late-run Kenai River sockeye salmon for an escapement goal of 550,000–750,000 sockeye salmon, as follows:

Make the sockeye escapement 550,000–750,000.

ISSUE: Kenai river escapement.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Harvestable surplus is being wasted.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, fewer back out fish will be caught.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? These numbers brought the largest returns.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-349)

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PROPOSAL 163 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Modify management plan to achieve late-run Kenai River sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 700,000–1,200,000 instead of the optimum escapement goal (OEG) of 700,000–1,400,000; modify the inriver goal; and remove some provisions in the plan, as follows:

5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan

(a) The department shall manage the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon stocks (**to**) [PRIMARILY FOR COMMERCIAL USES BASED ON ABUNDANCE. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALSO MANAGE THE COMMERCIAL FISHERIES TO MINIMIZE THE HARVEST OF NORTHERN DISTRICT COHO, LATE-RUN KENAI RIVER KING, AND KENAI RIVER COHO SALMON STOCKS TO PROVIDE PERSONAL USE, SPORT, AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERMEN WITH A REASONABLE OPPORTUNTIY TO HARVEST SALMON RESOURCES]

[(b) THE KENAI RIVER LATE-RUN SOCKEYE SALMON COMMERCIAL, SPORT, AND PERSONAL USE FISHERIES SHALL BE MANAGED TO]

(1) meet an [OPTIMUM] escapement goal (**BEG/SEG)** [OEG] range of 700,000–**(1,200,000)** [1,400,000] late-run sockeye salmon;

(2) achieve (**other escapement goals for king and sockeye stocks**) [INRIVER GOALS AS ESTABLISHED BY THE BOARD AND MEASURED AT THE KENAI RIVER SONAR COUNTER LOCATED AT RIVER MILE 19]; and

(3) distribute the escapements of [SOCKEYE] salmon evenly within the [OEG] (**escapement goal**) ranges over time [IN PROPORTION TO THE SIZE OF EACH RUN].

(c) [BASED ON PRESEASON FORECASTS AND INSEASON EVALUTIONS OF THE TOTAL KENAI RIVER LATE-RUN SOCKEYE SALMON RETURN DURING THE FISHING SEASON, THE RUN WILL BE MANAGED AS FOLLOWS:

(1) AT RUN STRENGTHS OF LESS THAN 2,300,000 SOCKEYE SALMON,

(A)] the department shall manage (**the commercial fishery**) for an inriver (**sonar**) goal range of 800,000–1,200,000 [900,000–1,100,000] sockeye salmon past the sonar counter at the river mile 19 which provides the inriver sport fishery with 100,000 sockeye at the bottom end of the goal range plus the 50,000 to 100,000 sockeye caught below the sonar counter, the department shall manage the sport fishery to achieve 700,000 to 1,200,000 sockeye by closing, restricting or liberalizing the fishery as needed **(as described in (h) below)**; and

(B) subject to the provisions of (**this and**) other management plans, the Upper Subdistricts set gillnet fishery will fish regular weekly fishing periods, as specified in 5 AAC 21.320. through July 20, [UNLESS THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT THE MINIMUM INRIVER GOAL WILL NOT BE MET, AT WHICH TIME THE FISHERY SHALL BE CLOSED OR RESTRICTED AS NECESSARY; THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, ALLOW EXTRA FISHING PERIODS OF NO MORE THAN 24-HOURS PER WEEK, EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN 5 AAC 21.365;

(2) AT RUN STRENGTHS OF 2,300,000–4,600,000 SOCKEYE SALMON,

(A) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MANAGE FOR AN INRIVER GOAL RANGE OF 1,000,000–1,200,000 SOCKEYE SALMON PAST THE SONAR COUNTER AT RIVER MILE 19;

(B) SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF OTHER MANAGEMENT PLANS, THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT SET GILLNET FISHERY WILL FISH REGULAR WEEKLY FISHING PERIODS, AS SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 21.320. THROUGH JULY 20, OR UNTIL THE DEPARTMENT MAKES A DETERMINATION OF RUN STRENGTH, WHICHEVER, OCCURS FIRST; IF THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT THE MINIMUM INRIVER GOAL WILL NOT BE MET, THE FISHERY SHALL BE CLOSED OR RESTRICTED AS NECESSARY; THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, ALLOW EXTRA FISHING PERIODS OF NO MORE THAN 51-HOURS PER WEEK, EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN 5 AAC 21.365; AND

(C) THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT SET GILLNET FISHERY WILL BE CLOSED FOR ONE CONTINUOUS 36-HOUR PERIOD PER WEEK BEGINNING BETWEEN 7:00 P.M. THURSDAY AND 7:00 A.M. FRIDAY AND FOR A 24-HOUR CLOSURE ON TUESDAY FROM 12:00 A.M. UNTIL 11:59 P.M.;

(3) AT RUN STRENGTHS GREATER THAN 4,600,000 SOCKEYE SALMON,

(A) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MANAGE FOR AN INRIVER GOAL RANGE OF 1,100,000–1,350,000 SOCKEYE SALMON PAST THE SONAR COUNTER AT RIVER MILE 19;

(B) SUBJECT TO THE PROVISIONS OF OTHER MANAGEMENT PLANS, THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT SET GILLNET FISHERY WILL FISH REGULAR WEEKLY FISHING PERIODS, AS SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 21.320. THROUGH JULY 20, OR UNTIL THE DEPARTMENT MAKES A DETERMINATION OF RUN STRENGTH, WHICHEVER OCCURS FIRST; IF THE DEPARTMENT

DETERMINES THAT THE MINIMUM INRIVER GOAL WILL NOT BE MET, THE FISHERY SHALL BE CLOSED OR RESTRICTED AS NECESSARY; THE COMMISSIONER MAY, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, ALLOW EXTRA FISHING PERIODS OF NO MORE THAN 84-HOURS PER WEEK, EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN 5 AAC 21.365; AND

(C) THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT SET GILLNET FISHERY WILL BE CLOSED FOR ONE CONTINUOUS 36-HOUR PERIOD PER WEEK, BEGINNING BETWEEN 7:00 P.M. THURSDAY AND 7:00 A.M. FRIDAY.

(d) THE SONAR COUNT LEVELS ESTABLISHED IN THIS SECTION MAY BE LOWERED BY THE BOARD IF NONCOMMERCIAL FISHING, AFTER CONSIDERATION OF MITIGATION EFFORTS, RESULTS IN A NET LOSS OF RIPARIAN HABITAT ON THE KENAI RIVER. THE DEPARTMENT WILL, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, CONDUCT HABITAT ASSESSMENTS ON A SCHEDULE THAT CONFORMS TO THE BOARD OF FISHERIES (BOARD) TRIENNIAL MEETING CYCLE. IF THE ASSESSMENTS DEMONSTRATE A NET LOSS OF RIPARIAN HABITAT CAUSED BY NONCOMMERCIAL FISHERMEN, THE DEPARTMENT IS REQUESTED TO REPORT THOSE FINDINGS TO THE BOARD AND SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO THE BOARD FOR APPROPRIATE MODIFICATION OF THE KENAI RIVER LATE-RUN SOCKEYE SALMON INRIVER GOAL.

(e)REPEALED 6/11/2005

(f) REPEALED 6/11/2005.]

(g) Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the [OPTIMAL] escapement goal, the department shall provide for a personal use dip net fishery in the lower Kenai River as specified in 5 AAC 77.540.

(h) Subject to the requirement of achieving the lower end of the [OPTIMAL] escapement goal, the department shall manage the sport fishery on the Kenai River, except that portion of the Kenai River from its confluence with the Russian River to an ADF&G regulatory marker located 1,800 yards downstream, as follows:

(1) fishing will occur seven days per week, 24-hours per day;

(2) the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon, unless department determines that the abundance of the late-run sockeye salmon exceeds (**the upper end of the escapement goal range**) [2,300,000 FISH], at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit as the commissioner determines to be appropriate; and

(3) if the projected inriver run of sockeye salmon above the Kenai River sonar counter located at river mile 19 is less than [9] (**8**)00,000 fish and the inriver sport fishery harvest is projected to result in an escapement below the lower end of the [OPTIMAL] escapement goal, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, decrease the bag and possession limit, as the commissioner determines to be appropriate, for sockeye salmon in the sport fishery above the Kenai River sonar counter located at river mile 19. (**If the commercial fishery is closed or is going to be closed for more than one regular period to achieve the lower end of the inriver sonar goal the personal use and sport fishery shall also close until the minimum sonar goal is projected.**)

[(i) FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS SECTION, "WEEK" MEANS A CALENDAR WEEK, A PERIOD OF TIME BEGINNING AT 12:00:01 A.M. SUNDAY AND ENDING AT 12:00 MIDNIGHT THE FOLLOWING SATURDAY.

(j)THE COMMISSIONER MAY DEPART FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN UNDER THIS SECTION AS PROVIDED IN 5 AAC 21.363].

ISSUE: The board over the last several cycles has placed many onerous, arbitrary and unnecessary restrictions for the commercial fishery into this management plan in order to create a stable and predictable inriver fishery. Evidently no one ever told KRSA that salmon are anything but stable and predictable, especially when they are not managed for escapement goals. It is time to end this Hollywood inspired management regime and return to the basics of managing for MSY as the law requires. The current BEG is 700,000 to 1.2 million and the inriver sonar goal should be 800,000 to 1.2 million with no conflicting OEG established. In no other area of the state are restrictions put in regulation that restricts a fishery without a need for conservation. Exceeding the MSY biological escapement goal to make another fishery more successful without even considering the biological consequences in unacceptable and illegal. This proposal also removes language that is not used or is unnecessary.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The sockeye, coho and king runs will continue to cycle between a few big returns and many more poor returns, which did not occur before the board began this Disney management program for KRSA. We will continue to see a two week long board meeting every three years with many emergency meetings in between all because we are not managing for the biological goal (MSY) whether SEG or BEG.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone. The board has tried KRSA's changes and they have not worked. Today there is more dissatisfaction, more unstable runs and fisheries and more stocks of concern than has ever existed. Instead of allocating by conservation maybe it is time to make the department do their job. If you continue to manage for the weakest stock and ignore or under harvest healthy stocks you get a lot of weak stocks.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Do nothing and allow these illegal provisions to continue to cause the swings in returns we are now seeing.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Ducker (HQ-F13-053)

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<u>PROPOSAL 164</u> - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to re-establish commercial priority for sockeye salmon in Upper Cook Inlet, as follows:

Reestablish the commercial priority for sockeye.

ISSUE: Sockeye management.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Reallocation of a fully allocated fishery.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. For a more orderly fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The commercial fishery and consumers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one in times of abundance.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? There isn't one.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-366)
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PROPOSAL 165 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to allow the 24-hour closure period (or "window") to be scheduled at any time during the week, and change the 36-hour closure period to 24 hours and allow it to be scheduled between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 11:59 p.m. Sunday, as follows:

Delete "window" prescribed times per week management in 5 AAC 21.360. (c) (2) (C), (c) (3) (C):

1/ Delete and Amend: [FOR A 24-HOUR CLOSURE ON TUESDAY FROM 12:01 A.M. UNTIL 11:59 P.M.] to **roaming 24 hour closure per week** or
Delete entirely (without Amend language to roaming 24 hour closure per week).
2/ Delete and Amend [WILL BE CLOSED FOR ONE CONTINUOUS 36-HOUR PERIOD BEGINNING BETWEEN 7:00 P.M. THURSDAY AND 7:00 A.M. FRIDAY]
To: **roaming 24 hour closure per week between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 11:59 p.m. Sunday.**

ISSUE: Windows closures have failed sockeye salmon fisheries management and impeded Commercial Fisheries Division's ability to manage Kasilof and Kenai sockeye salmon escapements and the distribution of sockeye escapement levels. Windows closures arbitrarily assume salmon stocks biologically determine certain days per week on their returns and further assumes sockeye salmon stocks are predictable.

Windows coupled with hours per week in regulation arbitrarily assumes Commercial Fisheries Division Managers can easily adapt at any given moment over weather, tides, fish abundance, ensure an orderly sockeye salmon fishery around prescribed windows, evenly distribute escapements throughout the season, and the department fulfills their duties and missions effectively without causing allocation conflicts. However, these assumptions aren't correct and have created situational factors to be avoided.

Significant and historical sockeye escapements occurred on prescribed window days. The department has written several management issue papers over "windows"- as impeding the department's ability to manage or accomplish its missions and duties, Commercial Fisheries

Division petitioned the board in the past to reduce and eliminate windows, a judicial ruling on windows as "invalid" (Brown decision), and a board finding that recognizes the commissioner's authority to break the windows at any time but not referenced in the sockeye salmon management plans.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Significant uneven distribution and over escapement events will continue to occur, lost sustained yield from exceeded biological goals, and significant economic loss to ESSN commercial fishery. Fishery conflicts continued, allocation conflicts, and diminished confidence in department to carry out its mission and duties on escapement goal management, and increase likelihood of incidental harvest on kings.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commercial Fisheries Division use of adaptive fisheries management is practiced throughout this state in order to protect, ensure, and develop the state's salmon resources. The fishing industry's economic utilization on improvements can produce a better product and the infrastructure in place along the beaches would be able to effectively utilize icing, holding, receiving facilities, and move a better product more efficiently to US consumers and worldwide destinations.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All user groups benefit from achieving spawning escapement goals. The commercial industry would benefit by planning and utilization of the resource. The department would benefit by managing fisheries based on adaptive fishery management practices proven to work as the key component to the success of Alaska fisheries.

Reduction in fishery conflicts benefits everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? N/A.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (HQ-F13-234)

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<u>PROPOSAL 166</u> - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to allow the 24-hour window, when the commercial set gillnet fishery is closed in the Upper Subdistrict, to be scheduled between the regular Monday and Thursday fishing periods, as follows:

We would like to see ADF&G have the flexibility to institute a floating 24 hour window, sometime between the Monday and Thursday regular period.

ISSUE: We would like to address the prescribed 24 hour Tuesday window in the Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Management Plan. This very restrictive regulation severally ties the hand of ADF&G. They lose tremendous flexibility when it comes to harvesting sockeye.

It is far better to give the department more flexibility to harvest sockeye when they are abundant on the beaches. By fishing on abundance, which is where the ESSN fishery harvest strategy should evolve, would enable the ESSN fishery to maximize sockeye harvest while minimizing Chinook harvest.

We fish on north Kalifonsky Beach (244-32) this prescribed window is extremely damaging to 244-32.

From 1999 to 2011, there has been 50 Wednesdays in the month of July for those years. Wednesday sits right before Thursday, which is the regular scheduled period for the ESSN fishery.

In that time period south Kalifonsky beach (244-31) fished 20 of those possible 50 Wednesdays. So 40% of the time North K-beach had gear in the water the day before that section opened by regulation. To make matter worse on some of those days South K-beach fished through the night, right up until North K-beach and all the rest of the ESSN fishery went into the water on Thursday.

It is hard to have a productive day when there is no buildup of sockeye.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Alaska Department of Fish and Game will continue to have less flexibility. Without this flexibility to fish on abundance, by default the Chinook harvest increases, by forcing ADF&G to fish more on times when less sockeye are available.

North K-beach will continue to feel the damaging effects of having South K-beach fish the day before or up to the time we are to start our scheduled period on Thursday.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All groups who want to give ADF&G the ability to maximize sockeye harvest when they are abundant on the beaches. This increased harvest could result in less fishing time later, which could decrease Chinook catches.

This would be very helpful to North K-beach, as ADF&G would have more options than fishing South K-beach the day before we are supposed to go into the water.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one. There still will be a 24 hour window to let salmon in the rivers, it just would not be fixed.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Getting rid of this Tuesday window altogether as it increases Chinook harvest. Rejected it as a similar proposal failed at last cycle.

PROPOSED BY: Greg Johnson & Gary L. Hollier (HQ-F13-203)

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PROPOSAL 167 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Remove 24- and 36-hour closure periods ("windows") in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery after July 31, as follows:

Delete all restrictions that apply to 24 and/or 36 hours of restricted fishing required after July 31st.

ISSUE: Needless restrictions in regulation that does not serve allocation or conservation necessities. Late run Kenai King Salmon Management ends inriver harvests on July 31st.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Continued restrictions on sockeye harvests that are abundant at times during these closures.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, allows a historic harvest of surplus sockeye in traditional areas of the eastside beaches.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Harvesters.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one since inriver fishery for sockeye and king salmon is typically over by normal regulation.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Association (SOKI) (HQ-F13-262)
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PROPOSAL 168 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Liberalize the Kenai River sockeye salmon bag and possession limit when the run is forecasted to exceed 2.3 million fish, as follows:

Automatically increase the Kenai sport fishery bag limit from three sockeye to six sockeye when the run is forecast to exceed 2.3 million fish. Corresponding changes in regulatory language are:

(h)(2) the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon, unless the department **forecasts or** determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye salmon exceeds 2,300,000 fish, at which time the commissioner [MAY] **shall**, by emergency order, increase the bag and possession limit **to six or twelve sockeye** as the commissioner determines to be appropriate;

ISSUE: Sport fishing opportunity for sockeye is unnecessarily foregone in the Kenai River during years of moderate to large runs when numbers can exceed inriver goals. For instance, king constraints to commercial sockeye fisheries in recent years have resulted in large numbers of sockeye entering the Kenai River. The potential of sport fishing to help limit escapement to target levels is not being fully utilized. The season begins with a sport bag and possession limit

of three sockeye even when moderate to large runs are forecast. In mid-July after the department determines that the abundance of late run sockeye will exceed 2.3 million, the management plan allows for the sockeye bag limit to be raised. However, liberalization of the sockeye limits often lags behind increases in commercial emergency order time in response to large numbers of sockeye. Sport fishery opportunities to take advantage of large early pulses of sockeye are often and unnecessarily missed. The sport fishery has the potential to harvest substantial numbers of sockeye in large run years but the fishing power is such that longer periods are needed to achieve significant exploitation rates. Large daily sockeye counts and increased bag limits in the middle of the system also create a derby mentality and increase crowding that could otherwise be avoided by a more orderly implementation of the regulation.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? We will continue to unnecessarily forego sockeye harvest and risk exceeding inriver and escapement goals.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Not applicable.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone will benefit from full utilization of sockeye and escapements that maximize future yield.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one. The commercial fishery will contend that they have priority access to sockeye but the proposed change in regulation is significant only in years when commercial sockeye harvest has otherwise been limited by unforeseen run patterns or other constraints. The commercial fishery still has first crack at the sockeye. If we are truly concerned with sockeye "overescapement" then all tools at our disposal including the sport fishery should be utilized to limit escapements to target levels.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? We considered continuing to delay increases in sockeye sport bag limits but rejected them because there is no downside risk to increasing bag limits at the start of the season on moderate to large run sizes. Sport fishery effort and catch rates for sockeye are contingent on large pulses of sockeye moving through the river. If there is not a surplus of sockeye entering the river, the higher bag limits cannot be filled.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-042)

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<u>PROPOSAL 169</u> - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Increase Kenai River sockeye salmon bag and possession limit to six fish when commercial fishing is opened by emergency order (EO) after July 1, as follows:

Sport fish daily bag and possession limit for sockeye salmon in the Kenai River below Skilak Lake shall increase to six sockeye salmon when the Department of Fish and Game issues the first emergency order for additional commercial fishing time in the Upper Cook Inlet gillnet salmon fishery after July 1st. Only two of these six salmon can be coho salmon.

ISSUE: Increase the daily bag and possession limit in the Kenai River Sockeye Salmon sport fishery from three sockeye per person to six sockeye per person in conjunction with the first emergency order issued by the Department of Fish and Game allowing additional fishing time in the Upper Cook Inlet gillnet fishery after July 1st.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Fish and Game is worried about too many sockeye escaping to the spawning grounds. This will decrease escapement and allow sport harvest additionally when fish managers issue additional gillnet harvest fishing time. By the time sport fishermen are allowed to fish for six per person per day, the sockeye are hard to come by in the Lower Kenai River.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Sockeye will be in prime condition and of highest quality when they first enter the Kenai River early in the July fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Sport Fishers who enjoy harvesting their winter supply of sockeye by means of rod and reel. The fishery itself will benefit according to those biologist who speculate that too many sockeye are escaping upriver to the spawning grounds.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one will suffer so long as the Alaska Department of Fish and Game biologists believes there is good reason to allow additional commercial fishing time in the gillnet fishery.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Start July with six fish, but rejected because Fish and Game needs to feel there is a need for additional harvest.

PROPOSED BY: Randy J. Berg (HQ-F13-233)

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<u>PROPOSAL 170</u> - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan and 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. Increase possession limit for Kenai River sockeye salmon from three to six fish, as follows:

Simply change the possession limit for sockeye to twice the bag limit.

ISSUE: Currently, regulations state that bag and possession limits are the same for any species of fish caught on the Kenai River. Fish caught and frozen do not add to the possession limit but fish caught and kept in a cooler do. This disparity provides fisherman with access to freezers, such as RV owners/renters and those staying in lodges, with more fishing opportunity than fisherman who just use coolers. Fisherman with immediate access to freezers can stay overnight and catch fish the next day while others who catch their limit must go home first and then return, unnecessarily adding to the travel time and cost of fishing. Fisherman that camp out overnight, either to save money or by preference, and put their catch in a cooler should have the same opportunity to fish the next day as those staying in an RV or lodging. If anything, those willing to rely on less mechanization should be given preference.

This proposal asks that this inequity be eliminated by changing the possession limit for sockeye salmon caught on the Kenai River (and tributaries) to twice the bag limit. This will allow fisherman who are camping to make more efficient use of their time and travel expenditures. It could also help reduce crowding on the river and roads by reducing the number of trips someone needed to catch their desired number of fish for the season.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The inequities between fisherman with RV's or lodging and those who camp will continue.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? The proposal will improve the quality of the fishing trip for fisherman who camp overnight in the area and allow more flexibility to travel to the Kenai River at times when traffic is less stressful. Also, if fishermen are able to catch the number of salmon they need for their freezer at home with fewer trips, it could benefit other fishermen by reducing congestion on the river.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The fishermen who will benefit are those who don't have the desire or wherewithal to have an RV with a freezer or prefer camping out. Also, being able to catch twice as many fish per trip could benefit all other fisherman by reducing fishing pressure.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Allowing more efficient and less expensive fishing trips would not be to the advantage of those who benefit from these expenditures.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED: Have the possession limit twice the bag limit apply only when the bag limits haven't been increased by emergency order.

PROPOSED BY: George Matz (HQ-F13-197)

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<u>PROPOSAL 171</u> - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to require fishing closures ("windows") to Kenai River inriver sport fish and personal use fisheries when there are closure periods for the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery, as follows:

If there is a window closure outside the river, there will be a window closure inside the river.

ISSUE: Mandatory closures when sockeyes are abundant.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Commercial fishermen continue to lose harvest opportunity.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Prime sockeyes will be harvested, more kings will spawn.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Consumers and commercial fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Mandatory closures are wrong.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-356)
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PROPOSAL 172 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Close the Kenai River personal use fishery when it is announced the sockeye salmon optimal escapement goal (OEG) may not be met, as follows:

Amend 5 AAC 21.310 by deleting (b)(C)(iii) [FROM AUGUST 11 THROUGH AUGUST 15, THE FISHERY IS OPEN FOR REGULAR PERIODS ONLY;]

Add (g)(1) Upon announcement that the lower end of the optimal escapement goal may not be met, the personal use fishery shall close and then reopen when the department projects the lower end of the OEG to be achieved.

ISSUE: Inconsistent application of the regulatory requirement that commercial, sport, and personal use fisheries will be closed if the department projects the lower end of the optimal escapement goal will not be achieved.

If the department projects the lower end of the optimal escapement goal may not be met and issues emergency order closures to the commercial and inriver sport fishery the department has been reluctant to timely close the personal use fishery. The harvest level in the personal use fishery has increased annually over the past several years. The department has estimated that one-third of the sonar count is now impacted; i.e., a one-third increase in sockeye sonar passage counts can occur when similarly closed.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The lower end of the optimal escapement goal may not be achieved. Unnecessary fishery conflict can occur by arbitrary use of (g).

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Orderly management to achieve the minimum OEG directive in (g).

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Every fishing sector is closed (suffers).

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? N/A.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (HQ-F13-239)
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PROPOSAL 173 - 5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan. Modify confusing provisions of the management plan to reference the Upper Subdistrict to ensure they meet board intent as originally adopted, as follows:

5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan. (a) The purpose of this management plan is to allow for the harvest of surplus pink salmon in **the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District of** Upper Cook Inlet for set gillnet and drift gillnet gear. Notwithstanding 5 AAC 21.310(b)(2)(C)(iii), from August 11 through August 15, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open a commercial pink salmon fishery in an even-numbered year for up to two regular 12-hour fishing periods if the commissioner determines that the sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers are being achieved and coho salmon run strength is sufficient to withstand additional harvest.

(b) The first pink salmon commercial fishing period will occur only if, during the regular fishing periods from August 6 through August 10, the daily harvest of pink salmon **in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery** exceeds 50,000 fish or the cumulative harvest is 100,000 or more pink salmon. The second pink salmon commercial fishing period will occur only if 50,000 or more pink salmon and no more than 2,500 coho salmon are harvested **in the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery** during the first pink salmon commercial fishing period.

(c) During a pink salmon commercial fishing period opened under this section, a

(1) set gillnet may not have a mesh size greater than four and three-quarters inches, and the set gillnet may only be operated 600 feet or greater from the shore line; and

(2) drift gillnet may not have a mesh size greater than four and three-quarters inches, and fishing with drift gillnet gear will only be opened in the areas defined in **5 AAC 21.200(b)(2)(B)** [5 AAC 21.200(b)(2)(A) AND (B)].

ISSUE: During deliberations on this proposal at the 2011 Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) meeting for Upper Cook Inlet (UCI), drift gillnetting in the Kenai Section (corridor) was added to open waters if the pink salmon fishery occurred. The management plan, as written, can be interpreted to mean that fishing for pink salmon is open in all of UCI for set and drift gillnet gear. Secondly, it is unclear from which fisheries the harvest criteria must be met during the August 6–10 timeframe. Lastly, part of the area that the management plan states is to be opened to drift gillnetting during the pink salmon fishery—East Forelands Section (5 AAC 21.200(b)(2)(A))—is a defined set gillnet fishing area. This can cause confusion to both setnetters and drifters when opening an area specifically designated as a set gillnet fishing area.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? If this management plan is left "as is," it will continue to cause confusion to fishermen and to the department.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users and the department will benefit from clearly defined objectives.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-177)
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PROPOSAL 174 - 5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan. Modify pink salmon management and/or develop a new management plan to allow for harvests of earlier-arriving Northern pink salmon and later-arriving Kenai and Kasilof pink salmon, as follows:

Once the board adopts the concept of having a meaningful Northern bound pink salmon harvests, specific regulatory wording can be worked out for the harvest of these distinct Northern Pink Salmon returns.

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to establish/allow for meaningful harvests of the earlier Northern Pink Salmon stocks and the later Kenai/Kasilof Pink Salmon returns and develop a Pink Salmon management plan for northern bound stocks.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Millions of fish remain unharvested, economic opportunity lost for all commercial fishermen, including Northern District setnetters.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Each year, millions of pink salmon remain unharvested, contributing to an economic lost opportunity as well as the loss of a food resource. There are two distinct runs of pink salmon: Northern bound stocks move through the Central and Northern Districts around July 15th and Kenai/Kasilof stocks through the Central District around August 1st.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Opening the Northern District to drift gillnetting as it was for several years.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-101)
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PROPOSAL 175 - 5 AAC 21.356. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to read that the department shall manage Cook Inlet pink salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance, as follows:

5 AAC 21.356. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan.

(a) **The department shall manage the Cook Inlet pink salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance.**

ISSUE: The current pink salmon management plan does not allow the managers the flexibility to manage for harvesting the pink salmon harvestable surplus. Literally tens of millions of pinks are not allowed to be harvested under the current management plans.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The continued waste of tens of millions of pink salmon. Pink salmon were historically harvested in large numbers. The current plan allows virtually no pink salmon harvest and allows most of the entire run to go un-harvested by anyone.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? It allows the harvest of pinks over the entire run. It will allow a harvest of quality and quantity to develop markets. The Cook Inlet pinks are large, bright and highly marketable.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Those who wish to harvest, process and market pink salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one. There are literally millions of pinks going un-harvested and wasted in Cook Inlet. The coho runs are healthy and only being exploited at less than half the biological exploitation rate.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None. Status quo only continues the waste of a high protein food for absolutely no reason.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-343)

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PROPOSAL 176 - 5 AAC 21.310. Fishing Seasons and 5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan. Amend fishing seasons and management plan to remove restrictions on set gillnet fishing in the Kenai, Kasilof, and East Forelands sections of the Upper Subdistrict in August, and change mesh size from four and three-quarters inches to four and seven-eighths inches when fishing for pink salmon, as follows:

Amend 5 AAC 21.310 by deleting (b)(C)(iii) [FROM AUGUST 11 THROUGH AUGUST 15, THE FISHERY IS OPEN FOR REGULAR PERIODS ONLY;]

Amend Kenai, Kasilof, and East Forelands Sections: delete language : [unless closed by emergency order after July 31. If the department determines that less than one percent of the season's total sockeye harvest has been taken per fishing period for two consecutive fishing periods;]

Amend "up to two 12-hour fishing periods to "up to **five** fishing periods"; the season **from August 15–August 18th two 12-hour fishing periods or until closed by emergency order on even-numbered years.**

Amend 5 AAC 21.354 (c) (1) "four and three –quarters" to **four and seven- eighths**" inches.

ISSUE: Pink salmon stocks are severely underutilized; on even calendar years millions of pink salmon return to the Kenai River. Commercial lost benefit still occurs on an abundant salmon resource available during the fishing season, with millions of pinks still allowed to be wasted and rot in the lower and middle reaches of the Kenai River.

Kenai River pink salmon run timing is between August 7th and August 30th. Provision (b) (C) (iii) still inserted in Fishing Seasons impedes pink salmon harvest through August 15 especially when Kenai sockeye salmon goal is met or exceeded. Less than a 2–3 % percent set gillnet commercial exploitation rate harvest on Kenai coho return and the exploitation harvest rate on pink salmon stocks is currently less than < 1% (.02 exploitation) of the Kenai pink salmon return under the one or two 12-hour periods "only."

Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan only provides up to two periods along the eastside which disproportionately impedes the harvest on available pink salmon. The directed commercial pink salmon fishery on even years during August 7th through August 15th in current regulation with "up to two periods" strictly limits harvest on the vast amounts of pink salmon resources available and needs to be amended with up to 5 periods. From August 15th to August 18th up to two additional periods available.

The current mesh size requirement needs to be amended by additional one-eight inch; to four and seven-eight inches. The current mesh size limits pink salmon harvest and quality of the pink harvest.

The current regulatory language limitations for set gillnet in the Pink Plan should be amended to provide an orderly pink salmon harvest fishery.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Ninety-five percent of Kenai River pink

salmon stocks will continue to be wasted (ADF&G estimates five to eight million pinks).

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?

1. The improvement would be harvest as food to American consumers, instead of being wasted.
2. Quality pinks are in high demand and the ex-vessel price has increased throughout the state. Kenai pink salmon are known to be top quality pinks.
3. Four and seven-eighths web improves the quality of the resource harvested.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Commercial fishing families and fishing communities, the state's economy, and U.S. consumers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? N/A

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association (HQ-F13-238)

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PROPOSAL 177 - 5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan. Remove provisions restricting harvest of pink salmon in Upper Cook Inlet and add language to allow harvest of pink salmon from August 1–15 during even-numbered years, with mesh-size restrictions of five inches or less; no restrictions on area of operation relative to shore; and manage pink salmon based on harvest or escapement goals, as follows:

(a) [delete current language] write language that will allow full opportunity to harvest pink salmon as a full management plan directed for pink salmon harvest from August 1 to 15 on even years. Department shall set the harvest goal or escapement goal to manage for high sustained yields.

(b) [delete current language] write language that will restrict gillnet mesh size to 5" while fishing periods targeting pink salmon. No restrictions to pink fishing hours, depends on the abundance and run timing. No restrictions to area of operation of gear relative to shoreline which is an undefined term in regulation.

ISSUE: Ineffective harvest plan.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Low harvest, loss of opportunity, poor yields, economic loss.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, allows for an orderly harvest.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Processors, commercial fishermen, general public in reducing the amount of carcass waste in the rivers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Status quo, very low harvest potential.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Association (SOKI) (HQ-F13-261)

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PROPOSAL 178 - 5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan. Modify management plan to remove the 600-foot restriction and allow set gillnets to be operated from shore for pink salmon in the Upper Subdistrict, as follows:

Set gillnet may not have a mesh size greater than four and three-quarter inches. Then remove set gillnet may only be operated 600 feet or greater from shore line.

ISSUE: This regulation took our historical and traditional set gillnet locations from us. The set gillnet fishery has always been from the shore out first. If the intent of a set gillnet fishery is to harvest, then allow the fishery to harvest in the most effective way.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? N/A.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Currently with the political climate of the Kenai River there is little to no pink fishery allowed. The estimated run of pinks going up the river is in the millions (3 to 5).

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Setnet fishery, the community- this is a loss of revenue to the local economy.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? N/A.

PROPOSED BY: Chris Every (HQ-F13-092)
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<u>PROPOSAL 179</u> - 5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to remove restriction that only allows operation of set gillnets 600 feet or greater from the shoreline, as follows:

5 AAC 21.354(c)(1) set gillnet may not have a mesh size greater than four and three-quarters inches [AND THE SET GILLNET MAY ONLY BE OPERATED 600 FEET OR GREATER FROM THE SHORELINE]; and

ISSUE: There are several issues with the restriction on fishing within 600 feet from the shoreline. The term "Shoreline" is defined as where the water meets the beach at any stage of the tide, this is not a static point and is subject to change; therefore someone who is fishing legally at high tide may then be forced to pull their nets prematurely to comply with regulation as the tide goes out. Next, the restriction of fishing within 600 feet of the shoreline excludes many set gillnet permit holders from participating in the fishery. For example, in the East Forelands Section of the Upper Sub district, the majority of the set gillnet permit holders fish within 600 feet of the shoreline due to extremely strong tides offshore.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? By keeping this restriction in regulation, set gillnet permit holders who have fishing sites within 600 feet from the shore will continue to be excluded from this fishery, including the majority of permit holders in the East Forelands Section.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Set gillnet permit holders who fish within 600 feet of the shoreline. Processors of UCI salmon may also benefit by having a predictable flow of fish into their plants at this time of year.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Cliff Dejax (HQ-F13-244)

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PROPOSAL 180 - 5 AAC 21.354. Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan. Develop a management plan to harvest pink salmon in Upper Cook Inlet, as follows:

Develop a plan to harvest pink salmon, a real plan

ISSUE: Wanton waste.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Millions of pink salmon wasted.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Quality of pink salmon to market.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No other options.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-363)

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PROPOSAL 181 - 5 AAC XX.XXX. Cook Inlet Northern Pike Management Plan. Establish a commercial fishery for Northern pike in Upper Cook Inlet, as follows:

No limit in the sport fishery, any method, back in water (head or viscera removed). Open a commercial pike fishery. Pike can effectively be taken under the ice during winter conditions utilizing gillnets. Creates new commercial fishing opportunities, provides new food source(s) and reduces pike populations. Develops the fishery resources of the state.

ISSUE: Pike populations continue to increase and expand. This proposal asks the Board of Fish to consider establishing a commercial pike fishery in Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Lose more salmon habitat and populations due to pike increasing both range and densities.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Commercially caught pike can produce a high quality food product(s,) fish for fish and chips and fillets for citizens and businesses.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Pike fishermen, salmon in the Mat-Su.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Pike.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Open a commercial fishery on pike.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-109)
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PROPOSAL 182 - 5 AAC XX.XXX. New Section. Establish a five-dollar bounty for northern pike, as follows:

Five dollar ($5) bounty paid for pike.

ISSUE: Pike.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? More pike, fewer salmon.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? It will protect salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All salmon fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-368)
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PROPOSAL 47 - 5 AAC 56.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area; 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 59.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Anchorage Bowl Drainages Area; 5 AAC 60.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area; 5 AAC 61.110. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Susitna River

Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 62.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the West Cook Inlet Area. Prohibit use of barbed hooks while sport fishing for salmon in Cook Inlet fresh waters. *(This proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meetings.)*

In the freshwater systems of Cook Inlet, only barbless hooks are legal for salmon fishing.

ISSUE: There are 650,000 salmon (a huge number) that are caught and released every year in Cook Inlet, resulting in over a 150,000 salmon mortality. Salmon are a valuable food and economic renewable resource that are highly valued as such, and should not be reduced to a resource that is allowed to be played with and then wasted for the sole purpose of recreation.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? High numbers of salmon, equating into millions of pounds of food and millions of dollars into the economies, will continue to be wasted.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Fresher salmon will be harvested and less fish will be caught with snag gashes in their flesh. More salmon will be available to the angler for food in their freezer instead of being a salmon mortality floating out to sea.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The resource and users.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those anglers who put their recreational wants above the salmon waste that result from catch and release mortality.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-339)
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<u>PROPOSAL 48</u> - 5 AAC 56.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 57.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 58.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 59.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section; and 5 AAC 62.XXX. New Section. Designate all waters where catch-and-release fishing occurs on salmon as single, unbaited, barbless-hook waters. *(This proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meetings.)*

All salmon fishing where catch and release is a management option or practice, shall be designated as single, unbaited, barbless hook waters as per 5 AAC 75.023.

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to reduce the amount of mortality due to catch and release practices in Cook Inlet.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Over five hundred thousand salmon will be caught and released, many of these fish will not spawn successfully.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Increases the "sport" aspect of fishing, improves the quality of the experience while reducing the millions of pounds of wasted salmon. The following table summarizes the numbers of salmon released annually. These numbers do not include personal use salmon that are released annually. Most catch and release mortality rates often are measured within the first 24 hours. The real question is "how does catch and release mortality affect spawning success rates?" Most reported hook & release mortality rates do not include kings that are hooked/released and washout of the Kenai River, only to end up in a gillnet. These washouts are accounted to the gillnet harvest and not in the 24 hour catch and release mortality rates.

As can be seen in the included table, during the 1996 through 2009 sport fishing years, there were, on average, 645,646 salmon caught and released in Upper Cook Inlet. The mortality, incomplete spawning or total spawning failure associated with the hooking, playing, landing and release of these 645,646 fish annually amounts to millions of pounds of salmon that could have been harvested for human consumption. Considering the level of the allocation struggles in Upper Cook Inlet, it is appropriate to stop or severely reduce these catch and release numbers.

The 2010, 2011 and 2012 catch and release fish numbers will be made available as an RC at the 2014 Upper Cook Inlet Board of Fish meeting, providing ADF&G release updated catch and release numbers. When the harvest(s) and the catch and release numbers are added together with the coho numbers, the sport numbers become significant. Alaska Department of Fish and Game does not subtract the catch and release losses from the escapement(s). This often would result in lowering all "true" net escapement numbers, often below the minimum escapements required.

Table 1. Total number of salmon released in Upper Cook Inlet

Year	Responses with catch	King	Coho	Sockeye	Pink	Chum	Total
1996	15,036	87,006	34,679	154,545	156,626	51,349	484,205
1997	13,368	103,169	64,169	154,443	53,923	36,994	412,698
1998	13,095	70,756	79,991	121,677	217,973	53,121	543,518
1999	13,578	115,015	82,405	173,944	52,498	50,128	473,990
2000	17,608	109,704	153,609	184,033	449,681	76,155	973,182
2001	14,407	102,065	139,320	146,903	108,408	66,663	563,359
2002	13,901	89,887	176,167	220,652	287,010	99,339	873,055
2003	13,502	129,641	118,725	261,515	85,511	84,455	679,847
2004	12,595	99,454	167,114	229,592	280,311	63,298	839,769
2005	12,041	121,662	117,485	251,886	81,842	43,900	616,775
2006	12,104	99,905	133,834	220,149	275,577	50,936	780,401
2007	11,565	96,116	84,676	217,548	120,073	34,109	552,522
2008	11,521	61,537	101,113	180,593	279,875	41,482	664,600
2009	10,970	52,123	91,902	188,791	211,138	37,162	581,116
	1996-2009 Average	95,574	110,371	193,305	190,032	56,364	645,646

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Salmon populations

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Some fishermen

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-106)

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PROPOSAL 49 - 5 AAC 56.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 57.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 58.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 59.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section; and 5 AAC 62.XXX. New Section. Establish criteria to designate waters in Cook Inlet as single, unbaited, barbless hooks waters. *(This proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meetings.)*

5 AAC 75.023. Gear for single-hook waters.

(a) In waters designated as single**, barbless**-hook, waters, sport fishing is permitted only as follows:

(1) with **no** more than one single, **unbaited, barbless circle-hook** with gap between point and shank one-half inch or less;

(2) hooks or lures (including those of standard manufacture) may not have additional weight attached to them; weights may be used only ahead of the hook or lure.

(b) Multiple hooks are prohibited in waters designated as single **barbless** hook waters. (In effect before 1984; a.m. 4/28/84, Register 90).

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to reduce the hooking mortalities on released salmon.

Table 1. Total number of salmon released in Upper Cook Inlet

Year	Responses with catch	King	Coho	Sockeye	Pink	Chum	Total
1996	15,036	87,006	34,679	154,545	156,626	51,349	484,205
1997	13,368	103,169	64,169	154,443	53,923	36,994	412,698
1998	13,095	70,756	79,991	121,677	217,973	53,121	543,518
1999	13,578	115,015	82,405	173,944	52,498	50,128	473,990
2000	17,608	109,704	153,609	184,033	449,681	76,155	973,182
2001	14,407	102,065	139,320	146,903	108,408	66,663	563,359
2002	13,901	89,887	176,167	220,652	287,010	99,339	873,055
2003	13,502	129,641	118,725	261,515	85,511	84,455	679,847
2004	12,595	99,454	167,114	229,592	280,311	63,298	839,769
2005	12,041	121,662	117,485	251,886	81,842	43,900	616,775
2006	12,104	99,905	133,834	220,149	275,577	50,936	780,401
2007	11,565	96,116	84,676	217,548	120,073	34,109	552,522
2008	11,521	61,537	101,113	180,593	279,875	41,482	664,600
2009	10,970	52,123	91,902	188,791	211,138	37,162	581,116
1996–2009 Average		95,574	110,371	193,305	190,032	56,364	645,646

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Hundreds of thousands of hooked and released fish (645, 646 annual average from 1996–2009) will continue to die or fail to spawn. Use of single, unbaited, barbless hooks will facilitate removal of the hook from fish.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? If hook and release fishing is going to be used as a management strategy, then a single, unbaited, barbless hook must be used to enable the safe release of salmon. The mortality associated with baited hook(s), treble hooks and large hooks of any type increases salmon mortalities and lowers spawning success. Most hook and release mortality studies report the mortality rate within the first 24 hours of after release, 6%–7% –8%. The real question and statistic is "how did hook and releasing affect spawning success?" On coho salmon in the Mat-Su, 70% of the hooked and released coho died without spawning.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Salmon that otherwise would have spawned.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Hook and keep every salmon, no hook and release fishing.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-107)

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<u>PROPOSAL 50</u> - 5 AAC 56.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 57.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 59.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section; and 5 AAC 62.XXX. New Section. Prohibit catch-and-release fishing for coho salmon in all Cook Inlet fresh waters. *(This proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meetings.)*

No catch and release fishing for coho salmon in the fresh water streams of the Cook Inlet Drainages.

ISSUE: Catch and release mortality on coho salmon is 69% in the lower 15 to 20 miles of fresh water systems.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Wanton waste of 69% of coho, which is a tragic waste of a valuable nutritious food. Also many small coho systems will be jeopardized from getting their spawning goals even after other users sacrificed to get cohos into the system. Future coho returns, especially in small coho systems, will continue to be jeopardized.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. The coho harvested will be of quality.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The resource, future coho returns and the users depending on the salmon resources for recreation and a living.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those anglers that only consider their enjoyment of catch and releasing coho with no consideration to the detrimental effects their fishing practice is causing.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None. A catch and release mortality of 69% is immoral, if not criminal.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-340)
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PROPOSAL 52 - 5 AAC 56.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 57.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 59.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section; and 5 AAC 62.XXX. New Section. Prohibit catch-and-release fishing for salmon in all Cook Inlet fresh waters. *(This proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meetings.)*

In the Cook Inlet drainage there are no catch and release salmon fisheries in fresh waters. An angler must keep all salmon landed up to the regulated bag limit for that species.

ISSUE: Reduce the waste of salmon that is caused by the large number of salmon that are caught and released as documented from the high mortalities in the catch and release salmon fisheries.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? ADF&G reports show there is an average of 650,000 salmon caught and released in the Cook Inlet sports fishery every year. Catch and release results in hundreds of thousands of salmon wasted each year from either becoming a valuable food source or a spawner for producing future returns. Coho are extremely susceptible. The 1993 ADF&G report on the "Mortality of coho salmon caught and released using sport tackle in the Little Susitna, Alaska – ADF&G documented a 69% mortality on coho salmon in the lower (10 to 15 miles) of fresh water systems. This lower section is where the majority of catch and release occurs. This lower section of fresh water systems is the highest for mortality because of the stress caused by hook and release when salmon are the most susceptible because of chemical changes the body is undergoing to acclimate to fresh water.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Salmon harvested in the lower section of fresh water systems are of higher quality than salmon harvested further upstream as dictated by the amount of time the salmon has been in fresh water.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The resource and people. People will be able to access crowded areas because anglers will not be taking up space hook and release fishing. The small salmon systems will be more assured of meeting their spawning escapement goals. The State of Alaska will have a positive image for respecting a valuable food source by eliminating this practice of playing with salmon for entertainment that results in high mortality which is nothing more than blatant wanton waste.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those anglers who like catch and release for their enjoyment or profit and have little regard for wanton waste.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Just prohibiting catch and release fishing in the lower 15 miles of fresh water systems, but that would still promote wanton waste and be hard to enforce.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-337)
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PROPOSAL 53 - 5 AAC 56.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Prohibit anglers who are releasing a fish from removing the head of a fish out of the water. *(This proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meetings.)*

All sport fish caught and released in the fresh waters of the Kenai Peninsula must be handled such that the head is not removed from the water.

ISSUE: Salmon, trout, or other sport fish caught in fresh waters of the Kenai Peninsula, but intended to be released, should not be taken out of the water.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The mortality rates for fish kept out of water for any length of time, before being released, will continue to be higher than what is generally expected.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? This regulation would increase the numbers of sport fish in our fresh waters.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All who are concerned with increased mortality rates with poor fish release practices.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? All who want to get that perfect picture of a fish completely out of the water.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-383)
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PROPOSAL 54 - 5 AAC 56.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 57.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 59.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section; and 5 AAC 62.XXX. New Section. Prohibit sport fishing in major spawning areas where spawning fish are present in Cook Inlet salmon waters. *(This proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meetings.)*

Sport fishing in major spawning areas, as defined by the department, is prohibited when spawning fish are present.

ISSUE: Fish being caught and harassed in their spawning beds.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Fish hooked and released while protecting their eggs die before they spawn. Fish caught and removed before they spawn can deplete the run, or if only large ones are removed the size of fish will eventually become smaller.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. If the largest fish are continually harvested, then only smaller ones will return.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Spawning salmon and therefore the people of Alaska.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? People who fish in spawning beds and sort through their catch or just catch and release fish for fun.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? End hook and release so fish can spawn.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-332)
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PROPOSAL 183 - 5 AAC 56.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 57.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 59.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section; and 5 AAC 62.XXX. New Section. Adopt a policy that prohibits sport fishing within 50 percent of identified salmon spawning areas in all Upper Cook Inlet salmon waters, as follows:

I am not asking for a regulation; I am asking for a statement of policy that would result in the board of fish placing a call for proposals toward the establishment of spawning bed sanctuary on every salmon stream that empties into upper Cook Inlet.

ISSUE: The commercial spawning bed fishing fleet has been allowed unlimited growth until fish stocks inlet wide are imperiled. This proposal seeks to gain board of fish support for the proposition that important spawning beds should be sanctuary. Be it proposed that in every salmon stream that drains into upper Cook Inlet 50% of the spawning bed area, including the most important spawning beds, shall be sanctuary that is closed to fishing or harassment. Procedurally, the board of fish would put out a call for public proposals to help identify spawning bed areas that need protection by GPS coordinates, and also seek input the fish and game management. Over time, in a schedule workable considering the need for public notice and participation, every salmon stream in the Cook Inlet basin will have at least some spawning bed sanctuary.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? If we allow spawning bed fishing to grow unrestrained forever, then we will witness the destruction of the salmon runs. Or we will see whipsaw management, where an area is open to spawning bed fishing, and then closed for years

to allow the salmon to recover. Alaska's Constitution demands that renewable resources be managed for maximum sustainable yield. Our current policy of a free for all on spawning beds is incompatible with our responsibilities. The Matanuska Valley river systems are severely impaired by these practices. Kenai River king and silver salmon could benefit from spawning bed protection. West side spawning beds in the Big River Lakes and the Kusteatan River are seeing ever increasing spawning bed fishing. If we do not set aside some sanctuary areas where there is not fishing, except by emergency order when there are too many fish on the spawning bed, then we will witness a shameful collapse of the resource caused by greed and stupidity. Spawning beds are sanctuary!

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, salmon caught on the spawning beds are low quality. When spawning beds are sanctuary, more effort will be placed on catching salmon in migration when they have nutritional value.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Foremost, the salmon will benefit. The public generally will benefit by maintaining healthy salmon runs. The commercial fishermen, who have been displaced by the ever growing spawning bed fishery would benefit as the salmon recover. Guides who switch their operations to environmentally sound methods of catching salmon in migration would benefit.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Primarily, certain sport fishing guides will be hurt by not being able to access spawning beds for their clients.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Spawning beds should be sanctuary, most people know this. As our population grows, and tourism grows, the salmon need protection where they are most vulnerable, on their spawning beds. There is no other rational option but to identify important spawning beds as sanctuary.

PROPOSED BY: David Chessik (HQ-F13-319)

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<u>PROPOSAL 55</u> - 5 AAC 56.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Kenai Peninsula Area; 5 AAC 57.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 58.024. Harvest record required; annual limits; 5 AAC 59.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Anchorage Bowl Drainages Area; 5 AAC 60.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Knik Arm Drainages Area; 5 AAC 61.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Susitna River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 62.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the West Cook Inlet Area. Decrease Cook Inlet king salmon annual limit to two king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, of which only one can be from the Kenai River. *(This proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meetings.)*

5 AAC 58.024. Harvest Record Required; annual limits.

(a)Except as otherwise specified in 5 AAC 58.022(b) for specific areas, the following provisions regarding harvest records and annul limits apply to taking king salmon 20 inches or greater in length in the Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area:

(1) a nontransferable harvest record is required and must be in the possession of each person taking king salmon 20 inches or greater in length; for a licensed angler, a harvest record appears on the back of the angler's sport fishing license; for an angler not required to have a sport fishing license, a harvest record may be obtained, without charge, from department offices and fishing license vendors in the Cook Inlet area;

(2) immediately upon landing a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, the angler shall enter the date, location (water body), and species of the catch, in ink, on the harvest record;

(3) nothing in this section affects or modifies a bag or possession limit specified in this chapter, the annual limit for the combined waters described in this subsection and in 5 AAC 56.124, 5 AAC 57.124, 5 AAC 59.124, 5 AAC 60.124, 5 AAC 61.124, and 5 AAC 62.124 **is two** [FIVE] king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, not more than **one** [TWO] of which may be taken from that portion of the Kenai River drainage open to king salmon fishing, and not more than two of which may be taken in combination, from Deep Creek and the Anchor River, except that from January 1 through June 30, [A KING SALMON LESS THAN 28 INCHES IN LENGTH TAKEN FROM THE KENAI RIVER DOES NOT COUNT TOWARDS THE ANNUAL LIMIT].

(b) A person obtaining a duplicate sport fishing license or duplicate harvest record shall record on that form all the information required under (a)(2) of this section for all king salmon previously landed during that year that were subject to the harvest record reporting requirements of this section and 5 AAC 56.124, 5 AAC 57.124, 5 AAC 59.124, 5 AAC 60.124, 5 AAC 61.124, and 5 AAC 62.124.

ISSUE: Too few kings returning to Cook Inlet, by having some anglers fill their needs before the summer and from stock other than Cook Inlet should help all those involved.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The problems with too much effort for weak runs will continue.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Resource hogs.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Problem is too liberal a sport fishery for weak king stocks.

PROPOSED BY: Mary J. Adami (HQ-F13-222)

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PROPOSAL 56 - 5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area. Decrease the Cook Inlet saltwater king salmon bag and possession limit to one king salmon and reduce the annual limit to two king salmon. *(This proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meetings.)*

5 AAC 58.022. Waters; seasons; bag, possession, and size limits; and special provisions for Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

(a) Except as provided in (b) of this section, the following are the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and special provisions for finfish and shellfish in the Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area.

(1) king salmon: may be taken from January 1–December 31; bag and possession limit of **one** [TWO] fish; no size limit; an annual harvest limit of **two** [FIVE] king salmon 20 inches or greater in length; a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 58.024; a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length that is removed from the water shall be retained and becomes a part of the bag limit of the person originally hooking it; a person may not **remove any portion of** a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish;

(2) salmon, other than king salmon: may be taken from January 1–December 31; bag and possession limit of six fish, of which only three per day and in possession may be coho salmon; no size limit;

(3) rainbow/steelhead trout: no open season; may not be retained or possessed; all rainbow/steelhead trout caught must be released immediately; a person my not remove a rainbow/steelhead trout from the water;

(4) Arctic char/Dolly Varden: may be taken from January 1–December 31; bag and possession limit of five fish; no size limit;

(5) halibut: may be taken only from February 1–December 31; bag limit of two fish; possession limit of four fish; no size limit;

(6) rockfish: may be taken from January 1–December 31; bag limit of five fish and 10 in possession, of which only one per day and two in possession may be non-pelagic rockfish as defined in 5 AAC 75.995; no size limit;

(7) lingcod: maybe be taken only from July 1–December 31; bag and possession limit of two fish; minimum size is 35 inches in length with the head attached or, if the head is removed, 28 inches in length from the front of the dorsal fin to the top of the tail;

(8) shark (all species of the orders Lamniformes, Squaliformes, or Carcharhiniformes):

may be taken from January 1–December 31; bag and possession limit of one fish; annual harvest limit of two fish; a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 75.012;

(9) king crab: no open season; may not be retained or possessed;

(10) Dungeness crab: no open season; may not be retained or possessed;

(11) Tanner crab: may be taken only form July 15–March 15, except that the waters east of Cape Fairfield are closed and when the sport fishery in the Kamishak District or Barren Islands District is closed to the taking of Tanner crab, the sport fishery in the Eastern, Outer, and Central Districts shall remain closed as specified under 5 AAC 35.410(c); bag and possession limit of five male crab; minimum size is five and one-half inches across the widest part of the shell, including spines, a shellfish harvest recording form is required as specified in 5 AAC 58.026;

(12) littleneck clams and butter clams: may be taken from January 1–Decemer 31; with a combined bag and possession limit of 80 clams; minimum size for littleneck clams is one and one-half inches in length across the widest part of the shell; minimum size for butter clams is two and one-half inches in length across the widest part of the shell;

(13) repealed 7/13/2012;

(14) razor clams: may be taken from January 1–December 31 as follows:

(A) from the mouth of the Kenai River to the southernmost tip of the Homer Spit: the bag limit is the first 60 clams harvested, the possession limit is 120 clams;

(B) on the remaining beaches of the Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Area: no bag, possession, or size limits;

(15) shrimp: no open season; may not be retained or possessed:

(16) other finfish and shellfish not specified in this subsection: from January 1–December 31; no bag, possession, or size limits.

(b) The seasons, bag, possession, an size limits, and special provisions set out in this subsection are localized exceptions to those specified in (a) of this section for the Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Saltwater Area:

(1) in waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00'N. latitude):

(A) king salmon

(i) repealed 3/2/2011;

(ii) the salt waters within a one mile radius of the terminus of the Ninilchik River are closed to sport fishing for king salmon from January 1–June 30, except that sport fishing from shore is allowed on Memorial Day weekend and the following two weekends and the Monday following each of those weekends;

(iii) in the salt waters south of the latitude of the mouth of the Ninilchik River (60° 03.99'N. latitude) to the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00'N latitude) and within one mile of shore, a person may not, after taking a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, fish for any species of fish on that same day as specified in 5 AAC 58.055(e),

(B) Tanner crab: in Kachemak Bay, east of a line from Point Pogibshi to Anchor Point, the open season is from July 15–December 31 and from January 15 or the beginning of the commercial Tanner crab season, whichever is later, through March 15;

(C) the following waters, within one mile of shore, are closed to all sport fishing from April 1 through June 30, as specified in 5 AAC 58.055(d):

(i) south of the latitude of the Ninilchik River to the latitude of an ADF&G regulatory marker located two miles south of Deep Creek at 60° 00.68'N. latitude, except that sport fishing from shore is allowed on Memorial Day weekend and the following two weekends and the Monday following each of those weekends,

(ii) from the latitude of an ADF&G regulatory marker located one mile north of Stariski Creek at 59° 54.37'N. latitude to the latitude of an ADF&G regulatory marker located one mile south of Stariski Creek at 59° 52.98'N. latitude;

(iii) from the latitude of an ADF&G regulatory marker located two miles north of the Anchor River at 59° 48.92'N. latitude to the latitude of an ADF&G regulatory marker located two miles south of the Anchor River at 59° 45.92'N. latitude;

(2) in the waters of Cook Inlet south of the latitude of the Anchor Point Light at 59° 46.14'N. latitude, including all of Kachemak Bay, to the latitude of Cape Douglas at 58° 51.10"N latitude, and east to the longitude of Gore Point at 150° 57.85'W. longitude:

(A) king salmon: from October 1–March 31, king salmon do not need to be entered on a harvest record and do not count against the annual limit set out in (a)(1) of this section and 5 AAC 58.024;

(B) salmon, other than king salmon: in the waters from the Homer city dock near the entrance of the Homer Boat Harbor, including the entire Homer Boat Harbor, northwest along the east side of the Homer Spit to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 200 yards northwest of the entrance to the fishery enhancement lagoon on the Homer Spit, including the enhancement lagoon, and to a distance 300 feet from the shore, the bag and possession limit for salmon, other than king salmon, is six fish, of which six per day and in possession may be coho salmon;

(C) a person 16 years of age or older may not sport fish in the Homer Spit youth fishery zone, established by ADF&G regulatory markers to include a portion of the Homer Spit fishery enhancement lagoon, during designated youth fishery days, which occur on the first Saturday in June and the first and third Saturday in August;

(D) Tanner crab: in Kachemak Bay east of a line from Point Pogibshi to Anchor Point, the open season is from July 15–December 31 and from January 15 or the beginning of the commercial Tanner crab season, whichever is later, through March 15;

(E) in the waters of Tutka Bay Lagoon sport fishing is prohibited within 100 yards of the Tutka Bay Lagoon hatchery net pens;

(3) in waters east of the longitude of Gore Point (150° 57.85'W. longitude) to the longitude of Cape Fairfield (148° 50.25'W. longitude), and north of the latitude of Cape Douglas (58° 51.10'N. latitude);

(A) in the salt waters north of a line between Cape Resurrection and Aialik Cape (Resurrection Bay Terminal Harvest Area):

(i) king salmon: from May 1–August 31, the bag and possession limit is two fish; from September 1–April 30, the bag and possession limit is one fish; king salmon do not need to be entered on a harvest record and do not count against the annual limit set out in (a)(1) of this section and 5 AAC 58.024.

(ii) salmon, other than king salmon bag and possession limit is six fish, of which six per day and in possession may be coho salmon;

(iii) lingcod: no open season, may not be retained or possessed;

(B) in the salt waters south of a line between Cape Resurrection and Aialik Cape:

(i) king salmon: form January 1–December 31, the bag and possession limit is one fish; king salmon do not need to be entered on a harvest record and do not count against the annual limit set out in (a)(1) of this section and 5 AAC 58.024;

(ii) salmon, other than king salmon, bag and possession limit between Gore Point and Cape Fairfield is six fish, of which only three per day and in possession may be coho salmon.

ISSUE: Too few kings returning to Cook Inlet, by having some anglers fill their needs before the summer and from stocks other than Cook Inlet should help all those involved.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The problems with too much effort for weak runs will continue.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Resource hogs.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Problem is too liberal a sport fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Mary J. Adami (HQ-F13-223)

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PROPOSAL 184 - 5 AAC 01.530. Subsistence fishing permits; 5 AAC 56.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Kenai Peninsula Area; 5 AAC 57.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 58.024. Harvest record required; annual limits; 5 AAC 59.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Anchorage Bowl Drainages Area; 5 AAC 60.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Knik Arm Drainages Area; 5 AAC 61.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Susitna River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 62.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the West Cook Inlet Area; and 5 AAC 77.525. Personal use salmon fishery. Require sport, personal use, and subsistence fishermen to record and report king salmon harvest information within a 24-hour period, as follows:

Add to the current regulation of recording the harvest of a king salmon in Upper Cook Inlet within 24 hour of harvest via on-line or electronic means (established by the department) record the date of harvest, location of harvest, approximate length of king salmon, and sex of king salmon. This harvest reporting is required by all sport, personal use, and subsistence caught in salmon in Upper Cook Inlet.

ISSUE: Establish a regulation requiring 24 hour on-line/electronic king salmon harvest reporting by sport, personal use, and subsistence fishing in Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The department is in need of immediate, accurate, sport/personal-use/subsistence harvest reporting of king salmon to accurately manage the UCI fishery during these times that lack abundance. Current information is by sporadic means; in river monitoring by the department or after season harvest reports.

During the short season when king salmon return to our rivers, every fish that is harvested needs to be accurately counted to allow the department to establish the health of the run. If all user groups are committed to timely and accurate "during the season" reporting, the information would be essential to accurate goal management.

Ask the department; would it be helpful information to managing a fishery that is on the brink of destruction if you knew within 24 hours, with say 90% certainty, how many king salmon were actually being harvested in any Upper Cook Inlet River or salt waterway? Would this be

considered better information than receiving a harvest report the following winter from 10% of the fishing population?

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, immediate and accurate king salmon reporting will allow the Department of fish managers to "the management plan during to progression of the season" with more accuracy.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All those interested in the department managing with accurate king salmon harvest information.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Any user group that benefits from the Department of fish making management decisions with less than accurate information. With this accurate harvest information, we may find this new accounting does not benefit users that can continue to harvest fish because of the department's inability to accurately count fish.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None on this topic, I see no downside of this proposal. The department is already set up to receive electronic data for other tasks, and the time period this information is needing to be received is not year round. We could eliminate the paper-mail in harvest reporting if this type of reporting was established.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce Morgan (HQ-F13-379)

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PROPOSAL 185 - 5 AAC 01.5XX. New Section; 5 AAC 21.3XX. New Section; 5 AAC 56.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 57.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 58.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 59.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 62.XXX. New Section; and 5 AAC 77.5XX. New Section. Require daily reporting of all salmon harvested in Upper Cook Inlet salmon fisheries by all user groups, as follows:

ALL users of the resource shall report harvest using one of the following methods on a daily basis.

a. Electronic/Computer.
b. Telephonic, fax or other means.
c. Fish and Game Office.
d. Smartphone Apps.

ISSUE: Daily reporting of all salmon harvested in Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Fisheries by all user groups. Electronic, online, telephonic, or report to Fish and Game office.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The department will continue to have inaccurate timely harvest data for inseason resource management.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Unknown.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users and our resource will benefit from improved harvest data.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No other solutions. Detailed and accurate data is the building block for a healthy fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Todd Smith, Megan Smith, Amber Every, Travis Every (HQ-F13-201)
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PROPOSAL 57 - 5 AAC 56.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 57.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 58.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 59.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section; 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section; and 5 AAC 62.XXX. New Section. Limit amount of sport-caught fish that may be exported to 100 pounds of fillets. *(This proposal will be considered at the Lower and Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meetings.)*

One hundred pound exporting limit-filets.

ISSUE: Over limits and sales of sport caught fish.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Continual waste and abuse.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? One hundred pounds is more than enough.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Resident Alaskans.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Fed Ex, UPS.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-375)
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PROPOSAL 186 - 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King salmon Management Plan methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Add a reference to the existing optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Kenai River early-run king salmon and provide department additional management flexibility, as follows:

(d) In the Kenai River,

…

(3) if the spawning escapement is projected to fall within the optimal escapement goal **of 5,300–9,000**, the commissioner **may** [SHALL] by emergency order, liberalize the sport fishery downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, by allowing the use of bait if the department projects

that the total harvest under a liberalized sport fishery will not reduce the spawning escapement below the optimal escapement goal; only king salmon less than 46 inches in length or 55 inches or greater in length may be retained;

ISSUE: The primary objective of managing early-run king salmon is to achieve a spawning escapement within an optimal escapement goal (OEG) range established by the board, but that range is not defined in regulation and thereby not readily accessible to members of the public.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? A board-adopted OEG will continue to be in regulation without reference to the number established.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The public and department will benefit from accessibility of the OEG range.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-294)

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PROPOSAL 187 - 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Modify the Kenai River early-run king salmon plan to provide the department more flexibility when liberalizing the sport fishery, as follows:

Change: 5 AAC 57.160 (d)(3).

"If the spawning escapement is projected to fall within the OEG, the commissioner **may** [SHALL]**,** by emergency order, liberalize the sport fishery downstream of Skilak Lake, by allowing the use of bait if the department projects that the total harvest under a liberalized sport fishery will not reduce the spawning escapement below the OEG."

ISSUE: This clause in the Kenai River early-run King Salmon Management Plan directs the department to liberalize the fishery to allow the use of bait if the spawning escapement is projected to fall within the OEG by using the word **shall** in reference to this liberalization. We believe the word **shall** should be replaced with the word **may** because it provides the department more leeway in assessing the varying diversified elements of this run before liberalizations are instituted.

The Kenai River early-run of king salmon is unique in the sense that it is very diversified with about 80% of the run going into a variety of tributary streams along the river and about 20% of the spawning occurring in the main stem. The Kenai River ER has been in decline since about 2006 and recent research data illustrates that some of these tributary streams are experiencing

steeper run strength declines than others. Additionally, many property owners and fishermen on the middle river, above the Soldotna bridge, report that they aren't seeing many spawning kings in their traditional spawning locations of the main stem in the last several years. Despite not having an active Cook Inlet commercial fishery during the ER it is experiencing a steeper decline than the late-run and that of most other Cook Inlet rivers and streams.

Since this run is made up of many smaller run segments they can individually be in jeopardy for a variety of reasons such as over-harvest, habitat destruction, erosion, development, bear predation, etc. For this reason, we believe the mandatory liberalization to the use of bait by the use of the word **shall** could jeopardize some segments of this run when it is applied at the lower end of the OEG as directed. Research also indicates that smaller individual runs of fish are more vulnerable to rapid declines or extinction than larger runs. Because of these factors we have to be more conservative in the way we manage this run and the change we are proposing would provide a better management approach for this particular run of Kenai River king salmon.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Some segments of the ER could suffer from too much harvest pressure and continue to decline or even become extinct. Additionally, any recovery efforts of these stocks could be delayed or enabled if this mandatory liberalization isn't altered.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The resource itself and those who would like to see this run recover to its traditional numbers of fish in all run segments.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Nobody. Recovery and rebuilding of the ER is in the best interest of the resource and those want to enjoy this fishery into the future.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Bait only allowed below Slikok Creek. Rejected, because it might be too restrictive on larger returns if they develop.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Area Fisherman's Coalition (HQ-F13-096)

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<u>PROPOSAL 188</u> - 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Maintain existing optimal escapement goal (OEG) of 5,300–9,000 Kenai River early-run king salmon, as follows:

Maintain the existing OEG of 5,300–9,000 as a precautionary measure which precludes increases in fishery exploitation and provides a safety factor for escapement during a period of low returns and transition in assessment methodology.

ISSUE: Problems with the historical assessment methodology led the department to undertake a comprehensive reanalysis of the historical data which has provided new estimates of fish number and productivity. This analysis incorporated new research data including mark-recapture

estimates of abundance and Didson sonar counts. The Didson sonar substantially improves the capability of the department to assess run strength in real time and regulate fisheries in-season to meet management goals. At the same time, the historical data is very limited. As a result, estimates of historical run size and productivity are extremely uncertain. Very low escapement goals identified by the department (3,800–8,500) and alarmingly lower Didson-equivalent counts (2,450–5,500) must be considered with a healthy degree of skepticism. Recent low run sizes and escapements and historical run reconstruction uncertainties warrant a highly precautionary approach to management of the early king run in the interim until more reliable information can be developed using the more-reliable Didson sonar assessment technology.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The fish run and fishery will continue to subject to high risk and uncertainty.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Not applicable.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Recreational anglers will benefit from increased opportunities when the fishery is effectively managed for sustainable escapements in a simple.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Various other OEG ranges were considered but did not represent a substantial improvement over the current range.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-038)

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PROPOSAL 189 - 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Modify Kenai River early-run king salmon optimal escapement goal (OEG) to 9,000–14,000 fish, as follows:

The new regulation would say…
(b) The department shall manage the Kenai River early-run king salmon sport and guided sport fisheries to achieve the optimal escapement goal range of [7,200] **9,000**–14,000, to provide reasonable harvest opportunities over the entire run, and to ensure the age and size composition of the harvest closely approximates the age and size composition of the run.

ISSUE: I would like the board to address the alarming trend of the department lowering escapement goals. While they justify this action with questionable number and new sonar counters, the bottom line is that we do not get "more fish from less fish." This is a ridiculous notion and a dangerous concept. The strength of our early run has diminished steadily since the low end of the early run escapement numbers were lowered to 5300 Chinook, despite many restrictions on the inriver sport angler and no local commercial fishing pressure. Just recently, the department lowered the low end of the late-run king escapement goal too, despite its clear failure to improve the early run numbers. This is a dangerous and unacceptable direction in

fishery management and the low end of the early-run escapement goal needs to be returned to the 9,000 fish number of previous years.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? If the problem is not solved, the early-run of Kenai kings will continue to decline and the late run of Kenai kings will follow suit. We have lost our May kings and the June kings are well on their way to disappearing also. Quite frankly, the question has got to be asked: are we coincidently in a "period of low abundance" or have some questionable management strategies (such as lowering escapement goals to unbelievably low numbers) been implemented?

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, my proposal improves the quality of the resource and the products produced as the early run would rebound and the past levels of abundance would be returned.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Present and future generations of Alaskans as well as local businesses will benefit from a healthy early run of Kenai kings.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? ADF&G managers may suffer initially as the higher minimum escapement goal might increase the likelihood of not making their escapement goal initially. However, with that said, lowering a goal to achieve that goal is never prudent and the initial hardship and criticism incurred would be short lived as the runs rebounded and a viable fishery restored. The only other person likely to suffer might be the short-sided sport angler who wishes to use bait earlier in the early run to increase his/her success rates. However, this hardship would also be temporary as the overall numbers of early run king would eventually increase to where future success rates with more fish without bait would match or exceed that of bait with less fish.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Other solutions considered where to accept the current philosophy in management propose lowering the low end of the escapement goal even further, burying into the "less fish equates to more fish" concept. However, this was rejected since this management practice has proven itself ineffective for the past three or four lifecycles of the Kenai kings during the May/June early run.

PROPOSED BY: Scott M. Miller (HQ-F13-256)

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<u>PROPOSAL 190</u> - 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Revise the management plan with measures that stabilize fisheries during low-run years, increase opportunities during large-run years, and eliminate the "slot limit" for king salmon, as follows:

Undertake a comprehensive revision of the management plan based on new information published in an updated 2013 stock assessment for Kenai early-run Chinook including:

- Regulatory approach that stabilizes fishery predictability and limits the potential for disruptive closures during low runs, (conservative early-season management and inseason triggers and areas for catch & release or closure).
- Measures to increase opportunity during large run years in order to avoid exceeding escapement goals (e.g. opening the season with bait based on forecasts rather than by inseason EO, allowing multiple hooks).
- Elimination of the slot limit which is no longer meaningful based on the new stock assessment, due to lack of measurable effects, much-reduced fishing rates in recent years, and effectiveness of sanctuaries.

Corresponding changes in regulatory language of the *Kenai River and Kasilof River Early Run King Salmon Management Plan* include:

(d) In the Kenai River,

(1) the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and other special provisions for king salmon are set out in out in 5 AAC 57.120 - 5 AAC 57.123 and in (4) of this subsection;

(2) if the spawning escapement is **forecast or** projected to be less than the lower the end of the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, restrict as necessary the taking of king salmon in the sport and guided sport fisheries in the Kenai River to achieve the optimal escapement goal using one of the following methods:

(A) prohibit the retention of king salmon less than 55 inches in length, except king salmon less than 20 inches in length, downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake through June 30, and require that upstream from the Soldotna Bridge to the outlet of Skilak Lake and in the Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge, from July 1 through July 14, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used [AND ONLY KING SALMON LESS THAN

(I) 46 INCHES IN LENGTH AND 55 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH MAY BE RETAINED; OR

(II) 20 INCHES IN LENGTH AND 55 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH MAY BE RETAINED; OR]

(B) close the sport and guided sport fisheries to the taking of king salmon in the Kenai River

(i) downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake through June 30; and

(ii) from July 1 through July 14, upstream from the Soldotna Bridge to the outlet of Skilak Lake and in the Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge;

(3) if the spawning escapement is **forecast or** projected to fall within the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, liberalize the sport fishery downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, by allowing the use of bait if the department projects that the total harvest under a liberalized sport fishery will not reduce the spawning escapement below the optimal escapement goal; [ONLY KING SALMON LESS THAN 46 INCHES IN LENGTH OR 55 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH MAY BE RETAINED;]

(4) **if the spawning escapement is projected to exceed the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, liberalize the sport fishery downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, by allowing the use of multiple hooks.**

(5) a person may not possess, transport, or export from this state, a king salmon 55 inches or greater in length taken from the Kenai River from January 1 through July 31, unless the fish has been sealed by an authorized representative of the department within three days

after the taking; the person taking the fish must sign the sealing certificate at the time of sealing; the seal must remain on the fish until the preservation or taxidermy process has commenced; a person may not falsify any information required on the sealing certificate; in this paragraph,

(A) "sealing" means the placement of an official marker or locking tag (seal) by an authorized representative of the department on a fish and may include

(i) collecting and recording biological information concerning the conditions under which the fish was taken;

(ii) measuring the specimen submitted for sealing; and

(iii) retaining specific portions of the fish for biological information, including scales, fin rays, and vertebrae;

(B) "sealing certificate" means a form used by the department for recording information when sealing a fish.

ISSUE: New information on the status of the early run of Kenai king salmon warrants a careful reconsideration of provisions in the current management plan. Problems with the historical assessment methodology led the department to undertake a comprehensive reanalysis of the historical data which has provided new estimates of fish number and productivity. This analysis incorporated new research data including mark-recapture estimates of abundance and Didson sonar counts. The Didson sonar substantially improves the capability of the department to assess run strength in real time and regulate fisheries in-season to meet management goals. At the same time, the historical data is very limited. Recent low run sizes and escapements and historical run reconstruction uncertainties warrant a highly precautionary approach to management of the early king run in the interim and until more reliable information can be developed using the more-reliable Didson sonar assessment technology.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The fish run and fishery will continue to subject to high risk and uncertainty.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Not applicable.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Recreational anglers will benefit from increased opportunities when the fishery is effectively managed for sustainable escapements in a simple and predictable management framework.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Plan revisions are necessitated by changes in escapement goals and assessment methodology.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-039)

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<u>PROPOSAL 191</u> - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.160.

Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Repeal slot limit for Kenai River early-run king salmon, as follows:

Repeal slot limit from regulation.

ISSUE: Repeal non retention of king salmon between 46–55 inches regulation.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Loss of opportunity for early run kings. This regulation has had significant negative economic impacts with little, if any, positive biological impact. Discouraged anglers will continue to not participate.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Spreads out harvest to all age classes. Less catch and release mortality. Catch and release should be a personal choice.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Consumptive anglers and all fisherman.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No One.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None**.**

PROPOSED BY: Joe Hanes (HQ-F13-199)
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PROPOSAL 192 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Increase Kenai River early-run king salmon slot-limit size requirement, as follows:

The new regulation would say….(i) from January 1 through June 20, from its mouth upstream to the outlet of the Skilak Lake, and from July 1 through July 14 from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake and in Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge, only king salmon that are less than [46] **42** inches in length or 55 inches or greater in length may be retained;

ISSUE: The problem is the harvest of a high percentage of large hens with the present slot limit. Currently, the present low-end of the ER is 46" which enables and encourages anglers to harvest large, 40–45 pound kings, which are predominately hens, often three, four and five ocean fish. These are precisely the fish we need on our spawning beds to pass on their unique large Chinook genetics that the Kenai River was famous for. All low-end slot limit number of 42" protects these large hens much better.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Large hens will be singled out and the disproportionate harvest of these hens will continue, resulting in the continued decrease of the over-all size of Kenai Kings.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? The new regulation would improve the quality of the resource by protecting more large Chinook and putting them on the spawning beds.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The image of the Kenai River would benefit. Future generations (kids) of users would benefit. The longevity and sustainability of the ER Kenai Kings would benefit.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Only anglers who wanted to harvest kings from 42"–46" would suffer.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? I considered regulations that allowed the harvest of bucks only as well as total catch and release restrictions but believed them to be difficult for the average user (differentiating between male/females) to determine and too contentious of an issue (C&R) to administer at this time.

PROPOSED BY: Greg Brush (HQ-F13-253)
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PROPOSAL 193 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Increase the Kenai River early-run king salmon slot-limit size requirement and extend slot limit through July 31, as follows:

The new regulation would say:

(i) From January 1 through [June 30] **July 31**, from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake, and from July 1 through July 14, from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of the Skilak Lake and in Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge, only king salmon that are less than [46] **42** inches in length of 55 inches or greater in length may be retained;

ISSUE: The problem is the unaddressed heavy harvest of four and five ocean Chinook during the July late-run of Kenai Kings. There is an increase likelihood of the use of bait during this LR. There is much heavier angling pressure during the late-run also. The likelihood of sorting (releasing smaller fish to catch and keep a larger fish) and the frequency of the selective harvest is higher during the late-run. Anglers during this period are targeting the largest king possible whereas a typical ER angler in May or June are often happy to catch any size Kenai king at which time it is kept, spreading harvest across all age classes of kings. All the previously mentioned reasons contribute to a marked decline in overall size of late-run kings as no protection is currently offered the four and five ocean kings that previously made the Kenai River world famous.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Older age class, i.e. larger Kenai kings will continue to decline in overall numbers if this problem is not rectified.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, my proposal would improve the quality of the products produced by returning the Kenai late-run to a more balanced age structure and to past levels of larger four and five ocean Chinook.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Present and future anglers will benefit from a balanced run and an increase in larger Kenai River kings. Local businesses, and the State of Alaska as a whole, will also benefit as the reputation of the Kenai River and its trophy sized fish is restored. In addition, as a side benefit, an across the board slot limit, i.e. early and late-run, could encourage some king anglers to consider choosing the early run as a viable option. Presently, a slot limit in May/June only seems to push anglers into an already saturated July fishery. The new regulation would benefit the state's overall image also as it would send a clear message that "Alaska cares about its genetically unique, trophy sized king salmon." Escapement goals might be more easily met as an overall decrease in harvest may occur with this new regulation.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Only those anglers who wish to harvest 42"–55" kings in July would suffer. However other viable harvest options in the forms of abundance sockeye and smaller kings still remain.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? I considered total catch and release on all late-run kings as well as full closure of the July king fishery but rejected them immediately as being too inflammatory and contentions for the board to consider at this time.

PROPOSED BY: Greg Brush (HQ-F13-254)

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<u>PROPOSAL 194</u> - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Prohibit retention of early-run and late-run Kenai River king salmon 42 inches or greater in length, as follows:

Only King salmon under 42 inches may be retained.

ISSUE: Kenai River first run king salmon slot limit.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The size of Kenai River king salmon continue to get smaller. All data collected from sport and commercial fish supports this trend.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? If we let the larger fish breed they will produce larger fish. Alaska Department of Fish and Game does not support this idea, they believe size doesn't matter.

The rest of the world only breeds their top (finest gene pool) specimens. Alaska Department of Fish and Game method is not working, we need to change direction and use worldwide food chain management practices

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Kenai River king salmon population.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Anyone who wants to kill a large Kenai river king salmon. You can still fish for trophy fish but they must be released.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Complete river catch and release. This could hurt businesses in the local communities.

PROPOSED BY: Greg Davis (HQ-F13-057)

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PROPOSAL 195 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Prohibit retention of female king salmon greater than 33 inches in length in the Kenai River sport fishery, as follows:

No retention of female Chinook over 33 inches in length.

ISSUE: Low abundance of early and late run Chinook in the Kenai Rivers.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Runs will continue to decline.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, puts more females on the spawning beds.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Persons that retain females for the use of eggs as bait.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No retention of females period.

PROPOSED BY: Christine Brandt (HQ-F13-218)

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PROPOSAL 196 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area;

and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Extend Kenai River early-run king salmon regulations through July 9, as follows:

First run Kenai king salmon regulations extend until 7–10-xx.

ISSUE: Season end of the first run Kenai kings should extend until 7–10-xx.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Continued decline of the first run kings.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Should get more escapement up the Kenai River, which we have struggled to make escapement goals.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Not sure who benefits.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? All anglers who fish with bait 7–1-xx.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Close the fishery until run strengths improve.

PROPOSED BY: Greg Davis (HQ-F13-069)
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<u>PROPOSAL 197</u> - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Modify the Kenai River early- and late-run king salmon sport fisheries to begin seasons without bait and catch-and-release only, as follows:

Although as a lay person I am not positive about WHERE and HOW to word this (I know that Mr. Cain does though!) the new regulation would say something to the effect of…

(b) The department shall manage the Kenai River early and late run king salmon sport and guided sport fisheries to where **it will start out as a single hook, artificial only and catch and release until the department can project that they will** achieve the optimal escapement goal range of 9,000–4,000 to provide reasonable harvest opportunities over the entire run, and to ensure the age and size composition of the harvest closely approximates the age and size composition of the run.

(c) The department shall manage the Kasilof River early-run king salmon sport and guided sport fisheries to achieve the sustainable escapement goal, to provide reasonable harvest opportunities over the entire run while ensuring adequate escapement of naturally-produced king salmon, and to minimize the effects of conservation actions for the Kenai River on the Kasilof River.

(d) In the Kenai River,

(1) The seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and other special provisions for king salmon are set out in out 5 AAC 57.120 – 5 AAC 57.123 and in (4) of this subsection;
(2) if the spawning escapement is projected to be less than the lower end of the optimal escapement goal [Range Of 7,200 Kings] **during the early or late-run the** commissioner shall [BY EMERGENCY ORDER,] **continue to** restrict as necessary the taking of king salmon in the sport and guided sport fisheries in the Kenai River to achieve the optimal escapement goal using one of the following methods:

ISSUE: I would like the board to address the curious management practice of allowing harvest of Kenai Kings on the front side of the runs (both early and late runs) prior to ever knowing run strength of IF the escapement goal will be reached. This makes no sense, since it is impossible to "un-kill" fish mid-way through the run if/when it becomes apparent that the escapement goal may not be achieved. In this scenario, when escapement goals may not be achieved, ever single fish on the beds becomes critical and sometimes the fish harvested on the front of the run, prior to ever knowing run strength, can make a viable difference in sustainability. Starting both sport fisheries, i.e. early and late run kings, with a more conservative approach of single hook, no bait and catch and release (until escapement goals are projected to be met) makes much more sense. In the same way that the department uses "step-down" tools in the times of conservation concerns, they should use "step-up" tools to liberalize the fishery when appropriate, i.e., times where there is a harvestable surplus.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? If the problem is not solved, early and late run Kenai king escapement goals will be increasingly difficult to be met and consequently our stocks will continue to decline. Managers will struggle and fish that both managers and conservation minded anglers "wish we had back" will not be available to protect.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, absolutely! It helps ensure the likelihood of meeting our escapement goals, it helps ensure healthy sustainable king runs and it minimizes the chance of emergency restrictions during the mid-season that are all too frequent in recent years, adding some sense of predictability in the fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The fishery itself and all users of the resource present and future will benefit. In addition, fishery managers will benefit as their job becomes easier: no need to restrict at a moment's notice. The fisheries begin with the more conservative stance that managers will not liberalize it until it is clear that there is a harvestable abundance.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? The only people who might initially suffer are those anglers who wish to harvest fish early in the run regardless of run strength, i.e. those that do not understand the effect of harvest prior to knowing the strength of the run. Thus, there will be somewhat of an educational component to this if adopted.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Other solutions considered were total catch and release throughout the run(s), but that was rejected by me as I respect and understand an angler's right to harvest if and when a harvestable abundance occurs.

PROPOSED BY: Greg Brush (HQ-F13-258)
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PROPOSAL 198 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Begin early- and late-run king salmon seasons with catch-and-release only and then liberalize during the season, as follows:

The existing system assumes that runs will be strong. When runs are late or weak escapement may not be met.

The change the existing bag limit to an "escalating system." Start at catch and release only, as escapement grows so do bag limits and gear type and season length.

Kenai River king salmon bag limit.

Catch and release only. After X fish return: One king salmon. After XX fish count bait allowed after XXX bait allowed two fish. After XXXX bait allowed three fish. After XXXXX season extended.

ISSUE: Kenai River early and late run king salmon stock preservation. Bag limits.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? On years that run strengths are weak escapement goals may not be met.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS

PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? It should give the fish a better chance at escapement on poor return years. Starts at zero harvest until we prove that sufficient numbers are returning

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? People who fish for king salmon on years that we have large escapements.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? It will be harder to book fishermen to during early run times for local businesses in an already short season.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Catch and release only for seven years. Thought we could better utilize the resource.

PROPOSED BY: Greg Davis (HQ-F13-058)
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PROPOSAL 199 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Allow catch-and-release fishing for king salmon on the Kenai River when runs are projected to be below the escapement goal, as follows:

In years of low abundance and projected not to meet the lower end escapement goals on Kenai River King Salmon in both the early & late run, and to still provide a small fishing opportunity allow catch and release fishing instead of closing the river.

ISSUE: In years of low abundance similar to 2012 and severe restrictions are needed, but to still provide a little bit of fishing opportunity, catch and release mortality is very low at seven percent and the difference in savings of fish between catch and release and total closure is not very much.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Loss of all fishing opportunity.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Kenai river sport fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Mel Erickson (HQ-F13-275)

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PROPOSAL 200 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. Prohibit catch-and-release fishing for king salmon on the Kenai River, as follows:

Hook and release not allowed on the Kenai River.

ISSUE: Hook and release of king salmon.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Kenai kings will disappear.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, eventually bigger kings will be present.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All king salmon fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Mortality is understated.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-357)
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PROPOSAL 201 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King salmon Management Plan. Establish the lower Slikok Creek king salmon sanctuary area as the lower boundary for restrictive actions in July to conserve early-run king salmon and prohibit bait for an additional two weeks in July in those waters, as follows:

5 AAC 57.120.

(2) king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, as follows:
(A) …
(i) from January 1 – June 30, from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake, and from July 1 – July 14, from **an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek** [THE SOLDOTNA BRIDGE] upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake and in Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge, only king salmon that are less than 46 inches in length or 55 inches or greater in length may be retained;

5 AAC 57.121.

(1) sport fishing gear restrictions:
(A) from January 1 – June 30, in the Kenai River, **and from July 1 – July 14, in the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake,** only one unbaited single-hook, artificial lure may be used;
(B) from July 1 – July 31, **in the Kenai River, from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, only one single hook may be used; from July 15 – July 31,** in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, only one single hook, may be used;

5 AAC 57.160.

(d) In the Kenai River,
…
(2) if the spawning escapement is projected to be less than the lower the end of the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, restrict as necessary the taking of king salmon in the sport and guided sport fisheries in the Kenai River to achieve the optimal escapement goal using one of the following methods:

(A) prohibit the retention of king salmon less than 55 inches in length, except king salmon less than 20 inches in length downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake through June 30, and require that upstream from **an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek** [THE SOLDOTNA BRIDGE] to the outlet of Skilak Lake and in the Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge, from July 1 through July 14, only [ONE UNBAITED, SINGLE-HOOK, ARTIFICIAL LURE MAY BE USED AND ONLY] king salmon less than

…

(B) close the sport and guided sport fisheries to the taking of king salmon in the Kenai River

(ii) from July 1 through July 14, upstream from **an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek** [THE SOLDOTNA BRIDGE] to the outlet of Skilak Lake and in the Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge;

ISSUE: Allowing use of bait in the area where the slot limit remains in effect is inconsistent with management of fisheries where nonretention of salmon is required. In addition, the current boundary of the Soldotna Bridge is inconsistent with management of tributary spawning stocks because Slikok Creek is downstream of this boundary.

Early-run king salmon stocks are comprised mainly of tributary spawning stocks that migrate above Slikok Creek and into Slikok Creek. Tributary stocks are the primary stock available to the fishery until late June when the king salmon mainstem stocks begin entering the river. Regulations for the Kenai River early-run king salmon fishery prohibit use of bait during June and prohibit harvest of king salmon greater than 46 inches and less than 55 inches during that same time period. Standard regulations for the Kenai River allow use of bait from the mouth of the river upstream to Skilak Lake beginning July 1, but the slot limit remains in effect upstream of the Soldotna Bridge. Radio-telemetry projects conducted by the department from 2010–2012 show that early-run king salmon are present in the Kenai River, above Slikok Creek, until about mid-July.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The harvest potential on small early-run stocks staging to immigrate into Slikok Creek spawn near the mouth of Slikok Creek or continue migrating to upstream spawning tributaries will remain unchanged.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Future anglers fishing for early-run king salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? People who like to fish for king salmon in waters that may be restricted by this proposal.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-293)

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PROPOSAL 202 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Increase Slikok Creek king salmon sanctuary area an additional 200 yards, as follows:

Change: **Slikok Creek.**

From January 1–July 31, the Kenai River from ADF&G markers about 300 YD downstream of the mouth of Slikok Creek upstream to ADF&G markers about **300 YD** [100 YD] upstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek is a fly-fishing-only water and is closed to fishing for king salmon.

ISSUE: Slikok Creek Chinook salmon have been reduced to numbers that threaten the viability of the population. In 2011 and 2012 only 44 and 30 Chinook salmon entered the stream (counts from a weir in the lower creek). In contrast, foot counts, which are minimum counts, averaged 165 from 1990 to 2004 (actual number of spawners probably averaged in the 200–300 range). Actual peak counts by year are:

1990 – 215	1996 – 88	2001 – 95	2006 – 47
1991 – 160	1997 – 313	2002 – 71	2008 – 59
1992 – 156	1998 – 61	2003 – 115	2009 – 70
1993 – 307	1999 – 180	2004 – 153	2010 – 28
1994 – 295	2000 – 106	2005 – 53	2011 – 44
			2012 – 30

(Please note that in 2012 these numbers would have been much lower except for the fact that both the commercial and sport fisheries were closed because of low Kenai River King salmon abundance.)

As noted above, peak foot stream survey counts of 165 spawning fish are conservative as single counts rarely see more than 50% of the total population. A good example of this was in 2009 when the weir counts of 70 fish translated to much less than 70 fish spawning as mortality took place upstream of the weir site due to bear consumption and other causes. A foot survey during the same weir counting period found just 10 fish. Additionally, in 2012 only 10 of the 30 fish counted at the weir were females and it should be assumed that most, if not all, were also lost due to predation. Therefore, it is likely that this population is at risk of not sustaining itself much longer.

In 2010 ADF&G indicated that they plan to study the situation and respond in the future. The problem with this approach is that it is not precautionary given this data set. At what count does ADF&G define a problem? If the weir counts go much lower than present it may be too late to recover this population. The risk/benefit analysis should favor the fish and not the users in this case.

Unfortunately, there is only a single escapement objective for Kenai River Early-run Chinook salmon. This is the classic problem of escapement goal management that does not consider spawner distribution in tributary streams in setting the goal. Small stream systems that have lower productivity tend to be over-harvested. It is very important for the BOF to realize that small populations in small stream systems are the first to be lost relative to habitat and harvest issues.

Run timing of Slikok Creek Chinook salmon extends from June to August with most fish entering between mid-July to early August. Therefore, Chinook salmon headed for Slikok Creek hold in the main stem Kenai River for a lengthy period of time and are exposed to harvest as the size of the area closed to Chinook fishing is not sufficient to protect these holding fish. This proposal would increase the size of the protective zone. Alaska Department of Fish and Game 1991 Bendock's Study stated, "Chinook salmon tracked to small tributaries such as Slikok, Juneau and Quartz Creeks spent a larger proportion of their stream life in the main stem than fish utilizing the Funny and Killey Rivers".

Additionally, recently released age/comp and sex ratio data of these stocks raises another area of concern. Weir data shows that of the 59 fish through the weir in 08 only 24 were female and in 09 only 16 of the 70 fish counted were female. Therefore, a system that once produced 100's of early run Kenai River Chinook salmon has been reduced to producing just a few females. The lack of females may also be an indication of selectivity as they are more frequently harvested because they have the added attraction of roe to utilize for bait within the fishery.

The age structure of these stocks in some years is even more unsettling as the majority of males (67% of fish age classed) in 09 were 1.2 age (jacks). This skewed age structure may be the result of selective harvest in the sport fishery towards larger age class fish.

All of these factors combine to illustrate a valuable stock that we should hold in grave concern and be proactive in protecting. The BOF's Sustainable Salmon Policy dictates that we should always err on the side of conservation when we see scientific warning signs to these degrees.

The sustainable salmon policy of the BOF states:

(A) a precautionary approach, involving the application of prudent foresight that takes into account the uncertainties in salmon fisheries and habitat management, the biological, social, cultural, and economic risks, and the need to take action with incomplete knowledge, should be applied to the regulation and control of harvest and other human-induced sources of salmon mortality; a precautionary approach requires

(i) consideration of the needs of future generations and avoidance of potentially irreversible changes;

(ii) prior identification of undesirable outcomes and of measures that will avoid undesirable outcomes or correct them promptly;

(iii) initiation of any necessary corrective measure without delay and prompt achievement of the measure's purpose, on a time scale not exceeding five years, which is approximately the generation time of most salmon species;

(iv) that where the impact of resource use is uncertain, but likely presents a measurable risk to sustained yield, priority should be given to conserving the productive capacity of the resource;

(v) appropriate placement of the burden of proof, of adherence to the requirements of this subparagraph, on those plans or ongoing activities that pose a risk or hazard to salmon habitat or production;

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Slikok Creek Chinook salmon will go to extinction and may require an Endangered Species Listing if no action is taken by the Board of Fisheries.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All user groups as Chinook salmon in Slikok Creek are a renewable natural resource.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Recreational fishermen who are incidentally harvesting Slikok Creek bound fish in these waters.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Additional closures downstream of Slikok Creek or an Endangered Species Listing may be warranted in the future. We believe, however, that a more conservative approach towards harvest on these stocks may be the appropriate measure necessary in a rebuilding effort at this time.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Area Fisherman's Coalition (HQ-F13-097)

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PROPOSAL 203 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Increase Slikok Creek king salmon sanctuary area an additional 600 feet, as follows:

Expand Slikok sanctuary area of Slikok Creek by 600 feet.

ISSUE: Twelve spawners at Slikok Creek.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? No more Slikok kings.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, it will protect the Kenai/Slikok kings.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users, eventually.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Close a section below the Soldotna Bridge.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-358)

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PROPOSAL 204 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower

Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Increase Kiley River king salmon sanctuary area an additional 600 feet, as follows:

Expand Kiley River sanctuary area by 600 feet.

ISSUE: Kiley River kings.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Fewer spawning kings.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? More kings will survive.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Eventually all users.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? A larger conservation zone.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-359)

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PROPOSAL 205 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. Close Kenai River tributaries to all fishing July 1–August 30, and the Kenai River mainstem upstream of river mile 13 from July 10–September 20, as follows:

Close all fishing on the Kenai River tributaries July 1 through August 30.

Close all fishing from Mile 13 (Honeymooner's Cove) to Kenai Lake from July 10 through September 20.

ISSUE: Fishing on spawning king salmon.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Spawning will continue to be disrupted.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No effect on fish quality.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone who values healthy king salmon runs.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Everyone who enjoys fishing these times/places.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Close the entire Kenai watershed upstream from Soldotna July 1 through October.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-135)

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PROPOSAL 206 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Close the Kenai River upstream of the Soldotna Bridge to sport fishing for king salmon, as follows:

King salmon fishing upstream from the Soldotna Bridge is closed to fishing for king salmon. Any king hooked accidentally shall immediately be released.

ISSUE: Continued decline in numbers of returning first and second run king salmon in the Kenai River. Different scenarios have been tried by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to save the king salmon runs, none the less, the runs continue to decline. Complete closure of king salmon fishing in the Kenai River upstream from the Soldotna Bridge will allow additional escapement which will result in increased numbers of kings returning to the Kenai River. This is an extreme measure but the present condition of the king population demands extreme action before the run is lost completely.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The king salmon population will continue to decline and the rate of decline may even accelerate. Other closure scenarios have been implemented by ADF&G without much result. If this proposal is not adopted, many kings that would otherwise spawn will be killed by anglers. The value of viable king salmon runs in the Kenai River far outweigh any negative related to adoption of this proposal. There will still be 21 miles of river to fish.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes and No. This will eliminate catching kings that are "ripe" and ready to spawn.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? First and second king salmon in the Kenai River.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? There will be increased boat traffic on the lower part of the lower river that might have a small effect on private property owners. No one else should suffer. There will still be 21 miles of river to fish and if people will spread out, that should cancel any negative impacts of this proposal.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Complete closure of the Kenai River to king salmon fishing.

PROPOSED BY: Bob Krogseng, Ron Weilbacher, Mindy Payne (HQ-F13-214)

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PROPOSAL 207 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Establish an optimal escapement goal (OEG) of 20,000–40,000 Kenai River late-run king salmon, as follows:

Establish an Optimum Escapement Goal (OEG) of 20,000–40,000. The proposed goal includes the department's model-derived estimates of MSY and MSP and thus recognizes both the commercial and sport fishery significance of Kenai kings. Avoiding very low escapements under 20,000 provides a precautionary reduction relative to the lowest historical escapement where returns have been estimated. The proposed upper goal of 40,000 includes the historical average escapement and maintains high production and yield according the Department's recent escapement goal analysis.

The corresponding change in management plan language would be:

(b) The department shall manage the late run of Kenai River king salmon to achieve a [SUSTAINABLE] **optimal** escapement goal of [15,000–30,000] **20,000–40,000** king salmon, as follows:

ISSUE: Alaska Department of Fish and Game has recommended an SEG for Kenai late-run kings of 15,000–30,000 which represents a substantial reduction from historical levels. The lower end of the new goal (15,000) is lower than any historical escapement for which production has been estimated (26,550). The top end of the new SEG for Kenai late-run king salmon (30,000) is less than the historical average escapement (37,000). The department's SEG recommendation was based on subjective interpretations of the available data and inconsistent with similar interpretations in other areas of the state (e.g. Kuskowim kings). Establishing a goal outside the range of data is statistically questionable and contrary to standard ADF&G practice. Alaska Department of Fish and Game also made an allocative decision to base the king goal on maximum sustained yield rather than maximum sustained production as would have been consistent with the sport fishery priority for kings.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Lowering the SEG will allow unrestricted fishing levels which risk prolonging the period of low king runs. The low SEG will also allow sport and commercial fisheries to increase harvest of kings over historical levels as the run rebounds from current low levels. Expansion of king fisheries is undesirable due to biological effects of harvesting for lower escapements and social effects of fishery expansion.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Not applicable.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone will benefit from continuing sustainable runs of Kenai late-run king salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one. This change prevents future fishery expansion. It does not affect current fisheries.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Just raising the upper end of the goal was considered but rejected out of concern for uncertainty and risk of maintaining the large reduction in the

lower end. Establishing the lower end at the lower limit of the range of the historical data (25,550) is also a reasonable option but 20,000 was a reasonable compromise relative to the questionable model-derived number of 15,000 and also included the model-derived estimate of MSY.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-035)

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PROPOSAL 208 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Establish a biological escapement goal (BEG) of 17,800–35,700 Kenai River late-run king salmon, as follows:

The new regulation should say…

(b) The department shall manage the late run of Kenai River king salmon to achieve a biological escapement goal of [15,000] **17,800**–35,700 king salmon, as follows:

ISSUE: The problem I would like the board to address is failed escapement goals and a decrease in overall numbers in late run kings. The departments "razor thin" line of what is adequate escapement affords no "cushion" and the recent decision to lower the lower end of the escapement goal is a step backwards. Their continued trust in the numbers provided by the sonar, even the new improved sonar, is cause for concern. Likewise, the department's belief that we can actually see "more fish from less fish" (i.e. better returns off our lower returns?) seems shaky at best, proven ineffective by weak early run returns ever since lower ER escapement goals.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? If the problem isn't solved, the July late run king stocks will continue to decline, just like the June returns, which have followed the catastrophic decline of Kenai kings that return in May.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, my proposal improves the quality of the resource as a healthy, predictable and sustainable late run of Kenai kings would now have a chance of returning to historic levels.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All sport anglers, present and future generations, would benefit from a healthy late run of Kenai kings. Likewise, local businesses and the image of the State of Alaska would benefit from a rebounding fishery and healthy resource.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Alaska Department of Fish and Game managers might initially suffer as a higher escapement goal could increase scrutiny if/when escapement goals might not initially be met. However, this is the hardship that has to be accepted. It would be a temporary condition as the run returned to past levels and goals are subsequently met. Commercial fishermen could also suffer as higher low-end goal increases the potential for restrictions on emergency openings.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Other solutions considered are to leave the recently lowered low-end number "as is" and hope that the outcome is entirely different than the effect a lowered goal has had on the early run. I rejected this solution immediately as I believe that re-active management, rather than pro-active management is a large part of our problem with our Chinook "period of low abundance."

PROPOSED BY: Scott M. Miller (HQ-F13-252)

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PROPOSAL 209 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Establish paired restrictions in sport, personal use, and commercial fisheries to meet sustainable escapement goal (SEG) and modify sport fishing liberalizations when goal is projected to be exceeded, as follows:

Incorporate provisions in the Kenai Late-Run Kenai King Salmon Management plan to:

- Pair restrictions in the sport, personal use, and commercial fisheries when necessary to meet the established escapement goal.
- Clarify sport fishing alternatives when the sustainable escapement goal is projected to be exceeded.

Corresponding changes to regulatory language include:

(a) (1) in the **Kenai River** sport fishery,

(A) if the sustainable escapement goal is projected to be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, **increase the harvest potential of the inriver sport fishery by establishing periods by emergency order during which time, season, area, gear and/or bag and possession limits are liberalized** [EXTEND THE SPORT FISHING SEASON UP TO SEVEN DAYS DURING THE FIRST WEEK OF AUGUST];

(B) From July 1 through July 31, a person may not use more than one single hook in the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake;

(C) the commissioner may, by emergency order, establish periods where bait is prohibited, retention is prohibited, or fishing for king salmon is closed.

(2) in the sport fishery, that portion of the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake is open to unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel on Mondays in July; for purposes of this section a non-motorized vessel is one that does not have a motor on board;

[(3) IF THE PROJECTED ESCAPEMENT IS LESS THAN 15,000 KING SALMON, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL]

[(A) CLOSE THE SPORT FISHERIES IN THE KENAI RIVER AND IN THE SALT WATERS OF COOK INLET NORTH OF THE LATITUDE OF BLUFF POINT TO THE TAKING OF KING SALMON;]

[(B) CLOSE THE COMMERCIAL DRIFT GILLNET FISHERY IN THE CENTRAL DISTRICT WITHIN ONE MILE OF THE KENAI PENINSULA SHORELINE NORTH OF THE KENAI RIVER AND WITHIN ONE AND ONE-HALF MILES OF THE KENAI PENINSULA SHORELINE SOUTH OF THE KENAI RIVER; AND]

[(C) CLOSE THE COMMERCIAL SET GILLNET FISHERY IN THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT OF THE CENTRAL DISTRICT.]

(3) in the marine sport fishery, the commissioner shall by emergency order,

(A) establish periods during which bait is prohibited when fishing for king salmon in the salt waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of bluff point, at such time as the Kenai River sport fishery is restricted by prohibition of bait;

(B) establish periods during which retention is prohibited when fishing for king salmon in the salt waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of bluff point, at such time as the Kenai River sport fishery is closed to retention;

(C) close the salt waters of Cook Inlet north of an ADF&G regulatory marker located two miles south of the Anchor River at 59°45.94' N. lat. to the taking of king salmon when Kenai River sport fishery is closed to fishing for king salmon.

(4) in the Kenai River personal use fishery, the commissioner shall by emergency order, prohibit the retention of king salmon when the Kenai River sport fishery is restricted by prohibition of bait, retention or fishing for king salmon.

(5) in the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper subdistrict, the commissioner shall by emergency order,

(A) restrict fishing periods to no more than 24 hours of aggregate fishing time per week, with a 36-hour continuous closure as described in 5 AAC 21.360(c)(2)(C), when sport fishing for king salmon in the Kenai River is restricted by prohibition of the use of bait;

(B) restrict fishing periods to no more than 12 hours of aggregate fishing time per week, with a 36-hour continuous closure as described in 5 AAC 21.360(c)(2)(C), when sport fishing for king salmon in the Kenai River is restricted by prohibition of retention;

(C) Close the fishery through August 15 when sport fishing for king salmon in the Kenai River is closed during July.

(6) in the commercial drift net fishery in the Central District, the commissioner shall by emergency order, close the fishery within one mile of the Kenai peninsula shoreline north of the Kenai River and within one and one-half miles of the Kenai peninsula shoreline south of the Kenai River when the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper subdistrict is closed.

(c) [FROM JULY 20 THROUGH JULY 31,] **Repealed (*date*)**

[(1) REPEALED 6/22/2002;]

[(2) IF THE PROJECTED INRIVER RETURN OF LATE-RUN KING SALMON IS LESS THAN 40,000 FISH AND THE INRIVER SPORT FISHERY HARVEST IS PROJECTED TO RESULT IN AN ESCAPEMENT BELOW 17,800 KING SALMON, THE DEPARTMENT MAY RESTRICT THE INRIVER SPORT FISHERY;]

[(3) REPEALED 6/22/2002;]

[(4) IF THE INRIVER SPORT FISHERY IS CLOSED UNDER (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION, THE COMMERCIAL SET GILLNET FISHERY IN THE UPPER SUBDISTRICT SHALL BE CLOSED;]

[(5) REPEALED 6/11/2005.]

(d) Repealed 6/22/2002.

(e) Consistent with the purposes of this management plan and 5 AAC 21.360, if the projected inriver return of king salmon is less than 40,000 fish, the department may not reduce the closed waters at the mouth of the Kenai River described in 5 AAC 21.350(b) .

(f) The provisions of the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 21.365) are exempt from the provisions of this section.

(g) The department will, to the extent practicable, conduct habitat assessments on a schedule that conforms to the Board of Fisheries (board) triennial meeting cycle. If the assessments demonstrate a net loss of riparian habitat caused by noncommercial fishermen, the department is requested to report those findings to the board and submit proposals to the board for appropriate modification of this plan.

(h) The commissioner may depart from the provisions of the management plan under this section as provided in 5 AAC 21.363(e).

ISSUE: The current management plan was written in a period of consistently high king runs sizes and does not effectively address low run sizes like those seen in recent years. This proposal is a simplified version of essential plan changes discussed in the 2012–2013 Upper Cook Inlet Task Force and considered during the board's 2013 statewide meeting. The board considered a paired step-down strategy for sport and commercial fisheries but this consideration was sidetracked by a discussion of changes in escapement goals.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Lack of direction in the current management plan for periods of low king returns: a) places a undue burden on the department to make highly-allocative fishery restrictions; b) fails to share the burden of conservation among sport and commercial fisheries, b) and c) increases risks of commercial fishery closures during low run years.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Not applicable.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone will benefit by clear management direction. The sport fishery will benefit by sharing the conservation burden through paired restrictions rather than shouldering the entire share of restrictions to meet king escapement goals. The commercial setnet fishery will benefit relative to the current plan because step-downs will provide the opportunity to avoid total closure when king numbers are not adequate to prosecute a full fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Various other proposals were considered based on UCI task force and 2013 Statewide Board meeting discussions and deliberations. Emergency Order limits of 36 hours were considered but rejected as inadequate protection for kings at low run sizes. No direction to the commercial setnet fishery for August was considered but substantial numbers of Kenai kings return and are harvested in the ESSN fishery during August in some years.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-036)

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PROPOSAL 210 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Modify *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan* to remove preamble language, establish a biological escapement goal (BEG) of 12,000–28,000 king salmon, increase emergency order (EO) hours for commercial fishing, and delete habitat and EO provisions, as follows:

5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan

(a) The purposes of this management plan are to ensure adequate escapement of late-run king salmon into the Kenai River system and provide management guidelines to the department. [THE DEPARTMENT SHALL MANAGE THE LATE-RUN KENAI RIVER KING SALMON STOCKS PRIMARILY FOR SPORT AND GUIDED SPORT USES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THE SPORT AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERMEN WITH A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO HARVEST THESE SALMON RESOURCES OVER THE ENTIRE RUN, AS MEASURED BY FREQUENCY OR INRIVER RESTRICTIONS.]

(b) The department shall manage the late run of Kenai River king salmon to achieve a biological escapement goal (**SEG/BEG**) of **12,000–28,000** [17,800–35,700] king salmon, as follows:

(1) in the sport **and commercial** fishery,

(A) if the biological escapement is projected to be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, extend the sport fishing season up to seven days during the first week of August **and in the commercial fishery allow as many additional hours as appropriate to achieve king and sockeye goals;**

(B) from July 1 through July 31, a person may not use more than one single hook in the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake;

(2) in the sport fishery, that portion of the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake is open to unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel on Mondays in July; for purposes of this section a non-motorized vessel is one that does not have a motor on board;

(3) if the projected inriver return is less than **the lower end of the** [17,800] king salmon **BEG** the department shall

(A) close the sport, **Personal Use and Educational** fisheries in the Kenai River and in the salt waters of Cook Inlet north of the latitude of bluff Point to **Boulder Point** to the taking of king salmon;

(B) close the commercial drift gillnet fishery in the Central District within one mile of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline north of the Kenai River and within one and one-half miles of the Kenai Peninsula shoreline south of the Kenai River; and

(C) close the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District.

(c) From July 20 through July 31,

(1) repealed 6/22/2002;

(2) if projected [INRIVER RETURN OF LATE-RUN KING SALMON IS LESS THAN 40,000 FISH AND THE] inriver sport fishery harvest is projected to result in an escapement below **the lower end of the** [17,800] king salmon **BEG**, the department may restrict the inriver sport fishery;

(3) repealed 6/22/2002;

(4) if the inriver sport fishery is closed under (2) of this subsection, the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict shall be closed;

(5) repealed 6/11/2005.

(d) Repealed 6/22/2002.

(e) Consistent with the purposes of this management plan and 5 AAC 21.360. if projected inriver return of king salmon is less than **30,000** [40,000] fish, the department may not reduce the closed waters at the mouth of the Kenai River described in 5 AAC [40,000] fish, the department may not reduce the closed waters at the mouth of the Kenai River described in 5 AAC 21.350(b).

(f) The provisions of the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 21.365) are exempt from the provisions of this section.

[(g) THE DEPARTMENT WILL, TO THE EXTENT PRACTICABLE, CONDUCT HABITAT ASSESSMENTS ON A SCHEDULE THAT CONFORMS TO THE BOARD OF FISHERIES (BOARD) TRIENNIAL MEETING CYCLE. IF THE ASSESSMENTS DEMONSTRATE A NET LOSS OF RIPARIAN HABITAT CAUSED BY NONCOMMERCIAL FISHERMEN, THE DEPARTMENT IS REQUESTED FOR APPROPRIATE MODIFICATION OF THIS PLAN.

(h) THE COMMISSIONER MAY DEPART FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN UNDER THIS SECTION AS PROVIDED IN 5 AAC 21.363.]

ISSUE: This proposal addresses the following four problems:

1. It removes the confusing preamble language which does nothing anyway.
2. It establishes that ADF&G should establish a BEG of 12,000 to 28,000 LR kings as their analysis indicated was MSY without the "Safety Factor" which is not necessary and was nothing but a hidden allocation which harms all users. Going below MSY has the same consequences to yield as going above, the safety factor is not based in science nor is it legal.
3. Liberalized both commercial and sport fisheries to eliminate over-escapement like what occurred in 2003–2006 to create the disaster experienced in 2012.
4. Eliminates the habitat provisions under (G) which ADF&G ignores anyway and the need to go "outside" the plan under (H) because ADF&G has no limits on EO Authority that they need to get around.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? If this problem is not solved escapement goals will continue to be exceeded by wide margins resulting in lower future returns where escapement goals are not achieved and "stocks of concern" are created and more problems for the Board to address out of cycle. Maybe if Cook Inlet were managed like the rest of the state for escapement goals without all of KRSA's fluff most of these meetings and proposals would not be necessary.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users and the resource as the escapement goal can actually be managed for without all the confusion that has been put into the regulation. In looking at the history of the king escapement it is very obvious the mismanagement of the

fisheries allowing for huge over-escapements is what has caused the recent declines and disaster of 2012.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Correcting the plan is the only solution.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Ducker (HQ-F13-055)

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PROPOSAL 211 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Establish certain set gillnet gear restrictions implemented by department to meet escapement goal, as follows:

Add a provision to the Kenai late-run king salmon management plan allowing the department to adopt gear restrictions they deem appropriate to provide fishing opportunity while also meeting established escapement goals:

> **The department may also restrict the limit of set gillnet gear two set gillnets that are not more than 70 fathoms in aggregate length; one gillnet that is not more than 35 fathoms in length; of set gillnets that are not more than 29 meshes in depth, when restrictions are deemed necessary based on projected escapement of king salmon in order to meet escapement goals identified in 5 AAC 21.359(b).**

ISSUE: The department currently does not have the authority to restrict setnet gear. During periods of low king salmon returns, the authority to limit fishing methods will provide added flexibility to continue to fish without placing king escapements at risk or triggering the need for complete fishery closures like those so disastrously experienced in 2012. The board considered a proposal to allow greater management authority to regulate gear in the eastside setnet fishery at the 2013 Statewide Board meeting but this effort was sidetracked by controversy over escapement goals.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Low king run sizes can trigger east side setnet fishery closures that might otherwise be avoided if greater gear flexibility was allowed.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Not applicable.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The setnet fishery will benefit from additional fishing opportunity during times they would otherwise be closed without this management flexibility.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Setnet permit holders will variously be affected depending on the number of sites and nets they fish.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-037)

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PROPOSAL 212 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Modify management plan to allow restrictions to set gillnetters in the Upper Subdistrict when the late-run Kenai River king salmon sport fishery has gone to catch and release, including limiting how many nets a permit holder can fish; closing fishing within one-half mile offshore; and nonretention or sale of king salmon, as follows:

In a year of low king salmon returns, below the lower escapement goal of 15,000 kings, when the sport fishery for kings has gone to catch and release in the Kenai river, if and only if this is a true conservation effort for minimal king salmon harvest, the department will have the power to restrict the amount of nets fished per permit, the areas fished and the restriction of selling, bartering, or retention of king salmon.

ISSUE: The local Upper Cook Inlet salmon managers need step down measures for the east side set netters in a year of true conservation for king salmon. The biologists need to be able to adjust the fisheries gear and area instead of just being able to open or close the setnet fishery. these restrictions could only be used when the sport fishery inriver has gone to catch and release for king salmon.

The department would be able to:
1) Restrict how many nets a permit can fish.
2) Close beach to one half mile off and allow offshore fishing.
3) Restrict the retention/selling of king salmon.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The east side setnet fishers will once again be closed for the season with no chance of fishing even when there is a large return of sockeyes.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Would not change quality.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The east side setnetters will at least have an opportunity to fish for sockeye when the king salmon return is below escapement goal and inriver sport fishing has gone to catch and release.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? The east side setnetters will be restricted in some way.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Gear mesh depth, restricting nets to 29 meshes. Not a viable solution as it would not hurt the beach fisherman as much as the offshore sites. Costs of having to have two sets of gear.

PROPOSED BY: Warren Brown (HQ-F13-062)
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PROPOSAL 213 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Close set gillnet fishery in the Upper Subdistrict, if the late-run Kenai River king salmon sport fishery is restricted to catch and release, as follows:

Once the Kenai River is regulated to catch and release fishing, all other means of the taking of king salmon is restricted. IE; The setnet fishery is closed to all fishing.

ISSUE: Catch and Release fishing for king salmon. Current regulation calls for the setnet industry to stop fishing when the sport fishery for king salmon is shut down for lack of abundance. However, if the river stays open by allowing fishing with no bait, or catch and release the setnet industry is still allowed to fish at least their standard fish openings for red salmon while intercepting kings.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? There will be in inequity for sharing the burden of conservation.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, this allows for total conservation of the resource as needed during times of low abundance.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The few king salmon that are returning to the fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? The setnet fishery, as they will not be able to fish and keep fish, with everyone else, during times of low king salmon abundance.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? It is embarrassing that the setnet industry has not taken any proactive measures to allow them self to fish by any other means than using force and changing escapement goals to meet their needs. The Kenai River King Taskforce was a prime example of them not wanting to share the burden of conservation.

PROPOSED BY: Bruce Morgan (HQ-F13-302)
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PROPOSAL 214 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Amend the management plan to clarify provisions within the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan exempt under this plan, as follows:

5 AAC 21.359(f). The provisions of **this section do not apply to provisions of** the Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan **contained in 5 AAC 21.365(f) that pertain to the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area** [(5 AAC 21.365) ARE EXEMPT FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THIS SECTION].

ISSUE: In 2002, changes were made to the *Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan*, including the name of the plan. Prior to 2002, the name of the management plan was *Kasilof River Sockeye Salmon Special Harvest Area Management Plan* and provisions within the plan pertained directly to creation and management of the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area. Beginning in 2002, many

other provisions were added to the management plan, guiding management of Kasilof River sockeye salmon.

The *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan* was not updated to reflect the changes made within the *Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan* in 2002. By adding (f) to the *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan*, it will correctly refer only to the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area and not to all of the provisions within the *Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan*.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The existing plan does not reflect current management practices. The *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan* will continue to be incorrect and outdated.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? This proposal would clarify the regulation for fishery managers, enforcement staff, and users.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-178)

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<u>PROPOSAL 215</u> - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Allow set gillnet fishing to occur in East Forelands Section of the Upper District if projected inriver return is less than 40,000 king salmon, projected escapement is less than 15,000 king salmon, and inriver sport fishery is closed, as follows:

5 AAC 21.359(b)(3)(C) close the commercial set gillnet fishery in the **<u>Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the</u>** Upper Subdistrict of the Central District.

5 AAC 21.359(c)(4) if the inriver sport fishery is closed under (2) of this subsection, the commercial set gillnet fishery in the **<u>Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the</u>** Upper Subsidtrict shall be closed.

ISSUE: Currently, when the department projects that the minimum spawning escapement goal for late-run Kenai River king salmon will not be met, the entire Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery must be closed. This included the East Forelands Section, which is the furthest north area of the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishing area. Because this area is quite small and because it is quite a distance north of the Kenai River, the number of king salmon that are captured in this area is very small (Table 1). Form 2002–2011 (last 10 years), the average number of king salmon caught per year has been around 100 versus an annual harvest of 78,000 sockeye salmon. This king salmon harvest equates to about six king salmon per fishing period during this timeframe. It is apparent from the data that the East Forelands Section set gillnet fishery is a

very, very minor harvester of Kenai River late-run king salmon. Comparing to the drift gillnet fleet fishing in the Kenai and Kasilof Sections (full corridor), the East Forelands Section harvests approximately ¼ as many king salmon per opening (Table 2). Therefore, if the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery is closed for king salmon conservation, this area could remain open to harvest sockeye salmon while having almost no impact at all on king salmon escapement.

Table 1. East Forelands Section harvest of Kenai River late-run king salmon and sockeye salmon during the past 10 years.

Year	Kings	Sockeye	Days fished
2002	38	45,120	17
2003	92	72,315	18
2004	163	100,908	25
2005	214	195,056	25
2006	100	36,556	12
2007	142	74,524	18
2008	48	41,755	5
2009	88	35,441	9
2010	69	65,842	20
2011	83	102,595	18
Average	**104**	**78,011**	**17**

Table 2. Drift gillnet harvest of king and sockeye salmon when fishing only in the Kenai and Kasilof Sections (full corridor).

	King Salmon		Sockeye Salmon		No.
Year	Total Catch[a]	Catch/Period	Total Catch	Catch/Period	Periods
2002	155	19	218,442	27,305	8
2003	430	43	299,054	29,905	10
2004	225	15	377,875	25,192	15
2005	806	45	775,559	43,087	18
2006	234	29	61,034	7,629	8
2007	131	16	105,560	13,195	8
2008	18	18	2,550	2,550	1
2009	0	0	0	0	0
2010	140	16	64,521	7,169	9
2011	190	17	930,141	84,558	11
2012	55	6	586,803	58,680	10
Average	238	24	342,154	34,914	10

[a]King salmon catch represents all kings, not just Kenai River king salmon

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? If the management plan is left as is, then the East Forelands Section set gillnet fishery would be closed for king salmon conservation on a stock that they harvest very little of. There would be a potential foregone harvest of sockeye salmon for a negligible savings of king salmon.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? The quality of the resource, in this case, sockeye salmon, may not necessarily by improved, but it would improved the stability of the fishery on this area by affording them opportunity to continue to harvest sockeye salmon during king salmon closures.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? East Forelands Section set gillnetters could benefit by remaining open to harvest sockeye salmon during times of set gillnet closure for king salmon conservation. The processors planning on processing the fish would also benefit from a more dependable supply of fish. Using the East Forelands Section as a tool to help manage sockeye returns will benefit all users. Finally, ADF&G could also benefit by having another took to help control sockeye salmon escapement during periods of king salmon conservation.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one should suffer, as this fishery would be opened at the discretion of the department to take harvestable surpluses of sockeye salmon.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Nelson (HQ-F13-149)
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PROPOSAL 216 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to change effective dates of provisions in the plan; delegate authority to the commissioner to manage restrictions by time, area, methods, and means during times of low king salmon abundance; and delete a provision in the plan, as follows:

(b)(3) on or after July 21, if the projected…
(b)(3) limit the harvesting opportunity with the… Central District [.] by delegation of authority to the commissioner to manage restrictions by the time and area, methods and means.
(c) From July 21 through July 31
(c) (4) Delete

ISSUE: Commercial set gillnet fishermen are closed during the times of low abundance of Chinook in the Kenai River. Closing the commercial setnet fishery before the 24th of July.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Commercial set gillnet fishermen will lose opportunity on targeted sockeye salmon.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, commercial fishermen will be allowed to harvest surplus stocks for targeted sockeye.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's, SOK-I (HQ-F13-304)
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PROPOSAL 217 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Delete language in Cook Inlet management plans that restricts department's flexibility to manage salmon fisheries based on inseason abundance and add language that states the department shall manage common property fisheries for a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources, as follows:

Delete from all management plans that contain the wording: [THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALSO MANAGE THE COMMERCIAL FISHERIES TO MINIMIZE THE HARVEST OF LATE-RUN KENAI RIVER KING IN ORDER TO PROVIDE PERSONAL USE, SPORT, AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERMEN WITH A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO HARVEST SALMON RESOURCES.]

Replace this wording with: **The department shall also manage the common property fisheries with a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources.**

ISSUE: Delete unnecessary language in Cook Inlet Management Plan that restricts the flexibility for the managers to manage on a real time basis based on inseason abundance. This language has resulted in millions of harvestable salmon going un-harvested and negatively affected salmon populations from the effects of over-escapement.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Continued conflict and unnecessary restrictions resulting in un-harvested salmon surpluses.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Salmon will be managed in real time abundance based management that will allow more salmon to be harvested earlier when their oil content and quality are higher.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The resource and all user groups.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Only those people who continually want more salmon allocated to them at the expense of negatively affecting the resource and other user groups.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-336)
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PROPOSAL 218 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan. Use the southern Anchor River marker instead of the Bluff Point marker when restricting the marine king salmon fishery to protect Kenai River king salmon, as follows:

The preferred solution would be to utilize the southern Anchor River marker location (lat. 59 45.92') instead of Bluff Point when step down measures are put into place due to projected low Kenai River king salmon escapement.

ISSUE: When there are restrictions (step down measures to reduce harvest) due to projected low Kenai River king salmon returns, EOs can currently close the marine fishery north of Bluff Point.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Marine sport anglers will lose opportunity to fish for halibut and feeder king salmon in marine water between Bluff Point and the southern Anchor River marker locations (lat. 59.45.92').

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Angers who have been fishing between Bluff Point and the Anchor River south marker location for kings and halibut, and who have been filling their harvest cards with feeder kings. Because harvest cards are being filled in this marine fishery with feeder kings, more Kenai River king salmon should be available for escapement and other fisheries.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Rejection of Bluff Point as the restriction line because marine fisheries would be lost between Bluff Point and the Anchor River south marker location when very few Kenai River king salmon are harvested in this area.

PROPOSED BY: Lynn Whitmore (HQ-F13-075)
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<u>PROPOSAL 219</u> - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Close sections of the Kenai River to sport fishing for king salmon during July, as follows:

Under the new heading … "**Seasonal King salmon restrictions on the middle Kenai River"**

<u>Spawning Conservation Area 1</u> - July 1–July 31… Moose River upstream to Skilak Lake closed to fishing for king salmon.

<u>Spawning Conservation Area 2</u> - July 10–July 31…Sterling Hwy. Bridge in Soldotna upstream to Moose River closed to fishing for king salmon.

ISSUE: In recent years we have seen a troubling pattern of near record low returns of both early and late run Kenai River Chinook salmon. We believe the declines in statewide Chinook

fisheries are largely due to marine survival issues, however, we also feel that part of our Kenai River decline can be linked to inriver harvest patterns, fishing on middle river main stem spawning fish throughout July, insufficient spawning area protections and multiple years of overharvest of the population due to biased high sonar counts.

History seems pretty clear that factors such as population growth, increased use, commercialization and development make it almost impossible for us to sustain indigenous wild Chinook salmon populations. Unless we alter our behavior we will join the long list of streams dependent on hatchery produced fish. We will not be able to sustain the high density fishery that has developed on the Kenai unless we consider a more conservationist approach of protecting production to secure future run strength stability.

In order to provide for recovery and certainty in future Kenai River King salmon production we are proposing the establishment of two permanent spawning conservation areas that would occur in a timely fashion as fish move upriver throughout the season.

Spawning Conservation Area 1 - July 1–July 31… Moose River upstream to Skilak Lake closed to fishing for king salmon.

Spawning Conservation Area 2 – July 10 –July 31…Sterling Hwy. Bridge in Soldotna upstream to Moose River closed to fishing for King salmon.

The Area 1 closure is designed mainly to protect Early Run (ER) Chinook stocks which have seen a much steeper decline than the Late Run (LR). Funny River weir data indicates about a 70% decline since 2006 and Slikok Creek weir data shows an 80% decline since 2004 with very few females returning. We believe the main stem component of the ER may be in even more peril because they enter the fishery in May and June and are vulnerable to harvest longer than any other segment of the Kenai River King salmon population. They are also the largest fish in the ER and have been targeted throughout the years by selective harvest. Alaska Department of Fish and Gameresearch indicates that the median spawning date for ER main stem fish is around July 20. This closure would also offer some additional protection to Killey River tributary fish that enter the stream in early to mid-July.

The Area 2 closure would protect both ER and LR fish that spawn in that area. Roughly 80% of the ER are tributary spawners and they are protected once they reach the tributary areas, however, almost all of the LR are main stem spawners and there is currently no spawning sanctuary area afforded to them. This closure would provide an area of certainty for LR spawning production.

We believe these types of pro-active conservation measures are both prudent and necessary as we face the future of a growing population with increased demand on our king salmon resources.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Future Kenai River Chinook production may be in jeopardy because of our intense sport fishery and the high harvest potential it demands. Other factors we now face such as turbidity, habitat destruction and development also exasperate our current and future abilities towards spawning production and rearing.

Management's inability to accurately count our Kenai River king salmon, over the years, is well documented and brings into question our production models. We have changed our escapement goals four times in the last decade alone.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? By providing more king salmon production certainty future generations will be able to count on enjoying this valuable resource as we have.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Perhaps some fishermen and local property owners who are used to harvesting fish from these areas. However, many property owners have complained that they hardly see any spawners in these areas anymore and have asked that they be closed to fishing to protect the resource.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Catch and release fishing for king salmon above the Sterling Hwy. Bridge in Soldotna July 1–July 31. Rejected it because mortality studies have indicated that, besides the level of mortality, it can disturb spawning fish and cause some fish to vacate the spawning area.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Area Fisherman's Coalition (HQ-F13-095)

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<u>PROPOSAL 220</u> - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Prohibit sport fishing for king salmon every other mile on the Kenai River between Eagle Rock and the Soldotna Bridge, as follows:

Angling for Kenai River Chinook salmon is restricted to every other mile in that area below the Soldotna Bridge and above Eagle Rock.

ISSUE: The Kenai River is being managed by the Alaska Department of Parks and Outdoor Recreation (Parks) as a playground for humans to fish and play in their watercraft without any consideration for the impacts of these activities upon the Chinook salmon resource. Also, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) seems to be ignoring or unaware of these issues as they pertain to the health of the fishery resource; sound generated by outboards, stresses from the boats constantly passing over the fish, hooks being dragged through the fish as they rest and prepare for spawning. These fish, especially those in the arguably most productive Chinook salmon areas below the Soldotna Bridge, are being afforded no consideration of their needs for successfully completing their life cycle to spawn and procreate future progeny. There are no areas, excepting for those two small areas just below the bridge, areas set aside for bank anglers (Centennial Park) and for protecting early run staging before spawning in Slykok Creek. There are no areas for protecting the spawning efforts of the late run main stem Kenai Chinook salmon. In fact angling effort has been targeted upon the main stem fishery prior to July 1, as segment of

which past data suggests was composed of 20% main stem spawners. Early entry main stem spawning Chinooks have essentially been eliminated by this management approach.

Another important and equally devastating consequence of present (recreation) management is the lack of consideration for the impacts of the continuous sound being introduced by outboard motor exhausts. The elimination of two stroke motors has done nothing to address this "noise" pollution. A review of scientific studies of sonic and sound barrage upon our planet's creatures reveals the stress of sound can be disruptive and devastating especially on marine environments. The result of many of these studies suggests increased birth mortality and declining birth weight. Many have complained for years of the diminished returns and smaller fish in the Kenai. Can we afford to not consider these impacts? We certainly are not at this time.

Finally, the genetic diversity of the Kenai Chinook salmon, especially the main stem component, is not being preserved. The largest salmon are being taken off of their spawning areas thus minimizing (if not eliminating) the potential for main stem production of these large fish.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Main stem Kenai River Chinook salmon will continue to be impacted by human activities on their spawning areas leading to sustained declining returns and poor salmon reproduction.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? This solution would increase the productivity of the main stem Kenai Chinook salmon below Soldotna by allowing the salmon to have sanctuary areas where they can conduct their spawning activities in a more natural environment where angling for Chinook would not be allowed. It will also protect the genetic diversity of the resource.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All anglers who want the Kenai to return to some semblance of its previous productivity in the 1980s.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those anglers who believe that human activities do not cause salmon productivity to decline.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? I considered closing every third mile to angling, but this every other mile closure seems a conservative approach which would allow for the genetic diversity of the lower Kenai to be preserved.

PROPOSED BY: Dennis Randa (HQ-F13-142)

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<u>PROPOSAL 221</u> - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. In times of low escapement of Kenai River king salmon, close or create conservation zones where king salmon spawn, as follows:

In times of low escapement close or create conservation zones where king spawn.

ISSUE: Fishing on spawning beds.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Fewer spawning kings.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Promotes king salmon survival.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? All will suffer in times of shortage.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? A drift only river (will not pass).

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-361)

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PROPOSAL 222 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Prohibit use of eggs for bait in the Kenai River king salmon sport fishery, as follows:

No use of eggs for bait to hook or land any king salmon.

ISSUE: No use of eggs for bait Kenai River early and late-run kings.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Retention of females for eggs will continue.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, it will increase the females on spawning beds.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? People that use eggs for bait.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? N/A.

PROPOSED BY: Christine Brandt (HQ-F13-217)

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PROPOSAL 223 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof

River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Prohibit use of bait in the Kenai River king salmon sport fisheries, as follows:

Only one un-baited single hook, artificial lure is allowed when fishing for king salmon in the Kenai River.

ISSUE: The continued decline of the Kenai River king salmon runs.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The Kenai River king salmon will likely continue to decrease in numbers to a potentially unsustainable number.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The Kenai River king salmon runs, the people of the State of Alaska, and future Kenai River anglers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Complete closure of the Kenai River to king salmon fishing.

PROPOSED BY: Bob Krogseng and Ron Weill (HQ-F13-259)

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PROPOSAL 224 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Require barbless hooks when use of bait is prohibited on the Kenai River, as follows:

When no bait is allowed, only barbless hooks are allowed.

ISSUE: King salmon mortality.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Fewer returning kings.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? It saves fish.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All fishermen in time.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? This will help.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-364)

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PROPOSAL 225 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. Modify Kenai River king salmon annual limit to two fish, of which only one may be greater than 28 inches in length, as follows:

The new regulation would say…

(i) From January–[June 30] **July 31**, from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake, and from July 1–July 14, from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of the Skilak Lake and in Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge, on **one** king salmon that are less than [46] **28** inches in length or [OR 55 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH] **and one king salmon greater than 28 inches in length** may be retained.;

ISSUE: I would like the board to address the problem of sustainability and predictability of Kenai kings. One way to do this is to implement an "over/under" bag limit. The board should consider adjusting the seasonal bag limit from two kings of any size to two fish, one under 28" and one over 28" in length. This precedent is set and successfully implemented on the Nushagak River, which by the way has a fraction of the sport fishing pressure that the Kenai has. Two major goals would be achieved with this regulation: (1) less kings harvested overall and (2) harvest more effectively spread throughout all the ages classes of the run, thus affording some measure of the projection for larger four and five ocean kings that are not being targeted with a fairly liberal two fish limit. Honestly, with an abundance of sockeye for the table and freezer, who needs two big fifty pound kings each year?

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? If this problem is not solved, the number of large Kenai kings will continue to decline and this so-called "period of low abundance" will continue. If you ask any local, or long-time visitor to the Kenai River, there are less kings than their used to be and (b) they are smaller overall than they used to be. This fact cannot be denied, nor can it be accepted with effort to turn this trend around.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, it does both. It improves the overall quality of the resource as well as the quality of the products produced as less Chinook overall are harvested and less large four and five ocean fish are harvest, yet….opportunity for reasonable harvest with a two fish limit is still allowed.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All sport anglers (both present and future generations), local businesses and the overall image of the Kenai and Alaska will benefit from decreased harvest and increased protection of the larger "trophy" sized fish as the Kenai's reputation of a world class king fishery is restored.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Only anglers wishing to harvest two large kings every year will suffer.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Other solutions considered, such as a one-fish annual limit, were rejected as they seemed too contentious for the board to administer at this time.

PROPOSED BY: Scott M. Miller (HQ-F13-257)

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PROPOSAL 226 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 75.011. Sport fishing by proxy. Prohibit proxy fishing for king salmon in the Kenai River, as follows:

No proxy fishing on Kenai River king salmon.

ISSUE: Proxy fishing for trophy Kenai River Kings.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The fish average size of Kenai kings continues to get smaller, proxy fishing should be on rivers without trophy status.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? The ADF&G uses this game management method to reduce pressure in select areas. Proxy fish can come from non-trophy areas.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The Kenai River salmon stocks.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? People who want a proxy fish from a trophy fishery. Proxy fish can come from non-trophy areas.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Greg Davis (HQ-F13-056)

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PROPOSAL 227 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Require department to demonstrate a significant savings of fish when restricting Kenai River king salmon sport fisheries, as follows:

If ADF&G issues an EO to restrict the king salmon fishery they must demonstrate that the EO will result in a significant savings of fish. Definition of significant could be difficult but at least a savings of 100 fish or more.

ISSUE: Alaska Department of Fish and Game issuing EO's that severely restrict the sport fishery that result in very little and insignificant savings to the resource, Example: early king run 2012, last few days of June fishery restricted from catch and release to closed. Catch and Release mortality very small at 7%, Effort very low, river blown out with mud. Example 2: August silver fishery restricted to no bait to conserve kings, and ADF&G threatened to completely close the silver fishery. Log book past data shows with bait maximum of 200 kings incidentally caught

and released in silver fishery with 7% mortality = 14 kings, bait restriction reduces king releases to 100 fish and a mortality of 7 kings, so the fishery got restricted for a savings of seven kings.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Continued restrictions that have little or no effect on savings of fish at great expense to the sport fishing industry.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All anglers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Nobody.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Mel Erickson (HQ-F13-271)

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PROPOSAL 228 - 5 AAC 57.XXX. New Section. Stock the Kenai River with 50,000 king salmon smolt, as follows:

Enhancement, 50,000 release.

ISSUE: Lack of Kenai kings.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Less kings in the future.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Quality of product and experience.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? It's time, this is how it started.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-365)

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PROPOSAL 229 - 5 AAC 57.106. Description of Kenai River Drainage Area Sections. Modify description of the Lower Section of the Kenai River to denote the mouth of the Kenai River, as follows:

(1) Lower Section: waters from the mouth of the Kenai River**, denoted by a line from the green light tower on the north shore and an ADF&G regulatory marker on the south shore,**

upstream to Skilak Lake, including Skilak Lake, but not including the waters of Skilak Lake within a one-half mile radius of the Kenai River inlet;

ISSUE: There is confusion of where the Kenai River ends and the marine waters of Cook Inlet begin for the purpose of administering sport fishing regulations.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The public will continue to be confused about what regulations pertain to the area they are attempting to sport fish.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Sport anglers, enforcement officers, and management staff.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-286)

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PROPOSAL 230 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. Add a reference to an ADF&G regulatory marker at the outlet of Skilak Lake, as follows:

5 AAC 57.120.

(2) king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, as follows:

(A) may be taken only from January 1 – July 31, in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to **an ADF&G regulatory marker located at** the outlet of Skilak Lake, and in the Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge, with a bag and possession limit of one fish, as follows:

(i) from January 1 – June 30, from its mouth upstream to **an ADF&G regulatory marker located at** the outlet of Skilak Lake, and from July 1 – July 14, from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake and in Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge, only king salmon that are less than 46 inches in length or 55 inches or greater in length may be retained;

…

(B) king salmon 20 inches or greater in length may not be taken

(i) in the Kenai River upstream **from an ADF&G regulatory marker located at** [OF] the outlet of Skilak Lake, including Kenai Lake; and

…

(C) a person, after taking and retaining a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length from the Kenai River, may not sport fish from a boat in the Kenai River downstream from **an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of** Skilak Lake for any species of fish on that same day;

5 AAC 57.121.

(1)(D) from December 1 – December 31, in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to **an ADF&G regulatory marker located at** the outlet of Skilak Lake, only unbaited artificial lures may be used;

…

(3)(A) on any Monday in May, June, and July, except Memorial Day, in that portion of the Kenai River from the Sterling Highway Bridge upstream to **an ADF&G regulatory marker located at** the outlet of Skilak Lake, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays in May, June, and July as described in 5 AAC 21.359(b)(2); for the purposes of this subparagraph, "non-motorized vessel" is a vessel that does not have a motor on board;

5 AAC 57.140.

(b) Downstream from **an ADF&G regulatory marker located at** the outlet of Skilak Lake, a person may not sport fish from a registered guide vessel on any Sunday from May 1 through July 31, and on any Monday in July, except that a person may fish from a registered sport fishing guide vessel during the last two Sundays in May and the first Sunday in June under the terms of a permit issued by the commissioner, for approved charitable nonprofit organizations or for educational public service activities.

…

(g) During July, a vessel used for guided sport fishing on the Kenai River downstream **from an ADF&G regulatory marker located at** of the outlet of Skilak Lake may not carry more than five persons, including the sport fishing guide, clients, and other passengers.

5 AAC 57.160.

(d)(2)(A) prohibit the retention of king salmon less than 55 inches in length, except king salmon less than 20 inches in length, downstream from **an ADF&G regulatory marker located at** the outlet of Skilak Lake through June 30, and require that upstream from the Soldotna Bridge to the outlet of Skilak Lake and in the Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge, from July 1 through July 14, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used and only king salmon less than

…

(d)(2)(B)(i) downstream from **an ADF&G regulatory marker located at** the outlet of Skilak Lake through June 30; and

(d)(3) if the spawning escapement is projected to fall within the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, liberalize the sport fishery downstream from **an ADF&G regulatory marker located at** the outlet of Skilak Lake, by allowing the use of bait if the department projects that the total harvest under a liberalized sport fishery will not reduce

the spawning escapement below the optimal escapement goal; only king salmon less than 46 inches in length or 55 inches or greater in length may be retained;

ISSUE: Due to the natural characteristics (width, water velocity, water depth, land features, etc.) of the Skilak Lake outlet area, it is difficult for anglers to determine if they are in Skilak Lake or the Kenai River when in they are in the outlet area. Consequently, ADF&G regulatory markers are presently used to delineate the boundary for some regulations that differ between the lake and the river. The sport fishing regulations summary booklet references an ADF&G marker at Skilak Lake, as well as some of the codified regulations, but not all of the codified regulations contain this reference.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Regulatory language describing the upper boundary for Lower Kenai River waters for fishing will remain inconsistent and may not be adequately delineated for the public fishing this area.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Anglers, department staff, and enforcement personnel.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-211)

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PROPOSAL 231 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King salmon Management Plan methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Remove a small section of water in the Moose River open to king salmon fishing, as follows:

5 AAC 57.120.

(2) king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, as follows:

(A) may be taken only from January 1 – July 31, in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream the outlet of Skilak Lake [AND IN THE MOOSE RIVER FROM ITS CONFLUENCE WITH THE KENAI RIVER UPSTREAM TO THE NORTHERNMOST EDGE OF THE STERLING HIGHWAY BRIDGE], with a bag and possession limit of one fish, as follows:

(i) from January 1 – June 30, from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake, and from July 1 – July 14, from the Soldotna Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake [AND IN THE MOOSE RIVER FROM ITS CONFLUENCE WITH THE KENAI RIVER UPSTREAM TO THE NORTHERNMOST EDGE OF THE STERLING HIGHWAY BRIDGE], only king salmon that are less than 46 inches in length or 55 inches or greater in length may be retained;

5 AAC 57.160.

(d)(2)(A) prohibit the retention of king salmon less than 55 inches in length, except king salmon less than 20 inches in length, downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake through June 30, and require that upstream from the Soldotna Bridge to the outlet of Skilak Lake [AND IN THE MOOSE RIVER FROM ITS CONFLUENCE WITH THE KENAI RIVER UPSTREAM TO THE NORTHERNMOST EDGE OF THE STERLING HIGHWAY BRIDGE], from July 1 through July 14, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used and only king salmon less than

…

(d)(2)(B)(ii) from July 1 through July 14, upstream from the Soldotna Bridge to the outlet of Skilak Lake [AND IN THE MOOSE RIVER FROM ITS CONFLUENCE WITH THE KENAI RIVER UPSTREAM TO THE NORTHERNMOST EDGE OF THE STERLING HIGHWAY BRIDGE];

ISSUE: The Moose River, from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the northernmost edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge (approximately 100–200 yards), is closed to fishing from a boat during king salmon season and is designated as fly-fishing-only water from May 15–August 15. The remainder of the Moose River drainage, upstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge, is closed to king salmon fishing. This area is a low-velocity slack water area where salmon of all species are known to "hold" before continuing upstream migration. It is not a popular Kenai River king salmon fishing area. Removing this small Moose River section of water from lower Kenai River waters open to king salmon fishing will: 1) align king salmon fishing regulations for the Moose River, 2) create more consistent regulations with other Kenai River drainage sections closed to fishing from boats on a seasonal basis, and 3) help to minimize public confusion with fishing regulations for the Moose and Kenai rivers.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Regulations will remain unnecessarily complex and confusing regulations will continue to exist in this small section of the Moose River.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The public fishing in the Kenai River, and department staff.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? People who may want to fish in the small section of the lower Moose River.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-296)

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PROPOSAL 232 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Modify the boundary for prohibiting sport fishing from a boat around the Moose River, as follows:

(3) a person may not sport fish from a boat

…

(C) …

…

(iii) in that portion of the Kenai River **from ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately 100 yards downstream** [WITHIN A 100-YARD RADIUS] of the mouth of the Moose River, **upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately 100 yards upstream from the mouth of the Moose River,** and the Moose River upstream to the upstream edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge;

ISSUE: The area of the Kenai River closed to sport fishing from a boat is described as a radius of the mouth of Moose River and is unmarked. Creating line-of-sight markers both upstream and downstream of the Moose River mouth will create a boundary for the closure that can be easily identified by the public and enforcement officers.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? A regulatory boundary will remain unclear to anglers and be difficult to enforce.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Anglers fishing from shore and from boats on the Kenai River.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-295)

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PROPOSAL 233 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Prohibit sport fishing within the Soldotna Centennial Campground boat launch lagoon, as follows:

The preferred solution is to reaffirm, with board action, the City of Soldotna's position to close the area to fishing for safety and social purposes as demonstrated by Municipal Code Section 12.28.170 paragraph C which states:

"No person shall fish from the shore or boat or within the waters of the Centennial Boat launch Lagoon. This area shall be understood to encompass all the area above and below mean high water within the lagoon from a line* between the upstream end of the disabled fishing platform to the downstream end of the rock pile jetty to the southerly end of the lagoon."

While the City of Soldotna closure is a year round closure, the closure is requested from the Board of Fish to be in effect from **July 1 through August 30 each year.** This closure outside of the normal peak sockeye run is requested because the problems also exist during pink salmon runs as well. Late season coho fishing does not seem to have such conflicting uses occurring with any regularity. If this proposal is adopted by the Board of Fish, the City of Soldotna will endeavor to amend its code to match any action/closure of the Department of Fish and Game.

(* the aforementioned line from disabled fishing platform to end of rock pile jetty is approximately 179'. Only approximately half of this distance is "standable" by bank anglers but all is within reach of anglers casting)

ISSUE: Dangerous safety and social situations are and have been resulting from conflicting uses between boaters and angler within the City of Soldotna Centennial Campground Boat launch Lagoon.

At present anglers fishing with the waters of the Centennial Campgrounds are doing so in a manner that endangers both themselves and boaters launching, entering and leaving the lagoon. Fishermen standing in the water routinely do so directly on the boat launch ramps, in the limited navigational path of boaters using the lagoon and routinely cast lures into and over boats navigating through. There has been at least one occurrence with an angler standing on the boat launch being backed over by a boater attempting to back his boat down the boat ramp.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Eventually a serious injury will happen to an angler or boat passenger from either a boat/angler collision, trailered boat/angler collision or lure/hook/boat passenger or pilot collision. Additionally, tensions will continue to escalate and altercations/conflicts will continue on a regular basis.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? The closure will improve the shore and boater experience by closing an area catalyzing conflict and dangerous interactions. Thus, if "the experience" were to be quantified as a resource it will improve that aspect. The resource i.e. fish harvested quality will not be changed from this proposed action.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Boaters using the limited river ingress and egress path of the boat launch lagoon will have a better experience because they will not have to worry about being struck by flying objects casted by shore and hip boot anglers. They will also not have to worry about dodging fishermen while navigating the irregular current within the limited navigational pathway. Ultimately, shore angler will have a better experience by having not entered into the area which because of its positioning with relation to the navigational pathway is, if not closed, somewhat of an attractive nuisance where unforeseen dangers exist.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Information signage has been used to no effect. Personal interactions between staff and anglers has not been effective. City of Soldotna Closure signs have only been marginally effective. Thus, these attempts have been considered and put into effect to no avail and are thus rejected as future remedies.

PROPOSED BY: City of Soldotna (HQ-F13-074)

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PROPOSAL 234 - 5 AAC 57.180. Riparian Habitat Fishery Management Plan for the Kenai River Drainage Area. Establish a new Kenai River riparian habitat area closed to fishing July 1–August 15, as follows:

(d) From July 1 through August 15, the following Kenai River riparian habitats are closed to all fishing, except fishing from a boat that is located more than 10 feet from shore and not connected to the shore or any riparian habitat:

…

(X) on the south bank of the Kenai River, between ADF&G regulatory markers located at river mile 22.0 and river mile 22.1.

ISSUE: Management rights of a state-owned parcel of land along the Kenai River were assigned to the department to implement the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Trustee Council's objective to restore, enhance, and rehabilitate natural resources injured by the oil spill. The parcel is also subject to a third-party conservation easement. The warranty deed and conservation easement include restrictive covenants that prohibit public access, including sport fishing, along the Kenai River shoreline of this parcel. Presently, 24 riparian fishery habitat closures of public lands are managed by the *Riparian Habitat Fishery Management Plan* in the Kenai River Special Management Area, encompassing approximately 17.5 river miles of riparian habitat. This proposal would assist the department in implementing warranty deed and conservation easement restrictions for the parcel.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? This public parcel of Kenai River shoreline will not receive protections specified in the warranty deed and conservation easement.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The public benefits when riparian habitat is protected.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Anglers who sport fish while standing on the riparian habitat at this location from July 1–August 15.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-287)

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PROPOSAL 235 - 5 AAC 56.180. Riparian Habitat Fishery Management Plan for the Kenai Peninsula Area; 5 AAC 57.180. Riparian Habitat Fishery Management Plan for the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 59.180. Riparian Habitat Fishery Management Plan for the Anchorage Bowl Drainages Area; 5 AAC 60.180. Riparian Habitat Fishery Management Plan for the Knik Arm Drainages Area; 5 AAC 61.180. Riparian Habitat Fishery Management Plan for the Susitna River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 62.180. Riparian Habitat Fishery Management Plan for the West Cook Inlet Area; and 5 AAC 77.5XX. New Section. Require the department to conduct habitat assessments on Upper Cook Inlet rivers related to sport and personal use fisheries, as follows:

The new regulations would require ADF&G to conduct habitat assessments on Upper Cook Inlet rivers that would encompass effects from both recreational and Personal Use Fisheries on a schedule that conforms to the Board of Fisheries triennial meeting cycle. It would also obligate ADFG to conduct and publish current riparian habitat assessments in all major and heavily used river systems in Upper Cook Inlet, most notably the Kenai and Kasilof rivers which have experienced drastically increased use through the Personal Use fisheries.

ISSUE: Currently, the Riparian Habitat Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 56.065) refers to only riparian habitat damage caused by recreational fishing, and only the Kenai River Sockeye (5 AAC 21.359) and king salmon (5 AAC 21.360) management plans obligate the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) to perform regular riparian habitat assessment. This management plan should be referenced in all major Upper Cook Inlet salmon streams. The respective management plans for these river systems should require similar regular riparian habitat assessment by ADF&G. There has also been a significant increase of inriver use due to Personal Use Fisheries in the Kenai and Kasilof rivers. It is imperative that these habitat assessments be expanded to include these areas and fisheries.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Loss of important riparian habitat, resulting in decreased future salmon returns and damage to our delicate river systems.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Healthy rivers produce healthy fish.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users will benefit from a healthy resource.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? All Alaskans could suffer if our rivers and fishery resources are not protected.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No other solutions. We need current habitat assessments. Detailed and accurate data is the building block for a healthy fishery.

PROPOSED BY: Todd Smith, Megan Smith (HQ-F13-090)

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PROPOSAL 236 - 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. Require submission of findings and proposals if the Kenai River riparian habitat assessment demonstrates a loss of riparian habitat, as follows:

Adhere to the current guidelines as required by the management plan 5 AAC 57.180. Riparian Habitat Fishery Management Plan.

ISSUE: Placeholder for possible regulatory changes and/or management plans based on results from a required current Kenai River Riparian Habitat assessment conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game as required by the Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Management Plan and the Late-Run Kenai River King Salmon Management plan. The last available report was Assessment of Shore Angling Impacts to Kenai River Riparian Habitats by Mary A. King and Patricia A. Hansen in 1999.

This placeholder proposal to allow fishery stakeholders, the board, and the department the opportunity to discuss proposed regulatory changes in Upper Cook Inlet based upon results of a current Kenai River Riparian Habitat Assessment Report conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game as required by 5 AAC 57.180 Riparian Habitat Fishery Management Plan; 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan and 5 AAC 21.360. Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan;

(d) The sonar count levels established in this section may be lowered by the board if noncommercial fishing, after consideration of mitigation efforts, results in a net loss of riparian habitat on the Kenai River. The department will, to the extent practicable, conduct habitat assessments on a schedule that conforms to the Board of Fisheries (board) triennial meeting cycle. If the assessments demonstrate a net loss of riparian habitat caused by noncommercial fishermen, the department is requested to report those findings to the board and submit proposals to the board for appropriate modification of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon inriver goal.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Net loss of important Kenai River Chinook Salmon riparian habitat will result in diminished future returns. Potentially important information regarding fisheries management will not be utilized until the next Alaska Board of Fisheries cycle for Upper Cook Inlet in 2017.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Unknown.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users of the resource**.**

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Todd Smith, Megan Smith, Amber Every, Travis Every (HQ-F13-198)
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PROPOSAL 237 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan and 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Add an additional drift boat-only day (Thursdays) on the Kenai River, as follows:

Amend 5 AAC 21.359(b)(2) as follows: In the sport fishery, that portion of the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake is open to unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel on Mondays in July, AND IS OPEN TO GUIDED AND UNGUIDED SPORT FISHING ON THURSDAYS IN JULY FROM A NON-MOTORIZED VESSEL.

Amend 5 AAC 57.121(3)(A) as follows: on any Monday in May, June and July, except Memorial Day, in that portion of the Kenai River from the Sterling Highway Bridge upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake, except that unguided sport fishing from a non-motorized vessel is allowed on Mondays AND GUIDED AND UNGUIDED SPORT FISHING FROM A NON-MOTORIZED VESSEL IS ALLOWED ON THURSDAYS in May, June and July as described in 5 AAC 21.359(b)(2); for the purposes of this subparagraph "non-motorized vessel" is a vessel that does not have a motor on board.

Amend 5 AAC 57.121(F) as follows: notwithstanding the provisions of (A) of this paragraph, on any Monday or THURSDAY…

ISSUE: Minimize adverse impact from motorized vessel use on the Kenai River and provide more opportunity for drift boat users. The Kenai Watershed Forum reported in its final report dated June 29, 2012, that analysis of data from water monitoring on the Lower Kenai River indicated that state turbidity standards were exceeded on several occasions during the study from 2008 through 2010 and there is a high correlation between high boat traffic and elevated turbidity.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Adverse impacts to salmon and wildlife habitat from motorized vessel use on the Kenai River will continue and drift boat only days on the Lower Kenai River will continue to be limited to one day per week.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Drift boat users and perhaps all users of the Kenai River through improved fish and wildlife habitat.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Power boat users, except that they may also benefit from habitat improvement.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: City of Kenai (HQ-F13-026)

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PROPOSAL 238 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan and 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Add an additional drift boat-only day (Thursdays) on the Kenai River, as follows:

Under the heading "Drift-only Mondays downstream of Skilak Lake" change to read: **On Mondays (except Memorial Day) and Thursdays May 1–July 31** [ON MONDAYS FROM MAY 1–JULY 31 (EXCEPT MEMORIAL DAY)]……

ISSUE: Heavy, high density motorized vessel use is responsible for excessive turbidity, increased erosion, and safety issues. There are other social issues associated with crowding that are compounded by motorized vessels in the current configuration of the fishery. Another drift day on the river, open to both guided and unguided anglers with no time restrictions, will help address hydrological and social issues and may promote more folks to invest in resource friendly drift boats. This would also allow more fish to move upriver and disperse during subsequent days. New boat use patterns indicate that most of the Chinook fishing is now taking place in the lower 10 miles of the river.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The use of power-boats will continue to cause hydrological and social problems.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The resource and those who would like to see the river use slow down with more peaceful days on the water. Commercial operators have the opportunity to add to their client base people who prefer non-motorized fishing.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Power-boat users would lose a day on the water; however, this change may provide an opportunity for the fishing public to enjoy a more aesthetically pleasing fishery.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? An alternative area of definition could be considered: None.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai Area Fisherman's Coalition (HQ-F13-098)

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PROPOSAL 239 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan and 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Add an additional drift boat-only day on the Kenai River, as follows:

One additional drift-only day.

ISSUE: Turbidity in the Kenai River.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? More egg/smolt mortality.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, less turbidity, noise pollution, erosion.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users and property owners and king salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Drift only / would not pass.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-355)
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<u>PROPOSAL 240</u> - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Prohibit sport fishing from a vessel on Mondays in the Kenai River downstream of Skilak Lake during May, June, and July, as follows:

No Fishing out of a vessel on Mondays downstream of Skilak Lake during May, June, and July.

ISSUE: One of the last liberalizations given to the in river sport fishery for king salmon on the Kenai River was to allow unguided anglers to fish out of a drift boat on Mondays during May, June, and July for king salmon. It was given during a time of high abundance of Kenai River king salmon and since that time we have seen a downward shift in the overall run strength. Since it was the last major liberation I feel it should be the logical choice to restrict during times of low king salmon abundance. The Kenai River can no longer withstand a 24 hour a day seven day a week king salmon fishery.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The Kenai River king salmon stock will continue to have angler pressure seven days a week 24 hours a day, Drift boat Monday was the logical choice for a restriction since those that wish to fish for king salmon out of a drift boat would still be able to do so Tuesday through Sunday 24 hours a day during May, June, and July.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, it would allow for one day a week with no sport fishing out of a vessel for Kenai River king salmon. This should reduce harvest which would decrease the likelihood of an inseason king salmon restriction on all anglers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All Kenai River King Salmon anglers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those that like to fish out of a drift boat on Mondays during May, June, and July on the Kenai River. However, the nearby Kasilof River is open for king salmon during this timeframe and it is a drift boat only river so those anglers could still go fishing that day for king salmon in a drift boat only fishery. Or they could simply use their drift boat on the Upper Kenai River to fish for rainbow trout, Dolly Varden, or red salmon on those days which is also a drift boat only area.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Close the Kenai River to fishing from a vessel 10:00 p.m.–5:00 a.m. during May, June, and July downstream of Skilak Lake but felt that the last liberation given should be the first taken away.

PROPOSED BY: Shaun Jensen (HQ-F13-273)

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PROPOSAL 241 - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Prohibit fishing from a vessel on the Kenai River from 10:00 p.m. to 4:00 a.m. during May, June, and July, as follows:

No fishing out of a vessel downstream of Skilak Lake from 10:00 p.m.–4:00 a.m. during May, June, and July.

ISSUE: The Kenai River is open 24 hours a day seven days a week for King Salmon Fishing during May, June, and July. I feel that it can no longer withstand a 24 hour a day seven day a week king salmon fishery.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Inseason restrictions and a downward trend in king salmon stocks will be more likely to occur.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Having the Kenai River restricted during these hours should result in some measurable savings of king salmon which would reduce the likelihood of an inseason restriction for king salmon fishing for all users.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Kenai River king salmon would benefit the most. But everyone would benefit from a healthy king salmon stock and during times of high abundance ADF&G could use there EO authority to lift this restriction.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those that wish to fish on the Kenai River from 10:00 p.m.–4:00 a.m.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Considered more hours to be restricted but thought that this would be discussed more in detail during the BOF process.

PROPOSED BY: Shaun Jensen (HQ-F13-303)

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<u>PROPOSAL 242</u> - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Restrict outboard motor use on the Kenai River to 10 horsepower or less, as follows:

Outboard motor use on the Kenai River will be restricted to 10 HP or less.

ISSUE: The Kenai River Chinook salmon have been a resource under siege since the early 1980s. Likely to follow in the footsteps of most all other west coast Chinook salmon fisheries, the Kenai Chinook arguably will continue to decline as they have since the 1990s and, not just since the mid 2010s as with statewide Chinook salmon resources. The common denominator for all these declines are man's activities associated with and consequence of our obsession with dominating the resource and the water it relies upon.

While we have advanced protection for the riparian areas of the lower 50 miles of the Kenai, we have not afforded much protection to the fish's essential fresh water spawning and rearing habitats. Our management approach is essentially to protect the green banks, which only actually contact the water for a few short months each year. Basically we manage the river as a playground for boaters and anglers. Yes, a playground, and not a fishery habitat. A fishery which evolved in a world where the Chinook, after they entered the river, were essentially the top of the food chain with little to fear from other creatures. They were king.

Now as the Chinook salmon enter the river they are relentlessly pursued and continuously exposed to stressors from man's activities. The lower 20 miles of the river, which is arguably the most productive of the spawning areas for the Kenai main stem Chinook, has very little protection area and no protections designated for what ADF&G describes as late run Chinook (which spawn in the main stem). Heavily weighted and powered boats capable of running on step go anywhere anytime the operators desire, oblivious to the havoc this behavior subjects to the river's inhabitants. At issue here aren't the impact of a few boats pursuing fishing opportunities but masses of these boats operating day and night during the season. Over 700 boats have been counted below the Soldotna bridge on a July day on the Kenai River.

Imagine arriving home after a long absence intent only on making love to one's mate to find that there is a flock of Pterodactyls trying to rip the roof off. How successful might that mating be?

Finally, I would ask you why is it we vent these exhausts into the water column? Is it convenient? Yes, but more than that we don't want to hear the noise ourselves. So what do we do, we put the noise into the water exposing the salmon to that contaminant we don't ourselves wish to expose ourselves to and the stresses that result from them, and the fish cannot avoid them.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? These fish will continue to be stressed by human activities, stress which can only additionally deplete the size and numbers of returning fish. The spawning areas will not be as productive as they once were. The success of the spawn will fail to be as it once was. The size of the fish will be smaller and the in stream mortality

higher. Studies of all other species suggest that unnatural stress from noise results in higher birth mortality and lower birth weight. Why would we assume that fish would respond otherwise?

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? The quality of the fishery would improve by increasing inriver survivability and thus the numbers of harvestable fish returning to the river. The ascetic appeal of a fishery not involving overwhelming numbers of power boats speeding up and down while negotiating around those boats fishing along with eliminating the wake effects on other anglers as well as reducing the bank impacts of those wakes would have nothing but a positive impact upon the river, it's inhabitants and users alike.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Users and the resource itself will benefit from having a fishery managed more like a fishery instead of a playground. The angler experience will improve and the stresses upon users wanting to enjoy the resource will be reduced.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Users who do not see how their behavior and activity can affect other species (such as the Kenai's Chinook salmon) will believe they are being wronged.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Considered no motors but that would effectively be re-allocating the fishery to non motorized users. Restricting HP to 10 will not stop any user from accessing the resource, it will, though, change their behavior on the river.

PROPOSED BY: Dennis Randa (HQ-F13-140)

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<u>PROPOSAL 243</u> - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Beginning in 2015, prohibit outboard motor exhaust from being discharged into the waters of the Kenai River, as follows:

Beginning in 2015 outboard motor exhaust will no longer be allowed to be discharged into the waters of the Kenai River.

ISSUE: The Kenai River Chinook salmon have been a resource under siege since the early 1980s. Likely to follow in the footsteps of most all other west coast Chinook salmon fisheries, the Kenai Chinook arguably will continue to decline as they have since the 1990s, and, not just since the mid 2010s as with statewide Chinook salmon resources. The common denominator for all these declines are man's activities associated with and consequence of our obsession with dominating the resource and the water it relies upon.

While we have advanced protection for the riparian areas of the lower 50 miles of the Kenai, we have not afforded much protection to the fish's essential fresh water spawning and rearing habitats. Our management approach is essentially to protect the green banks, which only actually contact the water for a few short months each year. Basically we manage the river as a playground for boaters and anglers. Yes, a playground, and not a fishery habitat. A fishery

which evolved in a world where the Chinook, after they entered the river, were essentially the top of the food chain with little to fear from other creatures. They were king.

Now as the Chinook salmon enter the river they are relentlessly pursued and continuously exposed to stressors from man's activities. The lower 20 miles of the river, which is arguably the most productive of the spawning areas for the Kenai main stem Chinook, has very little protection area and no protections designated for what ADF&G describes as late run Chinook (which spawn in the main stem). Heavily weighted and powered boats capable of running on step go anywhere anytime the operators desire, oblivious to the havoc this behavior subjects to the river's inhabitants. At issue here aren't the impact of a few boats pursuing fishing opportunities but masses of these boats operating day and night during the season. Over 700 boats have been counted below the Soldotna bridge on a July day on the Kenai River.

Another important and equally devastating consequence of present (recreation) management of the Kenai River is the lack of consideration for the impacts of the continuous sound being introduced by outboard motor exhaust. The elimination of two stroke motors has done nothing to address this "noise" pollution. A review of scientific studies of sonic and sound barrage upon our planet's creatures reveals the stress of sound can be disruptive and devastating especially on marine environments. The result of many of these studies suggests increased birth mortality and declining birth weight. Many have complained for years of the diminished returns and smaller fish in the Kenai. Can we afford to no consider these impacts? We certainly are not at this time!

Imagine arriving home after a long absence intent only on making love to one's mate to find that there is a flock of Pterodactyls trying to rip the roof off. How successful might that mating be?

Finally, I would ask you why is it we vent these exhausts into the water column? Is it convenient? Yes. But even more we don't want to hear the noise ourselves. So what do we do, we put the noise into the water exposing the salmon to that contaminant we don't ourselves wish to expose ourselves to and the stresses that result from them, and the fish cannot avoid them.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? These fish will continue to be stressed by outboard motor exhaust noise. Stress from this noise pollution will continue to deplete the size and numbers of returning fish. The spawning areas will not be as productive as they once were. The success of the spawn will fail to be as it once was. The size of the fish will be smaller and the in-stream mortality higher. Studies of all other species suggest that un-natural stress from noise results in higher birth mortality and lower birth weight. Why would we assume that fish would respond otherwise?

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Decreasing the stress we (unnecessarily) inflict upon the resource would improve the quality of the fishery and increase inriver survivability and thus the numbers of harvestable fish returning to the river.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Users and the resource itself will benefit from having a fishery managed more like a fishery instead of a playground.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Users who do not believe noise can affect other species (such as the Kenai's Chinook salmon) will believe they are being wronged.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? While I believe that limiting motor size to 10 hp would be a better solution, this solution would at least stop the barrage of noise that boating subjects upon river residents, only one of which are the Chinook salmon. I also believe that in the long run we should even eliminate all motor exhaust, even 10 hp, from discharge into the river. I can only hope that the Alaska Board of Fisheries can be brave enough to take these steps to protect the river's residents. One or two bees in camp is a nuisance, a warm of them can make camp unbearable. How can we not do something about the swarm of bee like behavior we subject the salmon to?

PROPOSED BY: Dennis Randa (HQ-F13-141)

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PROPOSAL 244 - 5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Close Hidden Lake Creek and Jean Lake Creek to salmon fishing, as follows:

(X) in Hidden Lake Creek, from an ADF&G regulatory markers located at the mouth of Hidden Creek, upstream to Hidden Lake, sport fishing for salmon is prohibited;

(X) in Jean Lake Creek, sport fishing for salmon is prohibited;

ISSUE: These two streams have been closed to salmon sport fishing since 1962, but that prohibition is not reflected in the current codified regulations. Between 2001 and 2002, codified language pertaining to the closure of these streams to salmon fishing was lost when the language format was converted from a matrix format to a text format. Hidden Lake and Jean Lake creeks salmon closures have been printed in the *Southcentral Alaska Sport Fishing Regulations Summary* every year since 1962, and the public has complied with salmon closure. This proposal seeks affirmation from the board on the closure of salmon fishing in Hidden Lake and Jean Lake creeks.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Inconsistency between the regulation and tributary spawning closures that the public has complied with on the Kenai River will continue to exist.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Sport anglers and enforcement personnel.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-285)
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PROPOSAL 245 - 5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Prohibit sport fishing for salmon in Russian River upstream of the power line, as follows:

No sport fishing for salmon above the power lines on the Russian River.

ISSUE: Overcrowding on the upper Russian River.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? For over twenty years I have seen a big change in the quality of fishing on the Russian River. I never fish the lower river anymore. With the salmon fishing, there are too many people on the river. With so many people, the river is getting trampled so bad there are very few rainbows or dollies left in the lower river. The Russian River is a world class trout fishing river, but with so many people fishing for salmon, it may lose much of its popularity as a trout fishery. I hope not.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. By the time the salmon get this far up the Russian River, their value as food is in question. These fish should be left undisturbed to spawn to insure the next generation of salmon. This proposal may also reduce the bear problems in this section of the river.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? People come from around the world to fish trout on the Russian River. It should be kept as a world class trout fishery. By saving the upper Russian River for this purpose will be worth it for all Alaskans. Many people spend thousands of dollars a year to fish the Russian River.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Some salmon fishermen.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? N/A.

PROPOSED BY: Robin Collman (HQ-F13-328)
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PROPOSAL 246 - 5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Prohibit barbed hooks when sport fishing in the Middle Section of the Kenai River drainage, including Russian River, as follows:

Hooks with barbs are not allowed on the Upper Kenai mainstem and Russian River.

ISSUE: Barbs on fishing hooks.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Fishing hooks have been in use for well over 9000 years. First used notably in the Middle East, hooks were fastened out of animal horns and bones, bronze, wood, shells and finally metals.

Hooks without barbs will increase your catch while at the same time decrease the physical damage and trauma to the fish. You can buy barbless or use pliers to crimp down the barb. Contrary to popular belief, more fish are caught using hooks without barbs. Furthermore, barbless hooks are ideal for fishing because they can be removed without injuring or killing the fish.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Barbs are unnecessary and injure or kill too many fish. Barbs are not needed to land fish.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All fish and people who fish the upper Kenai mainstem and Russian River.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Robin Collman (HQ-F13-327)

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PROPOSAL 247 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area. Allow snagging of sockeye salmon in the Kenai River, as follows:

All salmon hooked may be retained.

ISSUE: Harvest of sockeye salmon when limit is raised by emergency order to more than three sockeyes. Remove no snagging regulation below Skilak Lake.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Angler will continue to release snagged fish. The department may not be able to maintain and control escapement levels.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Proper escapement goals will more likely to occur. Mortally wounded sockeye will be utilized. Less enforcement dollars needed to control snagging

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All hooked fish, and all consumptive anglers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No One.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Joe Hanes (HQ-F13-205)
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PROPOSAL 248 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.170. Kenai River Coho Salmon Management Plan. Start the three coho salmon bag limit on the Kenai River two weeks earlier on August 15, as follows:

Increase coho daily bag and possession limit in the Kenai River (drainage) from two fish to three fish beginning on August 15 rather than September 1. Corresponding regulatory changes are:

(iv) from [SEPTEMBER 1] **the first day after closure of the east side setnet fishery but no later than August 15** — November 30, in the following waters of the Kenai River, excluding the tributaries, the bag and possession limit for coho salmon is three fish per day;

(C) from July 1 through August [31] **14**, the daily bag and possession limit for coho salmon 16 inches or greater in length is two fish;

(D) from **the first day after closure of the east side setnet fishery but no later than** [SEPTEMBER 1] ***August 15*** through November 30, the daily bag and possession limit for coho salmon 16 inches or greater in length is three fish;

ISSUE: For nearly forty years the daily bag and possession limit for coho salmon in the Kenai River was three fish, 16 inches or greater in length. In response to a decline in abundance of coho salmon during the late 1990's, the bag and possession limit was reduced to two fish as part of a comprehensive plan that included restrictions on commercial fisheries. Since that time abundance has improved, commercial fisheries are no longer restricted specifically to conserve Kenai River coho salmon yet the sport fishery still operates under the lowered bag and possession limit for the first part of the run in August. Increasing the bag and possession limit from two to three fish in August would not jeopardize the sustained yield for the resource, would provide increased opportunity for harvest and likely result in additional economic value for the fishery.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Coho harvest opportunity will continue to be unnecessarily foregone.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Sport fishing for coho salmon in the Kenai River Drainage puts salmon on Alaskan's dinner table, provides high quality recreational opportunity and supports significant economic activity on the Kenai Peninsula. Continuing to operate the fishery for coho under unnecessary restrictions only serves to reduce the potential benefits created by the fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Resident and nonresident sport and guided sport fishermen and the economy of the Kenai River Area.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? So long as the department continues to monitor the harvest of coho salmon of Kenai River origin by all fisheries and manages this important resource for

sustained yield, no one would suffer from adoption of a proposal seeking to fully restore the longstanding bag and possession limit of three coho salmon.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Sportfishing Association (HQ-F13-043)

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PROPOSAL 249 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Prohibit use of eggs for bait in the Kasilof River king salmon sport fishery, as follows:

No use of eggs for bait to hook or land any king salmon.

ISSUE: No use of eggs for bait in the Kasilof River.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Retention of females for eggs will continue.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, it will increase the females on spawning beds.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? People that use eggs for bait.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? N/A.

PROPOSED BY: Christine Brandt (HQ-F13-219)

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PROPOSAL 250 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Prohibit retention of female king salmon greater than 33 inches in length in the Kasilof River sport fishery, as follows:

No retention of female Chinook over 33 inches on the Kasilof River.

ISSUE: Low Chinook returns in the Kasilof River.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Runs will continue to decline.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, puts more females on the spawning beds.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Persons that retain females for the use of eggs as bait.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No retention of females period.

PROPOSED BY: Christine Brandt (HQ-F13-220)

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PROPOSAL 251 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Reduce king salmon bag and possession limit to one fish on the Kasilof River, as follows:

The allowable daily limit of King salmon in the Kasilof River during the early run in June would be one King, which could either be a wild or hatchery fish on Tuesdays, Thursdays or Saturdays, or just hatchery fish on the other days of the week.

ISSUE: The allowable daily limit of King salmon on the Kasilof River during the early run through June should be reduced from two fish to one fish.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? With the decrease in the number of King salmon returning to the Kasilof River in June, allowing a 2 fish daily limit could continue to add to this problem.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All who want to see our King salmon fisheries continue into the future.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those who are just concerned with the here and now!

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-382)

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PROPOSAL 252 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Open rainbow trout fishing year-round in the Kenai River downstream of an ADF&G marker located upstream of the Lower Killey River, and increase rainbow trout spawning closure area below the Upper Killey River by approximately three-quarters of a river mile, as follows:

5 AAC 57.120.

(6) rainbow/steelhead trout

…

(B) may be taken from **January 1 – December 31** [JUNE 11 – MAY 1], in all flowing waters from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to **an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one mile upstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River, and from June 11 – May 1 in that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one mile upstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River upstream to** Skilak Lake [,] and the waters of Skilak Lake, except the water within a one-half mile radius of the Kenai River inlet; bag and possession limit of one fish less than 18 inches in length; rainbow/steelhead trout 18 inches or greater in length may not be retained; rainbow/steelhead trout caught that are 18 inches or greater in length must be released immediately;

5 AAC 57.121.

(2) the following waters of the Kenai River are closed to sport fishing, as follows:

…

(K) from May 2 – June 10, in that portion of the Kenai River from **an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one mile upstream from the mouth of the Lower** [THE MOUTH OF THE UPPER] Killey River upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake;

ISSUE: The current area closed to protect spawning rainbow trout does not protect a large aggregate of spawning rainbow trout downstream of the lower boundary of the closed area. Information from a recent rainbow trout radio-telemetry study shows the current lower boundary, at the Upper Killey River, bisects an important spawning area. Numbers of rainbow trout are spawning downstream of the boundary in an area open to fishing for species other than rainbow trout. Annual department staff observations since this closure went into effect in 2008 indicate anglers are catching rainbow trout at and downstream of the current lower boundary when rainbow trout spawning aggregations are present from May 2–June 10.

Information also indicates relatively few rainbow/steelhead trout are present in most of the lower Kenai River (below the Lower Killey River) during the spring. This information, in combination with a restrictive bag limit and gear limited to single-hook artificial lures only from January 1–June 30 in the lower Kenai River, indicates closing the lower Kenai River downstream of the Killey River to fishing for rainbow/steelhead trout May 2–June 10 is unnecessary.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? A large aggregate of spawning rainbow trout between the Upper Killey River and the Lower Killey River will continue to be exposed to sport fishing pressure, and the lower Kenai River downstream of the Killey River area will remain closed to rainbow/steelhead trout fishing from May 2–June 10 unnecessarily.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Anglers who fish for Dolly Varden and other species in the Kenai River below the Lower Killey River during springtime and law enforcement because regulations will be less complicated.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Anglers who fish for Dolly Varden in the section of water between the Upper Killey and Lower Killey rivers.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-291)
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PROPOSAL 253 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Open rainbow trout fishing year-round in the Kenai River downstream of an ADF&G marker, designating the upper end of the Killey River king salmon sanctuary, and increase the rainbow trout spawning closure area located above the Upper Killey River, as follows:

Seasonal fishing closure between the Upstream King Salmon sanctuary marker located near the Killey River upstream to Skilak Lake May 2 through June 10. Downstream of this marker open to fishing for all species of salmon, rainbow trout, and Dolly Varden except for in the seasonal king salmon sanctuary closure areas already in regulation.

This proposal does not affect closure dates in regulation for all species of salmon and it does not change regulations in place regarding king salmon sanctuary areas.

ISSUE: Protecting a very important rainbow trout spawning area of the Kenai River. While at the same time providing opportunity for sport fishing below this area.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? People will continue to fish for rainbow trout in this area between May 2 through June 10.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? This proposal expands a very important spawning area for rainbow trout, while at the same time providing sport fishing opportunity below this area.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All sport fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those that wish to fish in this area between May 2 through June 10.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None. As the only viable option would be to leave regulations the same which would keep this important rainbow trout spawning area open to fishing between May 2 through June 10.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Professional Guide Association (HQ-F13-209)
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PROPOSAL 254 - 5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Allow fishing for trout on the Kenai River below Moose River using bait beginning June 1 and restrict gear, as follows:

ISSUE: Opening of Trout Fishing to scents and or single egg bait during the month of June.

1. Regulate either a Colorado Hook with single egg, or fly only with scent.
2. Regulate the use of no more than a six weight rod for trout fishing during this period for trout fishing using scent or bait.
3. Regulate monofilament only leaders of six# test or lower for trout fishing with bait or scent.
4. No other fishing gear may be carried to the river when fishing for trout.

A six weight rod is not capable of holding or even catching a king salmon of any real size. six# test line would assure easy break offs of any king salmon hooked by accident and single egg Colorado hooks would assure that only small hooks which are difficult to hook a king with would be used. All king salmon caught using this method would have to be released, unless they are under 20 inches long.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? This will help to slow the growth of the trout population during a time of poor king salmon production. Trout have only smolts, and king salmon eggs to eat during the June period. This affects the king salmon much more than the other species due to low numbers. King salmon smolts are larger and are easier to target in June as they move to the Ocean.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? This will improve the fishing experience of people coming to Alaska who are spending a lot of money and who have nothing to fish for in June. Keeping fish under 18 inches will also improve king salmon numbers. I have heard estimates of over 200,000 trout caught and released below Bings Landing. That number of trout means a five to one trout versus king salmon ratio in the best of years and in the last few years more like 15 to one. This is detrimental to the larger king salmon Smolts that move down the river and have fewer places to hide than smaller pinks, reds, dog, or silvers. Keeping small trout will improve this ratio and I would recommend raising the limit to 22 inches but realize that is not a likely proposal.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All Anglers will benefit. This is a win-win in my mind. It keeps the trout population down during a period of poor king salmon production. It will allow

tourism to flourish without hurting a resource that is growing and harming in some ways the king salmon population when it is most fragile.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? I do not see any down side to this other than a lower trout population until the king salmon population returns to historic high levels. Tourism and taxes are going be hurt as well as license sales which support the fisheries and hunting in Alaska if the Kenai has nothing to fish for in June. Lodges cannot legitimately try to book in June if there are no fish to fish for. Opening the month of June to bait on six weight or less rods would give lodges and tourists something to fish for with a better opportunity to hook up.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? I have not considered any other solution. I cannot find one that helps the people who spend thousands of dollars to come to the Kenai and end up not being able to fish, or have anything to have a reasonable expectation of catching fish. Being in the tourism side of the industry I feel like we are creating a fraud by getting people here in June to fish when we may close fishing for any reasonable expectation of success. Offering trout fishing as an alternative beats not having any fishing available. It hurts the tax base, the image of the state to bring people in and leave them only Halibut to fish for... and this too is not good putting more pressure on a fishery that is already hurting. While I live in Kentucky I have worked on the Kenai the past five seasons and been to Alaska now the last six years. I have been fishing for over 50 years and understand the relationship of predator and prey in the river system. Right now the king salmon are in decline and I see the trout as part of the problem. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game can easily figure the impact of this on the fishery. License sales from past years could be used to estimate how many trout would be taken or killed based on those numbers.

PROPOSED BY: James Dicken (HQ-F13-325)

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<u>PROPOSAL 255</u> - 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 57.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Middle Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Move Hidden Lake Creek and Hidden Lake special provisions from the Lower Section management area to the Middle Section management area, as follows:

5 AAC 57.121

(1) sport fishing gear restrictions:

…

(H) **<u>repealed</u>** [IN HIDDEN LAKE CREEK, ONLY ONE UNBAITED, SINGLE-HOOK, ARTIFICIAL LURE MAY BE USED];

…

(2) the following waters of the Kenai River are closed to sport fishing as follows:

(H) **repealed** [FROM MAY 2 – JUNE 10, HIDDEN LAKE CREEK];

…

(5) **repealed** [HIDDEN LAKE IS CLOSED TO SPORT FISHING FOR BURBOT];

(6) **repealed** [IN HIDDEN LAKE, THE BAG AND POSSESSION LIMIT FOR LAKE TROUT IS ONE FISH, WITH NO SIZE LIMIT].

Add paragraphs in 5AAC 57.122 as follows:

(1) the following waters of the Middle Section of Kenai River drainage are open to sport fishing, only as follows:

…

(H) from June 11 – May 1, Jean Lake Creek **and Hidden Lake Creek**;

…

(3) the following bag and possession limits apply:

…

(X) in Hidden Lake, the bag and possession limit for lake trout is one fish, with no size limit;

(4) the following sport fishing gear restrictions apply:

…

(X) in Hidden Lake Creek, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;

(X) Hidden Lake is closed to sport fishing for burbot;

ISSUE: Hidden Lake Creek and Hidden Lake are part of the middle section of the Kenai River drainage area. Hidden Lake Creek and Hidden Lake were incorrectly listed under the lower section of the Kenai River in codified regulations.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? These waters will continue to be listed under the wrong management area of the Kenai River.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Department staff, enforcement personnel, and sport fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-284)

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PROPOSAL 256 - 5 AAC 57.123. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Upper Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area. Reduce spawning closure period on Crescent Lake/Crescent Creek, as follows:

(6) Crescent Creek drainage, as follows:

(A) open to sport fishing from **June 11** [JULY 1] – May 1;

…

(C) in Crescent Lake, from **June 11** [JULY 1]–May 1, the bag and possession limit for rainbow/steelhead trout is two fish, of which only one may be 20 inches or greater in length;

(D) from **June 11** [JULY 1]–May 1, the Crescent Creek drainage, except Crescent Lake, is open to sport fishing for rainbow/steelhead trout; the bag and possession limit for rainbow/steelhead trout is one fish less than 16 inches in length; rainbow/steelhead trout 16 inches or greater in length may not be retained; rainbow/steelhead trout caught that are 16 inches or greater in length must be released immediately, and returned to the water unharmed;

ISSUE: The current spawning closure season for Crescent Creek and Crescent Lake is inconsistent with the rest of the Kenai River drainage. Modifying the date will align the fishing season at Crescent Creek and Crescent Lake with other fishing seasons in the upper section of the Kenai River drainage area that have been designed around spawning closures to protect rainbow trout. From 2009–2012, department research and annual observations have shown that most Arctic grayling spawning activity has taken place by June 11. Reducing the length of the closed period will not expose the total spawning population of Arctic grayling to fishing pressure.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Sport fishing will remain closed unnecessarily until July 1.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Sport anglers who access this remote location to fish for Arctic grayling.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-289)

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PROPOSAL 257 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai

Peninsula Area. Create a spawning closure period on Bench Lake and Bench Creek for Arctic grayling, as follows:

(X) From May 2 – June 10, Bench Creek drainage, including Bench Lake, is closed to sport fishing.

ISSUE: From 2009–2012, department research and annual observations have identified an Arctic grayling spawning population within Bench Creek drainage. Currently, the total spawning population is exposed to fishing pressure because there is no closure to protect these fish during spawning. The proposed closure dates would be consistent with other spawning closures that protect spawning rainbow trout and Arctic grayling on the Kenai Peninsula.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The total spawning population of Arctic grayling will remain exposed to sport fishing pressure.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Sport anglers who access this remote location to fish for Arctic grayling.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Sport anglers who access this remote location to fish for Arctic grayling from May 2–June 10.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-288)

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PROPOSAL 258 - 5 AAC 56.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai Peninsula Area. Remove liberal gear limits of five lines allowed while fishing through ice on Stormy Lake for northern pike, as follows:

(a) …

…

(13) **repealed** [IN STORMY LAKE, FIVE LINES MAY BE USED TO FISH FOR NORTHERN PIKE THROUGH THE ICE; ALLOWABLE GEAR IS LIMITED TO STANDARD ICE FISHING GEAR AS SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 56.120(7)(B); FISHING GEAR MUST BE CLOSELY ATTENDED TO AS SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 75.033; ALL OTHER SPECIES OF FISH CAUGHT MUST BE RELEASED IMMEDIATELY].

ISSUE: Stormy Lake was successfully treated with rotenone to eradicate northern pike in September 2012. Therefore, liberal fishing methods for pike are no longer warranted and standard sport fishing regulations for ice fishing should apply.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? A regulation that has no relevance will remain.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The public benefits when regulations are updated to fit current conditions.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-283)

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PROPOSAL 259 - 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Management Plan; 5 AAC 57.121. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area; 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area; and 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan. From May 1 to July 31, limit hours allowed for boat anglers; limit guides to 10 starts per week; and clarify department emergency order (EO) authority, as follows:

From May 1 to July 31, sport fishing from boats is only allowed Tuesday through Sunday 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. downstream of Skilak Lake. Guides are allowed 10 starts per week, trips in excess of six hours count as two starts; guides must fill out their logbook client info portion and start time prior to departure from the dock or launch point for their guided trips.

The department may restrict or expand the days or hours open to sport fishing from boats as needed to increase or reduce harvest in an effort to stay within the escapement goals. The department may use bait, and hook numbers, as well as hook types and sizes to increase or decrease harvests as needed to stay within the goals. The department may expand or reduce the area open to king salmon fishing. The department may restrict time, area, or gear in intercept fisheries to insure the health of the resource.

ISSUE: I would like the board to correct a misplaced restriction on guided anglers, and to preserve the health of the resource. The board has placed restrictions on guided anglers by limiting the days and hours guides may fish. I propose the restriction be placed on the guides if you really feel they should be restricted in their ability to make a living, then make it so they can only get 10 six hours starts or per week. This would be equal to what they are allowed to fish currently, starts that result in fishing more than six hours would count as two starts, just as it is now it would be the pursuit of a bite which constitutes fishing, if an angler hooked a fish he could fight it until it was landed but if fishing resumed after the fight ended the "clock" would continue, so if a half day group hooked a fish at 11:45 a.m. and it took them 30 minutes to land it

then it would only be a half day trip as long as they didn't put lines back in the water after the fight, in addition any fish hooked legally before 10:00 p.m. could be fought until landed or lost. When the river is open to fishing it should be open to every legal license holder not just the ones that own a boat or have a friend that will take them. The allocation issue should be assigned to sport anglers alone, the guided or non-guide aspect should have no bearing what so ever. The clients are not guaranteed fish nor do they belong to the captain so placing an allocation limit on them as a consumer is wrong. They are required to buy a Sportfishing license to participate so allocate on that basis alone. The river should also receive some breaks from fishing pressure so I propose we limit the hours of king salmon fishing from a boat to 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. This will accomplish several things, first it will give the King salmon a much needed break from angler pressure, it would make it easier for law enforcement to patrol when the people are able to fish. It would restore the equality between the non-guided and guided angler. It would defuse the "rush" to have to start at six and switch at 12 thus lower the potential for boat induced issues such as turbidity and boat wake issues. I would also establish a set of guidelines for the Department of Fish and Game to manage the inseason runs by being able to adjust time and area as well as methods and means to either increase or decrease harvests as abundance varies.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The river will continue to be unfairly given to the private boat owner, and the department's ability to have effective inseason management tools will be remain inadequate to keep up with the need to manage with the least intrusive means to achieve the desired result.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, this proposal would increase the equity of guided anglers, thus improving their experience and allow the fish to move up the system unbothered thus "spreading" the fish so that the anglers could spread out as well making it more enjoyable for all anglers, and it would give the department more tools to manage the runs for the overall health of the fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The community would benefit most as a healthy king salmon run is a valuable renewable resource, guided anglers would benefit as they would be treated equally to the non-guided angler, the guides would benefit as they would be given some latitude as to when they started their trips and the resource they use would be healthier. Non guided anglers would also benefit from a healthier resource.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? The non-guided anglers who chose to use the resource after 10:00 p.m. and before 6:00 a.m.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Continue on the path of guided vs. non guide discrimination; this was rejected for obvious reasons. I also considered several versions that would help protect the resource, they all have issues in keeping up with the dynamic fisheries we experience, the variable nature of run size, run timing and water conditions make very specific plans unaffective when things change, so I return to a basic equitable solution which relies on the department to use tools to manage the run.

PROPOSED BY: Monte Roberts (HQ-F13-064)
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PROPOSAL 260 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area. Allow guided fishing on the Kenai River seven days per week, but guides can only operate during five days of their choosing, as follows:

Allow guided fishing seven days a week, but each individual guide would only be allowed to fish five days a week. Enforcement and reporting could be done with daily activity reports instead of end of season reports.

ISSUE: Reduce crowding. Current regulations jam all the guides and guided trips into a five day period. Spread the use out over a seven day period without increasing the total number of days an individual guide can fish.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Guided anglers will continue to be funneled into small time frames for several fisheries. The Kenai Tuesday–Saturday, Kasilof, Cook Inlet, and West Side fly out on Sunday and Monday. You could reduce crowding and increase quality of all fisheries.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The Kenai River Fishery, Kasilof, Deep Creek Marine, and West Side fly out fisheries would all benefit, along with both guided and unguided anglers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Nobody.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Open all fisheries seven days a week for all anglers.

PROPOSED BY: Mel Erickson (HQ-F13-113)
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PROPOSAL 261 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area. Allow five anglers to fish from a registered guide vessel on the Kenai River during the month on July, as follows:

Allow five anglers in a guide boat in July as long as at least one angler is 18 years of age or under

ISSUE: Families not being able to fish together on the same boat. There are many times when a family of five book a guided fishing trip and cannot fish together and are split up between two boats and then are fishing with strangers.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? An Alaska fishing trip is an adventure of a lifetime for many families with a lot of great memories created and they are denied the

privilege of enjoying this great experience together. Effort and harvest will not increase at all if this proposal is adopted as they are all going to fish anyway. Also guide effort does not increase since the guide fleet operates far below 100% occupancy rates even in July.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Improves the quality of the fishing experience.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Families who want to fish together.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one since no additional fishing pressure will occur.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Allow five anglers of all ages in a guide boat in July/ no reason to reject just another option.

PROPOSED BY: Mel Erickson (HQ-F13-266)

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<u>PROPOSAL 262</u> - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area. Prohibit sport fishing from a registered guide vessel downstream from the outlet of Kenai Lake on Sundays and Mondays, as follows:

The following regulation apply to fishing from guide boats: Downstream from the outlet of Kenai Lake in May, June and July, fishing is not allowed on Sundays or Mondays (except for Memorial Day).

ISSUE: Overcrowding on the upper Kenai River.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Overcrowding will continue and get worse in the future. The quality of fishing on the upper Kenai River is not what it used to be. This problem must be addressed before it is too late. I have heard of some people who will not fish the upper Kenai because of this problem.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. With the overcrowding on the upper Kenai River now, this would improve the quality of fishing very much.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All sport fishermen who want a quality fishing trip on the upper Kenai River.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Some guide boats.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? If the crowding keeps getting worse, we may have to go to a drawing permit system. It may be too soon for this measure, but in a few more years it may be a reality if something is not done soon.

PROPOSED BY: Robin Collman (HQ-F13-329)

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PROPOSAL 263 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area. Allow fishing for coho salmon from a guided vessel in the Kenai River on Labor Day, as follows:

Fishing would be allowed from any legal boat every year on Monday Labor Day, the first Monday in September, for the purpose of harvesting silver salmon on all sections of the Kenai River.

ISSUE: To allow fishing from a boat in the Kenai River on Labor Day Monday for the purpose of harvesting of silver salmon during this traditionally last day of the fishing season for most Alaskan residents.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? All Alaskan residents with or without boats and registered Kenai River guides will continue to lose opportunity to harvest silver salmon from a boat on the Kenai River during this last traditional day of summer. Thus Alaskan residents would lose a last chance at putting some fish in their freezers for the long winter a head.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No, it only addresses the right thing to do for the residents of Alaska.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All Alaskan residents, with or without boats. Kenai River guides with or without clients.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one. Labor Day weekend is considered in Alaska as the last weekend to harvest fresh fish before winter sets in. There are no king salmon in the Kenai River during this time of year so no harm will result to any king salmon. Most tourist are already gone from Alaska. Alaskan residents look to Memorial Day Monday as the beginning of the summer season and the possibility of that first fresh salmon caught and ate. Likewise, Labor Day Monday is looked upon by Alaskan residents as the last opportunity to catch a fresh salmon before the coming of winter. All boaters are allowed to fish for king salmon on the Kenai River during Memorial Day Monday, including registered Kenai River guide boats. I feel that all boats should have that same opportunity to fish on Labor Day Monday for silver salmon, including registered Kenai River guide boats.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? I had also thought about the 4th of July whenever it fell on a Monday. But I rejected that because of the issues we have at this time with the King Salmon returns even though it would only be one Monday every seven years. I also felt that because it was in the middle of the summer it did not concern Alaskan Residents as much. Few tourists arrive before the 1st of June and even fewer remain after the 1st of September. That makes these two holiday Mondays, at the beginning of the summer and the close of the summer, much more of an important Alaskan salmon fishing/harvesting issue. The chance to get their first fresh salmon of the year and a chance to get their last fresh salmon of the year.

PROPOSED BY: Kenneth Bingaman (HQ-F13-084)
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PROPOSAL 264 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area. Allow anglers on the Kenai River to fish for coho salmon from a registered guide vessel on Mondays beginning September 1, as follows:

Lower Kenai River upstream to Skilak Lake guided anglers are allowed to fish seven days a week for coho salmon from September 1 through November 16.

ISSUE: Provide opportunity for the guided angler on Mondays for coho salmon from September 1 through November 16 during a time of low angler participation.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Lost opportunity for the guided angler on Mondays in September, October, and November when a large percentage of the anglers fishing at this time of year are residents of Alaska.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? It allows for the guided angler to fish for coho salmon during a time of the season that has traditionally seen low angler participation for coho salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The guided angler that wishes to target coho salmon on Mondays from September 1 through November 16. It will also benefit the unguided angler as it will spread out effort over the entire Lower Kenai River during this timeframe.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Participation is very low at this time of year for coho salmon so few anglers will be affected if any if this proposal is adopted.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Status quo but felt that this proposal was a win-win for all user groups.

PROPOSED BY: Kenai River Professional Guide Association (HQ-F13-208)
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PROPOSAL 265 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area. Allow Kenai River anglers upstream of the inlet of Skilak Lake inlet to fish for coho salmon from a registered guide vessel on Mondays beginning August 1, as follows:

(i) From July 31 or the end of the king salmon season, whichever is later, through October 31, sport fishing from a vessel that is registered with the Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, as a sport fishing guide vessel is restricted as follows:

(1) downstream from the confluence of the Moose River and Kenai River, sport fishing on Mondays is prohibited;

(2) upstream from the confluence of the Moose River and Kenai River **to the outlet ofSkilak Lake,** sport fishing for coho salmon on Mondays is prohibited; any coho salmoncaught must be released immediately without further harm.

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to rescind the regulation prohibiting resident and nonresident anglers from fishing for, and harvesting coho salmon from a guide vessel on the Upper Kenai River (Skilak Lake inlet to Kenai Lake outlet) on Mondays from August 1 through October 31.

Fishing methods and means, general seasons and limits, boating regulations/restrictions, and angling pressure for coho salmon on the Upper Kenai River are very different from those on the Lower Kenai River (Skilak Lake outlet to Moose River), regardless of whether anglers are guided or unguided, and should be prescribed as such. The spirit of the existing regulation is to give unguided anglers opportunity to fish for coho salmon without competition/pressure from anglers fishing from guide vessels on Mondays. Much like regulation 5 AAC 57.140(b) which prohibits anglers from fishing from a guide vessel downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake on Sundays and Mondays below Skilak Lake in May, June, and July (i.e., King salmon season).

The ADFG log book catch data from 2009–2011 (see table below) clearly shows that the Upper Kenai River (Skilak Lake inlet to Kenai Lake outlet) has very little total guided angler pressure on coho salmon compared to that of the individual, or combined total, of coho salmon kept or released on the Lower Kenai River sections (Cook Inlet to Skilak outlet). We concluded from this data that fishing for coho salmon from a guide vessel, on Mondays from August 1 through October 31, on the Upper Kenai River would NOT displace or deny unguided anglers fishing opportunity on this section of river. Therefore, we recommend relaxing the existing regulation and allow opportunity for anglers to fish for coho salmon from guide vessels, on Mondays from August 1–October 31, on the Upper Kenai River (Skilak lake inlet to Kenai Lake outlet).

ADFG Log Book Data: Total # Coho Salmon Kept & Released by section of the Kenai River, 2009–2011

	Lower Kenai River						Upper Kenai River	
	Cook Inlet to Soldotna Bridge (P50001)		Soldotna Bridge to Moose River (P50002)		Moose River to Skilak Lake outlet (P50003)		Skilak Lake inlet to Kenai Lake outlet (P50004)	
Year	# kept	# released	# kept	# released	# kept	# released	# kept	# released
2009	6536	222	487	42	2567	422	190	91
2010	7273	323	480	40	1793	267	228	151
2011	7781	141	735	77	1979	265	249	45

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Resident and nonresident anglers seeking opportunity to fish for, and harvest, coho salmon from a guide vessel above Skilak Lake (i.e. the Upper Kenai River - from the outlet of Kenai Lake downstream to Skilak Lake) on Mondays will unnecessarily continue to be prohibited.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Resident and nonresident anglers seeking opportunity to fish for, and harvest, coho salmon from a guide vessel above Skilak Lake (i.e. the Upper Kenai River - from the outlet of Kenai Lake downstream to Skilak Lake) on Mondays.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Unguided anglers who oppose anglers fishing for coho salmon from guide vessels on the Upper Kenai River on Mondays from August 1–October 31.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Cooper Landing Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-316)
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PROPOSAL 266 - 5 AAC 56.140. Kasilof River guiding and guided fishing requirements and 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area. Prohibit a registered guide who guides on the Kenai River from guiding on the Kasilof River when the Kenai River is closed to guided fishing on Sundays and Mondays, as follows:

No guide day on the Kenai: Kenai guides may not move to Kasilof.

ISSUE: Migration of guides from the Kenai River to the Kasilof River when the Kenai is closed to guided fishing.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Crowding on the Kasilof and depletion of the late run of King salmon on the Kasilof.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? People who guide only on the Kasilof. The fishing public who do not want so many guides on the Kasilof.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Kenai River guides who move to the Kasilof on the no guide days on the Kenai.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Requiring a guide to only fish one river the whole season.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-331)
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PROPOSAL 267 - 5 AAC 57.140. Kenai River guiding and guided fishing requirements in the Kenai River Drainage Area. Limit the number of guides on the Kenai River to 200, as follows:

Limit Kenai to 200 guides.

ISSUE: Erosion, crowding, turbidity, traffic, safety, noise, pollution.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? More of the same in the above stated issue and more king mortality.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? The quality of time on the river.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Property owners/Joe Fisherman.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? A few over-capitalized guides.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? The Deshka River has 60–70 guides for the same amount of king.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-362)

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PROPOSAL 268 - 5 AAC 57.XXX. New Section and 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section. Placeholder proposal to allow stakeholders, department, and board to discuss proposed regulatory action based on results of 2012 Kenai River Freshwater Logbook data, as follows:

UNKNOWN. Awaiting 2012 Freshwater Logbook Data.

ISSUE: Placeholder for possible regulatory changes and/or management practices based on Kenai River Freshwater Logbook Data for 2012. This is a placeholder proposal to allow stakeholders, the board, and the department an opportunity to discuss proposed regulatory changes in Upper Cook Inlet upon the results of the Kenai River Freshwater Logbook Data for 2012. The 2012 Freshwater Logbook Data was unavailable at time of Board of Fish proposal submission deadline.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Unfair allocation of the resource between user groups.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Unknown. Awaiting 2012 Freshwater Logbook Data.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users of the resource.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? The 2012 Logbook Data was not available to form solutions.

PROPOSED BY: Todd Smith, Megan Smith, Amber Every, Travis Every (HQ-F13-093)
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PROPOSAL 269 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Management Plan. Update sockeye salmon numbers within the personal use salmon management plan to align with the *Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan*, as follows:

(c) Salmon may be taken by dip net in the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers as follows:
(1) in the Kenai River, as follows:
(A) from July 10 through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.; the commissioner may extend, by emergency order, the personal use fishery to 24-hours per day if the department determines that the abundance of the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon is greater than **2.3** [TWO] million fish;

ISSUE: The tiered values of the *Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan* changed during the 2011 Upper Cook Inlet Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting. The new tiers are less than 2.3 million sockeye, 2.3 to 4.6 million sockeye, and greater than 4.6 million sockeye. Reference to the number 2.3 million in the *Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Management Plan* was not updated in 2011. This proposal seeks to clarify the board's intent on the change to this management plan.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? If this management plan is not updated, it will continue to be inconsistent with changes that were made to the interrelated *Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan* and cause confusion to the public.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The public and department staff.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-282)
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PROPOSAL 270 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Clarify when a person is required to record their harvest within Upper Cook Inlet personal use salmon fisheries regulations, as follows:

(a) …

…

(2) shall record all fish harvested on the permit, in ink, immediately upon harvesting the fish; for the purpose of this paragraph, "immediately" means before concealing the salmon from plain view or transporting the salmon from the **shoreline or streambank adjacent to waters open to personal use fishing where the salmon were removed from the water when fishing from shore or from the waters open to personal use fishing when fishing from a boat** [FISHING SITE];

ISSUE: During the 2012 season, over 300 citations were issued for failure to record personal use salmon harvest before leaving the fishing site. A clear definition of when users are required to record their harvest on a personal use permit is needed to help increase compliance of the recording requirement and decrease the chance of a user unknowingly violating the law.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Enforcement and compliance of personal use salmon fishing harvest recording requirements will remain less effective.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Upper Cook Inlet personal use participants and enforcement personnel.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-281)

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PROPOSAL 271 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Direct department to provide permit holder information to enforcement officials if permit holder fails to return their permit, as follows:

5 AAC 77.540(a)(3) should be amended to read, **shall return the permit to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) by the date specified on the permit; if the permit holder fails to return their permit by the date specified by the ADF&G, ADF&G will provide the name, address, and other permit information to Department of Public Safety (DPS) for prosecution.**

While the board does not have the authority to direct ADF&G or the DPS to do their jobs, the board does have the authority to strengthen existing regulations. I advocate that ADF&G continue to remind personal use permit holders of the requirement to return their permits, but if they fail to do so, the bail schedule of $200 for every permit not returned should be enforced.

ISSUE: Either DPS or ADF&G are not following regulations passed by the Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) as it relates to return of personal use permits. 5 AAC 77.540(a)(3) states that personal use fishermen are to return their permits by the date specified on the permit, which is

August 15. Approximately 40% of the permits issued are never returned by this date (see Table 1 below). The ADF&G chooses to send out two mail-out reminders to delinquent permit holders, which increases compliance only to about 80%. From 2010 through 2012, approximately 6,500 people per year never returned their permits, even after two reminders to do so. Legally, these folks are to receive a $200 citation and are not eligible to obtain a permit the following year. That said, neither DPS or ADF&G are doing anything about this. Their response when asked why is, "We don't need all the permits returned, we can estimate the harvest from the 20% of permits not recovered." Couldn't the same be said then for commercial fishermen who don't fill out a fish ticket or from sport fishing guides who don't fill out log books? Who made the decision to let nearly 58,000 non-compliant personal use permit holders (since 1996) not return their permits? Doesn't this amount to differential treatment under the law?

Table I. Number of personal use permits issues versus the number of permits returned, as required, by regulation.

	Permits Issued		Permits Returned								Permits not Returned	
			Voluntary		Mailing 1		Mailing 2		Total			
Year	Number	SE	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1996	14,576		9,986	69%	2,501	17%	569	4%	13,452	92%	1,124	8%
1997	14,919		7,031	47%	4,792	32%	1,148	8%	13,756	92%	1,163	8%
1998	15,535	19	8,209	53%	3,391	22%	1,590	10%	13,190	85%	2,345	15%
1999	17,197	25	8,960	52%	3,771	22%	1,485	9%	14,216	83%	2,981	17%
2000	16,107	11	8,070	50%	3,962	25%	1,546	10%	13,582	84%	2,525	16%
2001	16,915	1	8,515	50%	3,896	23%	1,987	12%	14,398	85%	2,517	15%
2002	17,568	1	8,881	51%	3,247	18%	2,156	12%	14,284	81%	3,284	19%
2003	19,110	2	9,602	50%	3,587	19%	2,537	13%	15,726	82%	3,384	18%
2004	21,910	2	10,653	49%	2,075	10%	5,020	23%	17,748	82%	3,868	18%
2005	21,905	1	12,760	59%	4,150	19%	2,171	10%	19,081	88%	2,680	12%
2006	18,563	1	11,658	63%	3,632	20%	1,242	7%	16,532	89%	1,996	11%
2007	23,046	1	14,090	61%	4,250	18%	1,972	9%	20,312	88%	2,734	12%
2008	23,722	1	13,743	58%	4,385	19%	2,131	9%	20,259	85%	3,289	14%
2009	29,619	1	18,426	63%	4,715	16%	1,888	6%	25,029	85%	4,384	15%
2010	31,590	1	17,193	55%	5,355	17%	2,674	9%	25,222	81%	6,092	19%
2011	34,515	3	20,276	60%	4,825	14%	2,080	6%	27,181	80%	6,789	20%
2012	34,315	3	20,266	60%	4,610	14%	2,172	7%	27,048	81%	6,616	19%
Minimum	14,576		7,031	47%	2,075	10%	569	4%	13,190	80%	1,124	8%
Mean	21,830		12,254	56%	3,950	19%	2,022	10%	18,295	85%	3,398	15%
Maximum	34,515		20,276	69%	5,355	32%	5,020	23%	27,181	92%	6,789	20%

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Personal use fishermen will continue to ignore the regulation to return their permits and ADF&G will continue to "guess" at the amount of salmon they harvested. Moreover, both commercial and sport fishermen who receive citations for not filling out forms correctly or on time will continue to legitimately ask why personal use fishermen who fail to turn in their permits are being treated differently.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All people who abide by and depend upon equal treatment under the law will benefit from a consistent enforcement of board regulations.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Personal use fishermen who fail to turn in their permits, as required by law.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? I would like to see ADF&G develop the option for personal use fishermen to turn their permits in by filling out an online permit form. In this day of internet access, this would be an effective option that many personal use fishermen might use. It would be a win-win for everyone.

PROPOSED BY: Margie Anderson (HQ-F13-114)
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PROPOSAL 272 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Require a person to show proof of residency prior to a permit being issued and require personal use fishery to be closed if more than five percent of permits are not returned, as follows:

5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Fishery Management Plan

(a) Salmon may be taken for personal use under this section only under a personal use permit issued under 5AAC 77.015 and 5 AAC 77.525; in addition to the requirements under 5 AAC 77.015, a person

(1) shall, before a permit may be issued, show (**one form of proof that they are an Alaskan Resident, permanent fund or voters registration.)** [THE PERSON'S RESIDENT SPORT FISH LICENSE, OR PROOF, SATISFACTORY TO THE DEPARTMENT, THAT THE PERSON IS EXEMPT FROM LICENSING UNDER AS 16.05.400; THE PERSON'S SPORT FISH LICENSE NUMBER SHALL BE RECORDED ON THE PERMIT];

(2) shall record all fish harvested on the permit, in ink, immediately upon harvesting the fish; for the purpose of this paragraph, "immediately" means before concealing the salmon from plain view or transporting the salmon from the fishing site;

(3) shall return the permit to the department by the date specified on the permit. **(If more thant 5 percent of these permits are not returned as required this fishery will be discontinued due to illegal fishing.)**

ISSUE: Illegal use of sport license as proof of residency and the continued lack of compliance with the rules in this fishery. Over 7,000 permits were not returned last year and ADF&G didn't issue a single ticket even with names and addresses. If you do not return a game tag as required you get a ticket why the difference?

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The state will be rewarding illegal actions both by the board and by personal use fishermen.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Alaska residents who actually live here and legal fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one but nonresidents and law breakers.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Ignore the problem and leave it to the state to correct, however they seem to be too complacent to do their jobs and get the permits returned. The board does not have and never had the authority to institute a sport fishing license requirement so this provision is illegal also.

PROPOSED BY: Brandie Ware (HQ-F13-049)

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PROPOSAL 273 - 5 AAC 77.015. Personal use fishing permits and reports and display of personal use fish and 5 AAC 77.525. Personal use salmon fishery. Exempt a person obtaining a personal use dipnet permit for Cook Inlet from requirement that the person is the holder of a valid resident sport fish license or is a resident exempt from licensing under AS 16.05.400, as follows:

A sport fishing license is not required to dipnet.

ISSUE: Sport fishing license.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Mis-represented facts.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Dipnetting is personal use, not sport.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Dipnetters can save money.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-373)

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PROPOSAL 274 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Require online permitting for personal use permits, establish penalties for violations, and reduce household limit to 15 per head of household and 5 for each additional member, as follows:

Instead of a sport license make it a personal use permit only available from the department online just like a hunting license! If there needs to be a charge have the legislature enact one. If you are convicted of any offense during the fishery you do not get a permit the following year. If you do

not return your permit you do not get one the following year and you will be charged whatever the cost of the ticket for that offences is before you or your named family members could get another permit. In addition with the growth in this fishery crowding is a problem, lower the bag limits to 15 per head of household and five per member.

ISSUE: The personal use fishery is growing at a phenomenal rate and is out of control. The Clarion police blotter is full of tickets issued to people for too many fish, not writing the fish down, not clipping the tails, fishing while closed and on and on. The Kenai beaches are full of drunken campers tearing up the beaches and other habitat and cleaning the fish and disposing of the waste all around their camp sites. All of this is putting excess pressure on the city's police force. In addition to this we now hear that nearly 8,000 people haven't turned in their permits as required. Better controls on this fishery are need immediately.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The habitat and resource will suffer and soon someone will get hurt.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Honest fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Can't see anyone suffering from fixing problems with the fishery.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? N/A.

PROPOSED BY: John Higgens (HQ-F13-231)
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<u>PROPOSAL 275</u> - 5 AAC 77.525. Personal use salmon fishery. Limit the number of Cook Inlet personal use permits that can be issued to 30,000 permits, as follows:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game will issue no more than 30,000 dip net permits per year.

ISSUE: Unlimited dip net fishery on one river.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Expectation will exceed the resources available.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Waste, pollution, illegal fishing could be controlled.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Kenai residents, solid waste locations, and borough.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Number 30,001.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? The opening date / would not pass.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-350)
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PROPOSAL 276 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Open Kenai River personal use fishery after 350,000 sockeye salmon escapement has been reached, as follows:

Dipnetting starts after 350,000 escapement is reached.

ISSUE: Dipnetters blocking escapement.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The commercial fleet will be closed.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? It rebuffs a re-allocation.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Commercial fishermen/consumers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Some personal use fishermen.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Calendar date / would not pass.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-352)
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PROPOSAL 277 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Open Kenai River personal use fishery after escapement has been met, as follows:

Dipnetting begins after escapement is met.

ISSUE: Reallocation of a fully allocated fishery.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Commercial fishermen will face reductions.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Dipnetting prosecuted on surplus stock prevent over-escapement.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Commercial fishermen will be whole again.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Dipnetters will benefit in times of abundance.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-353)
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PROPOSAL 278 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Prohibit emergency order (EO) authority liberalizing personal use salmon fishery to 24 hours per day, but allow for increased harvest limits, as follows:

Discontinue use of Emergency Orders to open Personal Use Fishery (dipnetting) to 24 hours at the mouth of the Kenai River.

Increase the number of fish allowed to be caught on a Personal Use permit when the need arises to increase the fish harvest, but limit this to the normal openings hours of 6:00 a.m.–11:00 p.m. Modify permit cards to allow for separate recording of the additional harvest if necessary.

ISSUE: The Emergency 24 hour opening of the Personal Use Fishery at the mouth of the Kenai River to Warren Ames Bridge creates a very disruptive situation in the residential neighborhoods adjacent to the activity.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Continued unrest during normal sleeping hours for nearby residents, increased complaints to state and local police departments about trespassing, noise and speeding traffic.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Residents living on and near the Kenai River Personal Use Fishery Area would benefit by having a break in the noise and chaos while trying to sleep during this three week event. This would also benefit area law enforcement and fish and game by reducing the burden on their departments.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Nobody. Extra fish can be caught during the normal opening hours.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Linda Lemanski (HQ-F13-019)
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PROPOSAL 279 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Modify existing Kenai River personal use fishery hours from 6:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m., to 7:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m., as follows:

Dipnet fishery open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

ISSUE: The traffic on the lower Kenai.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? More accidents, loss of life.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? It promotes safety.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Operators in the lower Kenai.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? The City of Kenai.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-370)

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PROPOSAL 280 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Reduce Kenai River personal use fishing season, establish paired restrictions with commercial fishery to achieve inriver goal, and prohibit retention of king salmon, as follows:

5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Fishery Management Plan. (a) Salmon may be taken for personal use under this section only under a personal use permit issued under 5 AAC 77.015 and 5 AAC 77.525, in addition to the requirements under 5 AAC 77.015, a person

(1) shall, before a permit may be issued, show the person's resident sport fish license, or proof, satisfactory to the department, that the person is exempt from licensing under AS 16.05.400; the person's sport fish license number shall be recorded on the permit;

(2) shall record all fish harvested on the permit, in ink, immediately upon harvesting the fish; for the purpose of this paragraph, "immediately" means before concealing the salmon from plain view or transporting the salmon from the fishing site;

(3) shall return the permit to the department by the date specified on the permit.

(b) Salmon may be taken with a set gillnet in the Central District as follows:

(1) From June 15 through June 24;

(2) fishing periods will be daily from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.;

(3) repealed 6/22/2002;

(4) salmon may be taken only from ADF&G regulatory markers located at the mouth of the Kasilof River to ADF&G commercial fishing regulatory markers located approximately one mile from the mouth on either side of the Kasilof River; fishing is prohibited beyond one mile from the mean high tide mark and is also prohibited within the flowing waters or over the stream bed or channel of the Kasilof River at any stage of the tide;

(5) salmon may be taken only by set gillent as follows:

(A) a set gillnet may not exceed 10 fathoms in length, six inches in mesh size, and 45 meshes in depth;

(B) no part of a set gillnet may be operated within 100 feet of another set gillnet;

(C) a person may not operate more than one set gillnet; the permit holder shall attend the set gillnet at all times when it is being used to take fish;

(D) only one set gillnet may be operated per household;

(6) the annual limit is as specified in 5 AAC 77.525.

(c) Salmon may be taken by dip net in the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers as follows:

(1) in the Kenai River, as follows:

(A) from July [10] **(15)** through July 31, seven days per week, from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. **(If the commercial fishery is closed or is going to be closed for more than one regular period to achieve the lower end of the inriver sonar goal the personal use and sport fishery shall also close until the minimum sonar goal is projected.)**; [THE COMMISSIONER MAY EXTEND, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, THE PERSONAL USE FISHERY TO 24-HOURS PER DAY IF THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT THE ABUNDANCE OF THE KENAI RIVER LATE-RUN SOCKEYE SALMON IS GREATER THAN TWO MILLION FISH];

(B) the annual limit is specified in 5 AAC 77.525, except that [ONLY ONE] king salmon may **not** be retained;

(C) from a boat, in the area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located near the Kenai City Dock upstream to the downstream side of the Warren Ames Bridge, except that salmon may not be taken from a boat powered by a two stroke motor other than a motor manufactured as a direct fuel injection motor;

(D) from shore, in the area from ADF&G regulatory markers located on the Cook Inlet beaches outside the terminus of the river upstream to the downstream side of the Warren Ames Bridge, except dipnetting is closed on the north shore from as ADF&G regulatory marker located below the end of Main Street, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located near the Kenai City Dock;

(2) in the Kasilof River, as follows:

(A) from June 25 through August 7, 24-hours per day;

(B) the annual limit is as specified in 5 AAC 77.525. except that king salmon may not be retained and any king salmon caught must be released immediately and returned to the water unharmed;

(C) from ADF&G regulatory markers located on the Cook Inlet beaches outside the terminus of the river upstream for a distance of one mile.

(d) Salmon may be taken by dip net in Fish Creek as follows:

(1) the commissioner may open, by emergency order, the personal use dipnet fishery in Fish Creek from July 10 through July 31, if the department projects that the escapement of sockeye salmon into Fish Creek will be more than 50,000 fish;

(2) the annual limit is specified in 5 AAC 77.525 except that no king salmon may be retained and any king salmon caught must be returned to the water unharmed;

(3) from a boat or shore, in those waters upstream from ADF&G regulatory markers located on both sides of the terminus of Fish Creek, to ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately one-quarter mile upstream from Knik-Goose Bay Road.

(e) Repealed 6/22/2002.

(f) A person may retain flounder incidentally caught when fishing for salmon in the Cook Inlet Area under this section. A person may retain up to 10 flounder under this section per year and must record those flounder retained by the person on that person's permit specified in (a) of this section.

(g) In Beluga River, salmon may be taken by dip net only as follows:

(1) salmon, other than king salmon, may be taken only by a person 60 years of age or older; a person authorized to take salmon under this subsection may not authorize a proxy to take or attempt to take salmon on behalf of that person under 5 AAC 77.016 and AS 16.05.405;

(2) from July 10 through August 31, the fishery is open 24 hours per day from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one-quarter mile upstream of the Beluga River Bridge, downstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one mile below the bridge;

(3) the annual limit is as specified in 5 AAC 77.525 except that within the total annual limit one king salmon may be retained per household;

(4) the commissioner will close, by emergency order, the fishery when 500 salmon, other than king salmon, have been harvested;

(5) a permit holder for this fishery shall report weekly to the department as specified in the permit.

ISSUE: Crowding on the Kenai beaches when it goes to 24 hours, the fishery starts too early before fish arrive so the beaches are trashed for no good reason and clarifies how the department should manage the fishery. Eliminates king retention.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The city of Kenai will have problems with public safety; spend money for no reason and confusion will continue as to what the department is doing and why.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT?

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER?

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Brandie Ware (HQ-F13-050)

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PROPOSAL 281 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Prohibit retention of king salmon in the Kenai River personal use fishery, as follows:

No retention of kings.

ISSUE: Low abundance of king salmon in the Kenai River.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Runs will continue to decline.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, increase kings to the river to meet escapement goals, personal use is a fishery directed to harvest sockeye.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Debbie Petroze (HQ-F13-216)

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PROPOSAL 282 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Extend the Kenai River personal use fishery into August, as follows:

> **(E) During run strengths greater than 4,600,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River ADF&G may extend the Kenai River personal use dip net season by emergency order through August 10, and the personal use limit on the Kenai River may be increased by 10 salmon. All personal use caught king salmon and coho salmon must be released during the month of August on the Kenai River.**

ISSUE: Use of the dip net fishery during August to manage excess sockeye salmon escapement to the Kenai River on large run years.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? There may be unintended consequences to Kenai River sockeye salmon, other less abundant salmon or fish stocks, and possible emergency restrictions or closures as has occurred to Northern Cook Inlet dip net, sport, and commercial users.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users could benefit from an additional management tool that could be useful in keeping Kenai River sockeye salmon spawning escapement numbers within the objective range, while minimizing negative effects on other fish stocks and user groups.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Any other use group could not catch a salmon that was harvested in the personal use dip net fishery.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None. This seemed the cleanest and easiest solution.

PROPOSED BY: South Central Alaska Dipnetters Association (HQ-F13-155)

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PROPOSAL 283 - 5 AAC 77.525. Personal use salmon fishery. Reduce household limits for Kenai River personal use fishery based upon Kenai River sockeye salmon run size, as follows:

5 AAC 77.525. Personal use salmon fishery.

(a) Only one Personal Use salmon fishing permit may be issued to each household per year.

(b) Repealed 7/21/91.

(c) In the personal use taking of salmon, unless otherwise specified in 5 AAC 77.500–5 AAC 77.548, the total annual limit for each personal use salmon fishing permit is 25 salmon for the head of a household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

(1) Notwithstanding any other provisions in 5 AAC 77.525, when the Late-Run Kenai River sockeye return is less than 2,000,000, the total annual limit for each Personal Use salmon permit is [25] **10** salmon for the head of household and [10] **2** salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

(2)Notwithstanding any other provisions of 5 AAC 77.525, when the Late-Run Kenai River return is greater than 2,000,000 but less than 4,000,000, the total limit for each personal use salmon permit is 15 salmon for the head of household and five salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.

(d) Notwithstanding any provision in 5 AAC 01–77, in the Cook Inlet Area, a person may **not** possess sport caught and personal use caught salmon on the same day.

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to align the personal use bag and possession limits to salmon abundance(s). Currently, the Personal Use Fishery bag and possession limits are not connected to salmon abundance(s).

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? On weak, less than 2,000,000, late-run sockeye returns to the Kenai, in the Personal Use fishery there are no provisions for reduced bag or possession limits. As a result, all other users will be closed while the personal use fishers continue to have possession limits the same as a 6,000,000 sockeye return to the Kenai River. Current regulations are not abundance-based if the Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye existing personal use bag and possession limits remain the same during low, below 2,000,000, returns. All other users, including sport fishermen, will experience reduced bag and possession limits.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Provides for a limited salmon resource to be accessible to a greater number of personal use participants. Shares the conservation burden across all users in relation to Kenai River salmon abundance.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All other users.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Personal use harvesters.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Total closure of Personal Use Fishery, as current regulations require.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-100)

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PROPOSAL 284 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Establish harvest allocations for the Kenai River personal use fishery based upon Kenai River sockeye salmon run size, as follows:

(c)(1)(A) add language that would manage harvest on a three tired guideline harvest strategy as follows: Plan would mirror 5 AAC 21.360 Kenai River Late Run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan: The department will manage using methods and means, time and area would be regulated to achieve a harvest; of no more than 100,000 sockeye when the forecast is less than 2,000,000: No more than 225,000 sockeye when the forecast is between 2,000,000–4,000,000. In an over 4,000,000 forecast no restrictions for time and a liberalization of possession limits.

ISSUE: Unequal burden sharing for conservation (conserving).

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Disproportionate harvest by PU fishing relative to size of Kenai sockeye return.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All resource users, proportionate harvest of surplus stocks.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Status quo was not an option.

PROPOSED BY: South K-Beach Independent Fishermen (HQ-F13-160)

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PROPOSAL 285 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Prohibit dipnetting from boats in the Kenai River personal use fishery, as follows:

Eliminate personal use harvests from all vessels, boats, and watercraft.

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to address the hydrocarbon and turbidity problems in the Kenai River and boat congestion in the Lower Kenai River, below the Warren Ames Bridge.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Public safety issues and conflicts will continue.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Improves public safety and resolves conflicts with other users. Traffic congestion will be improved.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Personal use harvesters.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Personal use harvesters.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-102)
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PROPOSAL 286 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Establish a no-wake zone and maximum speed limit on the Kenai River between river mile 3 and 4.5 during the personal use fishery, as follows:

5 AAC 77.540(a)(6)(c)(1)(C)

(C) from a boat, in the area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located near the Kenai city dock upstream to the downstream side of the Warren Ames Bridge, except that salmon may not be taken from a boat powered by a two stroke motor other than a motor manufactured as a direct fuel injection motor**; and from river mile three to river mile four and a half when the high tide is at 21 feet or more there shall be a no wake and a speed of five miles per hour to protect the river bank an river bank vegetation.**

ISSUE: Kenai River bank damage and vegetation damage.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Damage to the Kenai River, damage to the river bank from river mile three to river mile four and a half with also vegetation loss.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? It would protect the Kenai River bank and protect River Bank vegetation and in turn protect the resource harvest.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All Alaskans who use the Kenai River Personnel Dip Net Fisheries and also the Commercial Fisherman in Cook Inlet while protecting the Kenai River Bank.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No One.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No other solutions other than closing the Personnel Dip Net Fisheries and I do not want that to happen. I dip net myself and l live just below river mile four. Three years ago when the tides were high I watched large pieces of bank and vegetation leaving the bank from the boat wakes or waves, my neighbors also had damage done to their banks. When the tide is high the river almost stops moving but the boat Wakes and waves pound the bank, the river does not damage the bank.

PROPOSED BY: Preston Williams (HQ-F13-324)
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PROPOSAL 287 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Reduce allowable mesh size to 2-inch mesh in Cook Inlet personal use dipnet fisheries, as follows:

Two inch mesh for dipnets.

ISSUE: Dipnetters using gillnets.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? King salmon will be caught.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? For red salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? People targeting red salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Size of hoop.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-351)

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PROPOSAL 288 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Prohibit release of salmon caught in Cook Inlet personal use fisheries, as follows:

All salmon caught while engaged in personal use fishing shall be retained, except as provided for in 5 AAC 77.540(c)(2)(B).

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to implement catch-and-keep sport fishing provisions for Upper Cook Inlet. Sorting of salmon, wastage of salmon resources, caught salmon must be harvested and remain part of bag and possession limits.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Salmon will be caught and released, possibly wasted and result in poor spawning success. Public access and high demand for selected species will encourage the release and potential waste of other non-targeted stocks.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Still provides for personal use fish for home use, provides food for human consumption.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Some salmon caught and released.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Probably very few personal use fishers.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-108)
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<u>PROPOSAL 289</u> - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Require fish waste from the Kenai River personal use fishery to be ground up to three-quarters inch, as follows:

All dip net carcasses ground to ¾ inches per DEC regulation.

ISSUE: Pollution, bacteria and illness.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Sickness and pollution.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, bio-waste is piped offshore, no pollution, illness, garbage, bears, bacteria.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All dipnetters and fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? The bears.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? More tractors.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-360)
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<u>PROPOSAL 290</u> - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Change dates for the Kasilof River personal use (PU) set gillnet fishery from June 15–24 to June 20–30, and close the PU set gillnet fishery and require release of all king salmon in the PU dip net fishery when sport fish restrictions are placed on king salmon in the Kenai or Kasilof rivers, as follows:

(b) Salmon may be taken with a set gillnet in the Central District as follows:

(1) from [JUNE 15] **<u>June 20</u>** through [JUNE 24] **<u>June 30: unless inseason sportfish management restrictions are placed on either the Kenai or the Kasilof for king salmon conservation reasons, in which case, the personal use set gillnet fishery in the Central District will be closed and only open for dipnetting and all Chinook salmon will be required to be released unharmed.</u>**

ISSUE: In years of low king salmon abundance, the personal use set gillnet fishery just south of the Kasilof River is preventing necessary escapement of naturally occurring Crooked Creek Chinook salmon and therefore is preventing the department from having surplus fish from which to take eggs for the crooked creek Chinook stocking program. This lack of hatchery Chinook production in turn has a very negative impact on the area's economy.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The escapement goal for early run naturally occurring Crooked Creek Chinook will not be achieved and surplus fish for an egg take and subsequent stocking of Crooked Creek hatchery Chinook will not occur.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All those that benefit from healthy returns of both naturally occurring and hatchery Crooked Creek Chinook stocks. Changing the fishery opener form June 15 to June 20 will help avoid early run king salmon interception and it will also benefit sockeye personal use participants as dates are more in line with annual peak sockeye returns to the Kasilof.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Only those that cannot adapt from a set gillnet to a dip net if fisheries are restricted in times of low Chinook abundance.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Permanently change this fishery from a setnet fishery to a dip net fishery. May not be necessary in times of average or high Chinook abundance.

PROPOSED BY: Mark Glassmaker (HQ-F13-225)

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PROPOSAL 291 - 5 AAC 77.527. Personal use smelt fishery. Extend fishing season for personal use smelt fishery from April 1 through June 15, as follows:

Drift gillnet hooligan season on the Lower Kenai open May 1st through June 15th. This extends the season 15 days, and brings the regulation in line with other fresh waters of the Kenai Peninsula.

ISSUE: Hooligan run has been showing up later than the historical norm, and personal use gillnet season ends too early now.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Users of the drift gillnet personal use hooligan fishery will miss the opportunity to harvest reasonable numbers of hooligan.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED?

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Those who have participated in this fishery but have missed the run because it came later.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Dave Lyon, Karen Berger, Stephen McCaslin (HQ-F13-133)

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PROPOSAL 292 - 5 AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan. Modify management plan to restrict commercial king salmon fishing in the Northern District if sport fishing in the Deshka River is restricted to artificial lures, or close commercial king salmon fishing in the Northern District if sport fishing is restricted to catch and release or closed in Susitna River tributary streams upriver from the Deshka River, as follows:

(12) if Deshka River sport fishing is restricted to artificial lures, the commissioner shall restrict Northern District commercial king salmon fishing periods to half of the regularly scheduled hours until bait is once again allowed in the sport fishery.
(13) if sport king salmon fishing is restricted to catch and release or closed, by emergency order. In Susitna River tributary streams upstream from Deshka River, the commissioner shall close the Northern District commercial king salmon fishery until these streams once again open to king salmon harvest.

ISSUE: Sharing of the conservation burden between sport and commercial users in a manner that allows for timely publication of coming season's regulations.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Users will not have enough advance knowledge of regulations as has occurred in both 2012 and 2013.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users could benefit from more timely dissemination of the coming season's fishing regulations.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? All users would continue to be restricted in a manner similar to ADF&G's current practices. In addition, the Northern District commercial king salmon fishery would close if an emergency order closed sport king salmon harvest in the road accessible fisheries along the Parks Highway.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? During times of king salmon shortage causing any emergency restrictions to the sport fishery, blanket closure of the Northern District king salmon fishery was also considered. The proposal was made as an action that all Board of Fisheries members may be willing to support as it more equally shares king salmon conservation burden.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission (HQ-F13-117)
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PROPOSAL 293 - 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan. Modify management plan to restrict commercial set gillnet fishing to one regular 12-hour period per week in the Northern District if sport fishing in the Deshka River is restricted to artificial lures; or close the Northern District to commercial fishing, if sport fishing is closed in the Little Susitna River, Fish Creek, Jim Creek, or Deshka River, as follows:

(3) If the Little Susitna River or Deshka River sport fishery is restricted to artificial lures only, then the Northern District commercial salmon fishery shall fish no more than one regular 12- hour period per week for the remainder of the season or until the Little Susitna sport fishery re-opens to the use of bait.

(4) If sport Coho salmon fishing is closed in Little Susitna River, Fish Creek, Jim Creek, or Deshka River then the Northern District commercial salmon fishery shall close for the remainder of the season, or until the coho salmon sport fishery re-opens.

ISSUE: Conservation burden sharing for Northern District coho salmon harvesters should be listed in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? During 2011 bait fishing was never opened in Little Susitna River (the most important sport coho salmon goal in all of Upper Cook Inlet) and ADF&G made no corresponding restriction to Northern District setnetters. When this occurred on August 6, it represented approximately a 25% reduction for the entire season's sport Coho harvest from the Little Susitna River. Later in the season when the Little Susitna River and most of the Knik Arm Management Unit was closed to sport coho salmon fishing there still was not even a single restriction to the Northern District commercial season. Alaska Department of Fish and Game failed to attain both the Little Susitna River and Jim Creek Coho salmon escapement goals in 2011.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users would benefit from a higher likelihood Northern District coho salmon spawning goals would be achieved during a time of resource shortage.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Northern District commercial fishermen and sport users would both share in the conservation burden to ensure adequate attainment of coho salmon escapement goals as currently measured by ADF&G weirs.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Requesting a closure of Northern District commercial fishing was considered, if the Little Susitna River or Deshka River sport fisheries were restricted to no bait. Rejected in favor of a shared pattern more similar to how the Northern District sport and commercial king salmon fisheries was managed by ADF&G emergency order in both 2011 and 2012.

PROPOSED BY: Andrew Couch (HQ-F13-309)

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PROPOSAL 294 - 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan. Modify management plan to manage Northern District commercial salmon fisheries based on abundance of Northern District sockeye and coho salmon, as follows:

(b) The Department shall manage the Northern District commercial salmon fisheries based on the abundance of sockeye salmon counted through the weirs on **Fish Creek,** Larson, Cheltna, and Judd Lakes, **and coho salmon abundance counted through the weirs on Fish Creek and Little Susitna River,** or other Salmon abundance indices as the department deems appropriate.

The department is spending thousands of dollars monitoring annual abundance of multiple salmon species through the Fish Creek and Little Susitna River Weirs. Both weirs have long histories of department enumerated salmon escapements, with ADF&G established salmon escapement goal ranges for each stream drainage. Both weirs provided earlier inseason management capabilities, based on earlier salmon passage through lower stream locations, than any abundance measurement specified in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan. Both weirs are currently used for inseason management purposes of Fish Creek sport and personal use fisheries and Little Susitna River sport fisheries.

In 2011 and 2012 the department closed Little Susitna River and Knik Arm coho salmon sport fisheries and the Northern District commercial fishery based partially on low and inadequate coho salmon escapements through the Little Susitna River and Fish Creek weirs. During 2012 and many previous years, the Fish Creek personal use dipnet fishery has remained closed for the entire years at a time, based on low sockeye salmon passage through Fish Creek Weir.

With Northern District's largest sockeye salmon stock (Susitna River) already listed as a stock of concern, because of low yield measured by Northern District setnet harvest and chronic failed escapements, and with Little Susitna River coho salmon teetering on the edge of a similar listing, the best available science (already used for annual sport and personal use management) should be fully utilized in managing Northern District commercial fisheries.

ISSUE: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) commercial managers have stated, on record, that migration of sockeye salmon through Larson, Chelatna, and Judd Lake weirs occurs too late in the season to provide any significant inseason management ability. Yet these are the only specified inseason abundance management tools contained in the Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Expanding stock of concern issues may continue and worsen for Northern District salmon stocks, escapement goals may continue to be missed on a regular basis, future yields may be lost, reasonable fishing opportunities for all northern user groups may be foregone without planned use of the best available science.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All Users could benefit if important Northern District salmon stocks are managed to return to former abundance and yield levels. Management based on abundance of Fish Creek and Little Susitna River salmon would provide managers an earlier season tool for attaining adequate salmon escapements of all Northern District salmon stocks,

some of which have no escapement goals, or have established goals, but less timely abundance monitoring.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? All users could see restrictions necessary to attain ADF&G established spawning escapement goals, that ensure future salmon abundance and yield levels.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Alaska Outdoor Council supports managing with the best available science, and supports using the Little Susitna River coho salmon goal and Fish Creek coho salmon goal in precautionary department management decisions for early-run coho salmon stocks through Upper Cook Inlet, or until the department develops more appropriate coho salmon escapement goals for additional coho stocks/management units.

A companion proposal addresses adjusting Central District drift gillnet harvest of Northern District bound salmon based on the same escapement abundance indices.

The largest and most important escapement indicator for managing Northern District salmon harvests would be a Susitna/Yenta River drainage salmon escapement goal, measured low enough in the drainage, to provide timely commercial harvest adjustment. As promised by ADF&G, when the current three weir-based Susitna sockeye salmon escapement goal was adopted, the department has continued to study the possibility of developing a sockeye salmon goal based on the use of sonar, fish wheels, and/or drift nets in the lower Susitna/Yenta River drainage. When will the public and board members see results and management adjustments based on these studies?

If stock apportionment remains the largest impediment for ADF&G development of a lower Susitna River drainage sockeye salmon escapement goal—would there be management value for a July/August, four salmon-species combined goal? A combined goal could include temporal ranges to fit portions of the season when specific salmon species are more abundant.

Also worthy of consideration (since the Susistna River drainage is acknowledged by ADF&G) as the largest producer of coho salmon, chum salmon, pink salmon, and king salmon in Upper Cook Inlet, shouldn't commercial management of Susitna River salmon stocks, be at least partially based on all five species produced from the river, rather than only sockeye and king salmon.

Alaska Outdoor Council supports department development/board adoption of salmon spawning escapement goals for managing additional Upper Cook Inlet salmon stocks and species and especially when a new goal(s) may be piggyback-monitored with department equipment and staff already counting other salmon species/stocks at the same location(s).

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Outdoor Council (HQ-F13-311)

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PROPOSAL 295 - 5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan. Amend management plan to remove references to Northern District coho, late-run Kenai River king, Kenai River coho salmon stocks, and add language that states the department shall manage common property fisheries for a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources, as follows:

Ammend 5 AAC Northern District Salmon Management Plan.

(a) [THE PURPOSES OF THIS MANAGEMENT PLAN ARE TO MINIMIZE THE HARVEST OF COHO SALMON BOUND FOR THE NORTHERN DISTRICT OF UPPER COOK INLET AND TO PROVIDE THE DEPARTMENT DIRECTION FOR MANAGEMENT OF SALMON STOCKS.] The department shall manage the chum, pink, and sockeye salmon stocks primarily for commercial uses to provide commercial fishermen with an economic yield from the harvest of these salmon resources based on abundance. [THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALSO MANAGE THE CHUM, PINK, AND SOCKEYE SALMON STOCKS TO MINIMIZE THE HARVEST OF NORTHERN DISTRICT COHO SALMON, TO PROVIDE SPORT AND GUIDED SPORT FISHERMAN A REASONABLE OPPORTUNITY TO HARVEST THESE SALMON RESOURCES OVER THE ENTIRE RUN, AS MEASURED BY THE FREQUENCY OF INRIVER RESTRICTIONS, OR AS SPECIFIED IN THIS SECTION AND OTHER REGULATIONS.] Replace with: **The department shall also manage the common property fisheries with a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon resources.**

ISSUE: The current management plans do not give the managers the flexibility to manage on real time abundance based management principles. The resource suffers the effects of over-escapement and the users suffer the effects from lost harvest of the salmon surpluses. The commercial fisheries only harvest less than 8% of the Northern District coho.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Harvestable salmon surpluses will continue to be wasted. This negatively affects the resource and the economic well-being of the users and communities.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Quality will improve by allowing managers to manage on a real-time basis and the harvest to be spread out more evenly for the entire run.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users, the resource, the managers, the local economies by harvesting the surplus and maintaining future high returns from managing biologically for maximum sustained yields.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one. The coho stocks are healthy, abundant and are being harvested substantially below the maximum exploitation rates. The few systems that have coho production problems are a result of inriver conditions and can only be fixed with in river solutions. There is more than a reasonable opportunity to harvest salmon.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None. Remaining status quo will only continue to waste the harvestable surplus and put undue restrictions on the managers and fishermen.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-346)

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PROPOSAL 296 - 5 AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan and 61.XXX. New Section. Adopt a Deshka River king salmon management plan, as follows:

The purpose of this management plan is to conservatively manage Deshka River/Susitna River king salmon during times of predictable king salmon shortages so as to provide a more consistent and predictable sport king salmon fishing opportunity, avoiding inseason restrictions and closures as much as practical, through the duration of the season on July 13, thereby, providing maximum benefit from the resource. The plan also seeks to maintain sport king salmon fishing and harvest opportunity on Susitna River tributary streams upstream of Deshka River.

When ADF&G's preseason outlook forecasts a total Deshka River king salmon return less than XX,XXX (25,000?) the Susitna River drainage sport fishery may be restricted to one artificial lure with one single hook and may be restricted to a two king salmon seasonal limit starting May 15.

If ADF&G projects a shortage of upriver Susitna River tributary king salmon requiring restriction to catch and release or closure of king salmon sport fishing at upriver tributaries to achieve established spawning escapement goal levels, then Deshka River fishing shall be restricted to one artificial lure with one single hook or closed downstream of a specific spot (perhaps a marker located above the first Deshka River Island and near the 1st marker of the float plan airstrip).

Inseason Step Downs:

(a) If the Deshka River king salmon escapement projections fall below XX,XXX (13,000) fish after June 15, then the Deshka River king salmon fishery may be restricted to one artificial lure with one single hook, and may be restricted to catch and release fishing, and king salmon fishing may close upstream of Deshka River Weir.

(b) If Deshka River king salmon escapement projections fall below XX,XXX (13,000) after June 30, then the Deshka River king salmon sport fishery may close through July 13.

(c)If less than 13,000 king salmon have passed the salmon counting weir by July 13, then waters upstream of the weir may be restricted to one artificial lure with one single hook through July 20.

Inseason liberalization back to standard Deshka River regulations may occur:

(a) If enough king salmon have passed the weir to project a spawning escapement exceeding XX,XXX (15,000?) fish on or after June 10.

Nothing in this plan shall constrain the commissioner's emergency order authority to manage to attain established salmon spawning escapement goal(s).

ISSUE: Adopt a Deshka River King Salmon Management Plan. Because of a downturn in king salmon production, lack of standard king salmon regulations, and lack of timely information about emergency regulations to be implemented, the Deshka River king salmon sport fishery has become inconsistent and unpredictable even for those most familiar with it. This creates difficulty for anglers planning vacations to coincide with king salmon harvest opportunity, and economic loss for related lodging, guiding, tackle sales, fuel, boat launch, campground, dining, and fish processing businesses. It means lost revenue to the State from lower fishing license and king salmon stamp sales. For the Mat-Su Travel Industry it means reduced bed tax revenues, and

lost future business, when visitors decide to go elsewhere, because of unpredictable and inconsistent Mat-Su salmon fishing opportunity during the months of May, June, and July.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The problem will continue and may worsen.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Sport anglers may see a higher likelihood the Deshka River king salmon fishery would continue without inseason restrictions or a season ending emergency closure. Sport anglers would enjoy a higher likelihood that some level of king salmon fishing and harvest opportunity may be maintained on Susitna River tributary streams upstream of Deshka River.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? During times of king salmon shortage inriver sport anglers could see both preseason and inseason restrictions in order to provide a more consistent and predictable sport fishery with a higher likelihood of the sport fishing season continuing without closure through July 13.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?
(a) The mentioned provisions could be adopted into the Northern District King Salmon Management Plan. Shared setnetter conservation may be included. An additional proposal has been submitted addressing this issue.

(b) A plan could contain different trigger points, different restricted areas, different limits, commercial restrictions or other stipulations.

Either option, depending upon details, could be acceptable. A benefit from a plan is that it would provide sport fishing public a written baseline upon which to comment on specific options or write proposals requesting management change.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission (HQ-F13-120)
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PROPOSAL 297 - 5 AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan and 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section. Adopt a Deshka River king salmon management plan, as follows:

The purpose of this management plan is to conservatively manage Deshka River/ Susitna River king salmon during times of predictable king salmon shortages so as to provide a more consistent and predictable sport king salmon fishing opportunity, avoiding inseason restrictions and closures as much as practical, through the duration of the season on July 13, thereby, providing maximum benefit from the resource. The plan also seeks to maintain sport king salmon fishing and harvest opportunity on Susitna River tributary streams upstream of Deshka River.

When ADF&G's preseason outlook forecasts total Deshka River king salmon return less than XX,XXX (25,000?) the Susitna River drainage sport fishery shall be restricted to one artificial lure with one single hook and may be restricted to a two king seasonal limit starting May 15, AND the Northern District commercial setnet fishery shall be restricted to no more than one six hour Monday opening per week starting the first Monday in June.

If ADF&G projects a shortage of upriver Susitna River tributary king salmon requiring restriction to catch and release or closure of king salmon sport fishing at upriver tributaries to achieve established spawning escapement goal levels, then Deshka River fishing shall be restricted to one artificial lure with one single hook or closed downstream of a specific spot (perhaps a marker located above the first Deshka River Island and near the 1st marker of the float plane airstrip), AND the Northern District commercial set net fishery shall close through July 7.

Inseason step downs: If the Deshka River king salmon escapement projections falls below XX,XXX (13,000) fish after June 15, then the Deshka River king salmon fishery shall be closed to bait use, and may be restricted to catch and release king salmon fishing, and king salmon fishing may close upstream of Deshka River Weir. If Deshka River king salmon escapement projection falls below XX,XXX (13,000) after June 30, then the Deshka River king salmon sport fishery shall close for the remainder of the season.

Inseason liberalization of the Deshka River sport fishery may occur if the king salmon spawning escapement projection exceeds XX,XXX (15,000?) fish on or after June 10. Nothing in this plan shall constrain the commissioner's emergency order authority to attain a salmon spawning escapement goal(s).

ISSUE: Adopt a Deshka River king salmon management plan. Because of a downturn in king salmon production, lack of standard king salmon regulations, and lack of timely information about emergency regulations to be implemented, the Deshka River king salmon sport fishery has become inconsistent and unpredictable even for those most familiar with it. This creates difficulty for anglers planning vacations to coincide with king salmon harvest opportunity, and economic loss for related lodging, guiding, tackle sales, fuel, boat launch, campground, dining, and fish processing businesses. It means lost revenue to the State from lower fishing license and king salmon stamp sales. For the Mat-Su Travel Industry it means reduced bed tax revenues, and lost future business, when visitors decide to go elsewhere, because of unpredictable and inconsistent Mat-Su salmon fishing opportunity during the months of May, June, and July.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Each problem mentioned above will continue and may worsen.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Sport anglers would see a higher likelihood the Deshka River king salmon fishery would continue without inseason restrictions or a season ending emergency closure.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? During times of king salmon shortage both inriver sport anglers and Northern District setnetters would see restrictions in order to provide a more consistent and predictable sport fishery with a higher likelihood of continuing without restrictions or closure through July 13. In addition Northern District setnetters would have an increased likelihood of a king salmon season emergency closure in times of king salmon shortage.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? The above provisions could be adopted into an existing management plan or a Deshka River plan could contain different trigger points, different restricted areas, different limits, or different commercial restrictions or stipulations. Either could be acceptable.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-081)

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PROPOSAL 298 - 5 AAC 61.112. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area. Allow use of bait in the Deshka River on June 1 instead of May 15, as follows:

In the Deshka River drainage, from its mouth upstream approximately 17 miles to ADF&G markers near Chijuk Creek, and all waters within a ½ mile radius of the Deshka confluence with the Susitna River, only unbaited artificial lures are allowed September 1–**May 31,** [MAY 14]. Bait is allowed **June 1** [MAY 15]–August 31.

ISSUE: Starting in 2007 there has been a downturn in Susitna River drainage and Deshka River king salmon production. Since 2007 many inseason sport fishing restrictions and closures have occurred in the Deshka River and Susitna River drainage sport king salmon fisheries. This request is for the board to adopt conservative changes to increase the likelihood the Susitna River drainage king salmon spawning escapement goals may be attained and also to increase the likelihood that the sport fishing seasons may continue through their scheduled season ending dates without inseason restrictions or closures.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? After several years of king salmon spawning escapements below established Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) levels throughout the Susitna River drainage - if not addressed this problem could increase in size with king salmon spawning escapements missed by larger numbers or with increasingly longer inseason emergency closures necessary to reach goal numbers.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No. Quality remains unchanged.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All sport king salmon anglers would benefit in a higher likelihood that king salmon escapement goals may be attained in the Deshka River and all upstream tributaries of the Susitna River drainage. All users should benefit from higher king salmon production. All sport king salmon anglers would benefit from a higher chance that the

king salmon season could proceed without emergency orders restricting or closing king salmon fishing in the Deshka River and other upstream tributaries of the Susitna River drainage.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Sport king salmon anglers who would like to fish with bait in the Deshka River drainage or within ½ mile of the Deshka's confluence with the Susitna River would have to wait an additional 18 days before they could fish with bait for king salmon at this location.

The Northern District King Salmon Management Plan states, "The department shall manage Northern District king salmon stocks primarily for sport and guided sport uses in order to provide sport and guided sport fishermen with a reasonable opportunity to harvest these salmon over the entire run as measured by the frequency of inriver restrictions."

Whenever the primary users of these king salmon stocks are restricted for conservation purposes, then additional restriction should also be shared by the Northern District setnet fishery. Such a change is also requested if this proposal is adopted.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? A better proposal is for the board to adopt a Deshka River King Salmon Management Plan with triggers determining when bait fishing is allowed and when it is shut down. Additional provisions should cover step downs or liberalizations to be taken inseason based on king salmon weir passage triggers. This plan should cover both sport and commercial fishing opportunities. A Deshka River King Salmon Management Plan is the preferred option, this proposal has been submitted in case a management plan is not adopted.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska-Susitna Borough Fish and Wildlife Commission (HQ-F13-119)

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<u>PROPOSAL 299</u> - 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section. Stock Deshka River with king salmon.
Allow for the enhancement of Deshka king salmon, as follows:

Enhancement.

ISSUE: Deshka kings.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Fewer kings.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? It would improve fishing.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All fishermen.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-369)

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PROPOSAL 300 - 5 AAC 61.112. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area. Establish an optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Deshka River coho salmon, as follows:

Establish an OEG (Optimal Escapement Goal) on the Deshka River for coho salmon. Currently the Deshka River has a weir that counts coho and has 10 plus years of complete data. Base the lower end of the OEG on the five year average of complete coho returns at 13,000 coho and have the upper end of the OEG based on the 10 year average of complete counts at 25,000 coho. Or direct the ADF&G to establish an SEG (Sustainable Escapement Goal) for coho on the Deshka River.

ISSUE: Currently there are no escapement goals for coho salmon in the Susitna River System.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The health of coho salmon stocks will continue to go unmonitored in the Susitna River System. How can the ADF&G manage sustainable fisheries without establishing goals or baselines to gauge the health of the stocks?

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, in years where the goals are over the high-end, limits and opportunity could be increased to maximize utilization of the resource. If at times the goals are not being made, actions to protect the resource would need to be placed.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All consumptive users of the resource and future coho salmon stocks.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? If the escapement goals cannot be achieved, sport and commercial fisherman may need to be limited in some way.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Maintain status quo. Rejected because it does nothing to assure that the ADF&G will manage for sustainable coho returns to the Deshka River.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-066)
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PROPOSAL 301 - 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section and 5 AAC 61.XXX. New Section. Adopt a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) established by the department or establish an optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Kashwitna River king salmon, as follows:

This proposal is a request for the Alaska Board of Fisheries to adopt a Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) developed by the ADF&G or to develop and adopt an Optimal Escapement Goal (OEG) for Kashwitna River king salmon. This proposal encourages the Department to develop a Kashwitna River king salmon spawning SEG range for adoption or use by the Alaska Board of

Fisheries in developing a Kashwitna River king salmon OEG at the 2013/2014 Upper Cook Inlet meeting.

ISSUE: Lack of a Kashwitna River king salmon spawning escapement goal. In terms of water volume and miles of stream, Kashwitna River is the largest tributary of the Susitna River on the road system between Willow and Talkeetna. Susitna Landing, a multi-million dollar state owned boat launch and campground providing access to Kashwitna River and other areas of the Susitna River drainage, is located adjacent to the Kashwitna/Susitna River confluence.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? There will be no objective measurement of the health of the Kashwitna River king salmon stock when evaluating Susitna River king salmon stocks. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) has gathered and compiled annual escapement index data from the North Fork of the Kashwitna River upon which an escapement goal could be established using the department's standard goal development process. Between 1979 and 2010 ADF&G escapement index counts have ranged from a low of 111 fish in 1984 to a high of 1,159 fish in 1988 with a mean index level of 580 fish. In past Board of Fisheries meetings there have been at least four different fisheries proposals specific to Kashwitna River king salmon sport fishing opportunities, considering the likelihood of additional future proposals before the Board, it makes sense to have adopted objectives to base such decisions on.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users would benefit from having a clear objective measurement for determining the health of the Kashwinta River king salmon stock. All users should benefit from management that adjusts fishing effort/harvests to achieve specific objectives that produce optimal or sustainable king salmon production.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? All users harvesting Kashwitna River king salmon could see emergency restrictions or closures if necessary to achieve an established escapement goal during times of resource shortage.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Additional salmon spawning escapement goals will be requested in the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area where ADF&G has long histories of escapement data collection, but has yet to develop salmon escapement goals for several important salmon stocks.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-080)

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<u>PROPOSAL 302</u> - 5 AAC 61.120. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 5 of the Susitna River Drainage Area. Prohibit sport fishing for all salmon in Larson Creek and its confluence with the Talkeetna River from June 1–September 30, as follows:

5 AAC 61.120. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 5 of the Susitna River Drainage Area….

(4) the Larson Creek drainage and all waters within one-quarter mile of its confluence with the Talkeetna River are closed to sport fishing for [KING] salmon **from June 1 through September 30** and the Larson Creek drainage upstream of an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one-quarter mile upstream of its confluence with the Talkeetna River is close to sport fishing for all salmon;…

ISSUE: This proposal seeks to limit/prohibit salmon fishing at the confluence of Larson Creek and the Talkeetna River. Begin to control the new and developing sport fishery at the confluence of Larson Creek and the Talkeetna River.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Larson Lake is one of the three indicator/index lakes used to assess sockeye production in the Susitna Valley. Larson Lake is the only monitored and index lake used by ADF&G to assess the sockeye production and spawning success on the main stream of the Susitna River. At the confluence of Larson Creek and the Talkeetna River is a sockeye and king salmon staging area. Here there is a new and expanding recreational fishery that has the access and capacity to harvest large numbers of salmon. The Larson Lake sockeye escapement goal is directly impacted by the recreational harvesters. Fishing and harvesting of king salmon is already prohibited in this confluence area.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? This Larson-Talkeetna confluence is already closed to king salmon fishing.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Improve the sockeye escapement index data for this region.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Some fishermen.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Total fishing closure for the entire year at this confluence.

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-103)

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PROPOSAL 303 - 5 AAC 61.120. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 5 of the Susitna River Drainage Area. Prohibit sport fishing in Larson Creek and its confluence with Talkeetna River from June 15–August 15, as follows:

Sport fishing is prohibited in Larson Creek and 100 yards upstream to 100 yards downstream from the confluence of Larson Creek and Susitna Rivers to be marked by the department from June 15 to August 15.

ISSUE: Fishing in Larson Creek and at the confluence of Larson Creek and Susitna River which is a staging area for fish going into Larson Lake.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Larson Lake is one of the lakes that determines if the escapement is being met in the Mat-Su. The accessibility to this area has been made easy by a four wheeler trail. Escapement into Larson Lake may not be achieved.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone, when the escapement goal is met.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those who wish to snag salmon in their staging area.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Steve Vanek (HQ-F13-330)

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PROPOSAL 304 - 5 AAC 61.120. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 5 of the Susitna River Drainage Area. Prohibit sport fishing at the outlet of Larson Lake, as follows:

Close the outlet of Larson Lake to sport fishing.

ISSUE: Larson Creek.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Will not meet escapement goals.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? An emerging fishery in conflict with escapement goals.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Future runs.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Some sport fishermen.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: John McCombs (HQ-F13-376)

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PROPOSAL 305 - 5 AAC 61.120. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 5 of the Susitna River Drainage Area. Close the Fish Creek drainage to sport fishing for salmon, as follows:

The Fish Creek drainage is closed to salmon fishing except where it enters the Talkeetna River.

ISSUE: There is a very small red salmon run in Fish Creek which is a tributary of the Talkeetna River, entering the river near the mouth of Chunilna (Clear) Creek, one run of about 300 comes in late May (early June) another comes in late July. With increased tourism and population it has become overfished. The reds congregate and hold up in Papa Bear Lake where Fish Creek enters it for most of the summer. It is common to see multiple float planes parked there with their passengers fishing in the only hole at the mouth of the stream which is less than 12 feet wide and one foot deep in most places. The early run did not show up in 2012. Nearby Larson Creek with a much larger and more resilient red salmon run was closed to salmon fishing except at the mouth a few years ago because of overfishing concerns. Fish Creek reds are much more vulnerable but has been overlooked because it is so small.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The red salmon run in Fish Creek could very easily go extinct.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes, the status quo will encourage a poor quality fishing opportunity. Closing it will help preserve a delicate fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Those who value a diverse wildlife population.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those who profit from exploiting a notorious snagging hole.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: Mat Schwab (HQ-F13-033)

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PROPOSAL 306 - 5 AAC 61.112. Special provisions and localized additions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 1 of the Susitna River Drainage Area and 5 AAC 61.118. Special provisions and localized additions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for Unit 4 of the Susitna River Drainage Area. Move several lakes from Unit 4 of the Susitna River drainage to Unit 1, as follows:

5 AAC 61.112.

(7) in the flowing waters of Alexander Creek, Fish Creek (lower Susitna River drainage), Fish Creek (Kroto Slough), [AND] Witsoe Creek, **and in Upper and Lower Vern and Lockwood lakes,** five lines may be used to fish for northern pike through the ice;

5 AAC 61.118.

(10) in Whiskey, Hewitt, Donkey, [UPPER AND LOWER VERN,] No Name (Cabin), **and** One Stone **lakes**, [AND LOCKWOOD LAKES,] and the flowing waters of Indian Creek, five lines may be used to fish for northern pike through the ice;

ISSUE: Recent cartography of the Susitna Drainage has revealed that some lakes listed under Unit 4 of the Susitna River drainage actually reside within Unit 1.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Several lakes will continue to be listed under the wrong management unit of the Susitna River.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All anglers benefit when lakes mentioned in regulation align under appropriate regulatory chapters for the sake of good organization.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-299)

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PROPOSAL 307 - 5 AAC 01.593. Upper Yentna River subsistence salmon fishery. Extend subsistence salmon fishery from July 31 to the first Monday, Wednesday, and Friday in August, as follows:

The regulation would be as is, but the new language would just add three days, (openers Monday, Wednesday, Friday) extending the end of the season, thereby putting those extra three days into the first week/s of August. The regulation can say; ***July 15, Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, through the third opening in August.***

ISSUE: The are not now sufficient number of opening periods (days) in the Upper Yentna Subsistence fishery to provide reasonable opportunities to harvest salmon, due to several issues. **1**. This is the most restricted subsistence fishery in Alaska. **2**. Quite often the runs do not arrive during the first week of the fishery, (July 15–25) so harvesting the modest PU type limit is sometimes nearly impossible in the first half of the season. **3.** The Yentna river is very prone to flooding in the end of July, and when the river rises, the wheels cannot be allowed to run; this has happened at least three of the last five years. **4.** The reduced opportunity to harvest king salmon in the Skwentna area, one of the main components of the overall salmon harvest taken by Alaska residents in the area, requires other opportunities to be provided. **6**. Working with the calendar dates now of July 15 to July 31, one year the season may have one, or even two days subtracted, due to how the days fall on the calendar. A very real loss of opportunity, particularly in a flood environment. **7**. The Upper Yentna Subsistence fishery is not a threat to the overall management plans for Upper Cook Inlet salmon, or any local stocks.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Alaska Citizens, who fish the Upper Yentna Subsistence fishery, and by the way, beginning after all commercial interests have had first opportunity to harvest those salmon, will continue to fish with the opportunities they now have, even though those opportunities are not very reasonable.

Note: The author of this present proposal is the author of the language, gear, dates, time periods, and limits on the present fishery. The original proposals that led to the present plan were much more liberal. The original proposals asked for area-wide fishery, and continued openings during a very long period. The present Upper Yentna Subsistence fishery language is in fact a quasi-self-imposed restriction that at the time had more to do with politics, than it did Customs, traditions, or biology.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? A subsistence fishery, and the resource, is at its peak quality if it harvests a resource at a most efficient, and opportune time.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? In my humble opinion, Alaska citizens will be benefitted by this change.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Again, in my humble opinion, no one will be likely to "suffer", if this proposal is adopted...and a poor choice of terms for this topic I suggest.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? I have considered proposing even a longer extension into August, and a continued opening period during the entire season. I do not reject that consideration. I am also considering a rod-and-reel King Salmon Subsistence fishery for this area.

PROPOSED BY: Tom Payton (HQ-F13-314)
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PROPOSAL 308 - 5 AAC 01.593. Upper Yentna River subsistence salmon fishery. Allow salmon to be harvested by dip net upstream of the Yentna/Susitna confluence to an ADF&G marker located 300 feet downstream of the department's Yentna River sonar, as follows:

Salmon may be harvested by dip net upstream of the Yenta/Susitna River confluence to an ADF&G marker located 300 feet downstream of the department's Yenta River sonar.

As currently configured this subsistence fishery provides an unreasonable hardship for several Alaskan subsistence users to participate in the harvest of subsistence salmon. Subsistence use is supposed to provide a harvest priority for Alaska residents; however, in terms of area this subsistence opportunity is much more restrictive than Upper Cook Inlet commercial and sport fishing opportunities. Around the state other subsistence fisheries are located along roads near population centers that are much more accessible than this fishery. In terms of methods and means, this subsistence fishery is currently much more restrictive than Upper Cook Inlet commercial, sport, personal use, and Tyonek subsistence fisheries as many more Alaskans own or have access to a net, than own or have access to a fish wheel (a requirement in this fishery).

A subsistence harvest opportunity located near the confluence of the Yentna and Susitna Rivers would be much more accessible to subsistence users who live in the area, as well as other Alaskans traveling along the Susitna River. In addition, it would provide higher quality fish for

consumption, and be situated in a location where ADF&G could immediately know if here was a shortage of salmon through their monitoring efforts directly upstream using the very expensive Yentna River Sonar Project.

The commissioner's emergency order authority could be used to adjust the subsistence fishery if a salmon escapement shortage or over escapement situation were to occur. Note: a subsistence moose hunt already occurs along this same stretch of river.

ISSUE: To provide a more reasonable harvest opportunity, the Upper Yentna River Subsistence Fishery should be expanded to provide a dip net harvest opportunity upstream of the Yentna River/Susitna River confluence to an ADF&G marker located 300 feet below ADF&G's Yentna River Sonar Counter. In earlier times, subsistence users along the Yentna and Susitna Rivers harvested salmon all along the river system, using a variety of harvest methods, including spears and nets.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Alaskan subsistence users, some of who live near the Yentna River's confluence with the Susitna River in the Susitna Station area will have to travel miles upriver, and seek out the use of someone else's fish wheel in order to have any legal opportunity to participate in the Upper Yentna River Subsistence Fishery.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Salmon harvested near the Yentna/Susitna River confluence are in more ocean-fresh condition with a higher fat content than salmon that must migrate a considerable distance upstream before any subsistence fishing is allowed.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Alaskan residents who would like a more reasonable opportunity to harvest subsistence salmon using a dip net in the Yentna River.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Other Upper Cook Inlet users, who are not Alaska residents, or who choose not to participate in this subsistence opportunity, may need to provide some salmon allocation for this priority fishery.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

(a) A proposal requesting reasonable subsistence harvest opportunity in the Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan will also be submitted.

(b) A regularly scheduled Fish Creek personal use dip net season is also requested.

PROPOSED BY: South Central Alaska Dipnetters Association (HQ-F13-156)

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<u>PROPOSAL 309</u> - 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section and 5 AAC 62.XXX. New Section. Develop and adopt a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) or optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Big River and Kustatan River coho salmon, as follows:

This is a request for the Alaska Board of Fisheries to adopt a Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) developed by ADF&G or develop and adopt an Optimal Escapement Goal (OEG) for both Big River and Kustatan River coho salmon. Alaska Department of Fish and Game sets SEGs usually during the three year Board of Fisheries cycle. This proposal is also meant as an incentive for ADF&G to develop an appropriate Big River/Kustatan River coho salmon SEG range for the Board of Fisheries to adopt or use in developing a Big River/Kustatan River coho salmon spawning OEG during the winter 2013/2014 Upper Cook Inlet meeting.

ISSUE: Lack of coho salmon escapement goal for Big River/Kustatan Rivers. Big River and Kustatan Rivers have the largest coho salmon production of any west side Cook Inlet drainages and together provide one of the larger float plane accessible coho salmon sport fisheries in the Northern Cook Inlet Management area. Other than the Kenai River, this area represents the second largest coho sport fishery in South Central Alaska.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Without a Big River/Kustatan River coho salmon spawning escapement goal ADF&G will likely continue passive management of both Big River and Kustatan River drainage coho salmon with little inseason regulatory action to either provide additional harvest opportunity in times of harvestable surplus, or few restrictions to ensure adequate spawning escapements occur on an annual basis during times of resource shortage. Until ADF&G develops an inseason monitored, drainage-wide Big River/Kustatan coho salmon escapement goal, Little Susitna River coho should serve as surrogate to the health of other coho salmon stocks in the vast west Cook Inlet drainage.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Commercial users and thousands of sport users could benefit from consistently better coho returns into West Side Cook Inlet Rivers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? All harvesters of coho salmon could see restrictions or closures during times of low coho production.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Establish coho salmon SEGs for additional Upper Cook Inlet rivers, including the Kenai River (largest coho salmon sport fishing in all of Upper Cook Inlet).

PROPOSED BY: Mark Glassmaker (HQ-F13-224)

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<u>PROPOSAL 310</u> - 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area. Allow harvest of king and coho salmon only on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays in the Little Susitna River, and reduce harvest limits, as follows:

Little Su king and coho stocks can only be fished on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday during the months of May through August. Limit the bag and possession limit to one King per year and one coho daily when open for fishing.

The first 70–72 river miles of the Little Su are readily accessible to sport fishermen. coho move, on average, two river miles (rm) per day. The "prime" coho spawning area is near rm 80. These coho are readily accessible for an average of 40 days. The Little Su coho have been decreasing for 20 years while the sport fishery exploitation rate has remained at 50%, primarily due to accessibility and the 40 days it takes these coho to migrate from saltwater to spawning areas. This coho population is not able to sustain these high levels of exploitation (50%) over a 20-year period.

The Central District exploitation rates have remained at 5–10% over the last 20 years.

ISSUE: This proposal is intended to address the sportfishing coho issues in the Little Susitna River (Little Su). The Little Su drainage has a history of cyanide leaching of lode gold ores that resulted in few, if any, species of fish from the 1900's through the 1960's. There were at least three major hatchery stocking programs in the 1960's, 70's and 80's, up until 1996. These hatchery stocking programs utilized six Alaskan stocks and six coho stocks from Washington and Oregon. There were 10–30 million coho fry/smolt stocked in the Little Su on top of the hybrid spawners. Since 2000, these coho and Chinook stocks have been in decline as the negative effects of disease, parasites, impaired water, pollution, increasing water temperatures and blocked culverts have depressed the coho and Chinook stocks. The sportfishing exploitation rates have remained relatively constant at 50%, even though the coho returns are less than half of what they were 10–15 years ago. Had the sportfish exploitation rates been reduced in proportion to the run declines, the escapement goals would have been achieved, except for 2011.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? We will continue to see large fluctuations in the run sizes. Depressed returns due to habitat impacts.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Gives these salmon an increased opportunity to reach spawning areas.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Sport fishermen, in the short term.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

PROPOSED BY: United Cook Inlet Drift Association (HQ-F13-104)

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<u>PROPOSAL 311</u> - 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section. Direct the department to begin stocking coho salmon into the Little Susitna River, as follows:

ADF&G shall follow FRED Phase II or FRED Phase III with regard to nursery enhancement of the Little Susitna River NOW specifically for sport, personal and subsistence silver salmon fishing on the Little Susitna River.

I**SSUE:** Restore the silver salmon fishery on the Little Susitna River by:

1. Starting a nursery enhancement/stocking program NOW utilizing the William Jack Hernandez Hatchery: (2013–2016).

2. Little Su egg-take (July–October 2013).

3. Follow nursery program at Hernandez Hatchery (2013–2016)

4. Restocking (2015–2016) Basically, follow FRED PHASE II enhancement with emphasis on sport, personal and subsistence fishing, by comparison to past commercial fishing discussed in the records of the Upper Cook Inlet (UCI).

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The silver salmon fishery on the Little Susitna River will continue to decline. Public protest will increase.
"Someone will be fired!"

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. FRED Phase I, FRED Phase II, and now FRED Phase III in SE Alaska set the bar for excellence. If FRED Phase III is good enough for SE Alaska, it is good enough for the UCI. Local ADF&G managers, biologists and other interested parties need to do their homework to realize that over a hundred years of active salmon enhancement has set a precedent. All salmon species in Alaska have been enhanced genetically through active nursery/hatchery programs. Silvers have been "restored" to the Little Su. Records show that active enhancement and nursery stocking from hatcheries programs are more effective than "letting nature take its course". Commercial fisheries have always been about enhancement. It's time for sport, personal and subsistence emphasis.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Those who continue to abuse and fraudulently advertise that "wild salmon" are better than hatchery "nursery" salmon will be held liable for continuing to spread the lie, which is causing millions of dollars of damage to the local (UCI) economy, sport, personal and subsistence fishers.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? FRED Phase I, FRED Phase II, and FRED Phase III in SE Alaska set the standard in commercial salmon fisheries at a time when there was less emphasis on sport, personal and subsistence fisheries. While this has been ignored in recent years, it will not continue. The UCI residents are suffering economically, mentally and physically because of poor silver salmon returns (as well as kings). This is no longer tolerable. The ADF&G is responsible, collectively and individually. This proposal puts the ADF&G on notice.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Anything less than following FRED Phase I, II, and III deviates from past success managing all species of salmon in the UCI. Alaska Department of Fish and Game shall pursue excellence in salmon management based up upon healthy, abundant returns and STOP the misinformation that is circulating with regard to discriminating against nursery stocks and hatchery efforts. The ADF&G shall actively campaign to educate their biologists, managers and administrators to STOP the propaganda that is negatively impacting hatchery, nursery and egg-enhancement efforts and facilities.

PROPOSED BY: Jack B. Harrison (HQ-F13-068)
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PROPOSAL 312 - 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section. Direct the department to begin stocking coho salmon into the Little Susitna River, as follows:

1. The Alaska State Legislature shall implement new use categories as stated above, with all Alaskan residents falling under Personal Use for that which goes to feed their families, and all others shall be deemed sport or commercial, and all regulations and management shall give Personal Use the highest priority.

2. Alaska Department of Fish and Game shall follow FRED Phase II or FRED Phase III with regard to nursery enhancement of the Little Susitna River immediately; specifically for sport, personal and subsistence as currently designated, (and for Personal Use as shall be designated for all Alaskan residents in the future) for silver and king salmon fishing on the Little Susitna River, and shall follow with similar measures for all other salmon bearing drainages in the Upper Cook Inlet fisheries.

ISSUE: As a third generation Alaskan who feeds his family from the natural resources that we the people of the State of Alaska, collectively own, I am others like me, are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with Fish and Game's management style, and the terrible cost to us and our communities caused by F&G mismanagement.

Two issues must be addressed immediately:
1. Reform legislation to eliminate distinction between "subsistence", "sport", and "personal use" for Alaskans. Alaskans collectively own the resource, so any Alaskan resident putting the fish in their freezer, regardless of method or location caught, should be labeled "personal consumption".

Any nonresident catching a fish should be deemed sport. It is and should be that simple. This creates a fair and even playing field and those closer to the resource will still have superior access because of logistics. We own the resource...stop discriminating.

All future resource allocation legislation must be built on a three tier platform with Personal Consumption being number one, Alaskans making a living off of it number two, and nonresidents recreating or making a living number three. This is the fairest method of managing our resource so that we the residents of Alaska have access to healthy food for many generations.

Though personal consumption and sport fishing (as currently designated) produce a far greater impact in the Upper Cook Inlet (UCI), this tiered system giving first priority to personal consumption (as recommended above), must be done regardless of the economic value. The people own the resource therefore the people shall have first access to the resource, and it shall

not be managed in accordance to that which Fish and Game deems convenient, nor shall it be subject to the political manipulation of numbers and statistics.

2. Because so many Alaska residents depend on the Susitna Drainage for filling their freezers and making a living, Fish and Game must start by restoring the silver and king salmon fishery on the Little Susitna River, and then replicate these efforts in other South Central Alaska river systems by:

a) Starting a nursery enhancement/stocking program now utilizing the William Jack Hernandez Hatchery: (2013–2016).

b) Little Su egg-take (July–October 2013).

c) Follow nursery program at Hernandez Hatchery (2013–2016).

d) Restocking (2015–2016). Basically, follow FRED PHASE II enhancement with emphasis on sport, personal and subsistence fishing, by comparison to past commercial fishing discussed in the records of the Upper Cook Inlet (UCI).

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The continuation of current user designations and legislation that does not give "personal consumption" the highest priority and unify Alaskan Residence under the term "personal consumption", and thus allowing Fish and Game to rationalize dysfunctional management practices, shall continue to cause strife and ill feelings among user groups whose combined voice and discontent are directly proportional to the scarcity of our salmon the impact on their personal economics and food security, and the educational efforts of the associations behind this proposal that are working diligently to shed light on the realities of our current policies and administration, and who shall combine in strength to challenge in court and/or the ballot box the very laws, practices, and administration that brought us to this crisis point.

The current mismanagement of our fisheries shall cause the silver and king salmon fishery on the Little Susitna River and Susitna River Drainages to decline to a point where recovery will be difficult, lengthy, or even impossible.

The economic impact the Matanuska Susitna borough from emergency closures and mismanagement has been well documented, and far exceeds commercial fishery economics. Already there are significant efforts to raise public awareness of the economic, food security, and health issues that result from Fish and Game's mismanagement. These efforts are increasing in intensity and producing increasingly cohesive audiences throughout the state, which are preparing to protest current mismanagement and practices.

As our salmon fisheries continue to decline, Fish and Game will no longer be able to hide behind manufactured science, convenient propaganda campaigns and slothful administration. As awareness of the problem and the impact on the average Alaskan resident becomes crystalized and municipal and borough governments align on the topic, the State of Alaska will be facing a collective lawsuit, current Fish and Game administration will be removed, and new policies and

practices will be forced in court and/or through the ballot box. Those such as myself, shall also assure that those responsible for the laws and mismanagement are personally identified, and no political entity or individual, or management personnel will be given refuge. They will be publically identified and shall be forced to shoulder the exact portion of blame as is reflected by results. No one shall be allowed to hide behind obfuscation, protestations of ignorance, or finger pointing to divert attention.

This can be avoided with common sense and sincere effort to protect and preserve that which Alaskan's own and rely on for economics, food security and sustenance. This can be avoided if Fish and Game is forced to manage the resource as though it belongs to the people of the state, rather than as though it belongs to Fish and Game.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? FRED Phase I, FRED Phase II, and now FRED Phase III have set a successful precedence in SE Alaska with excellent results. These methods are easily adaptable for Upper Cook Inlet, which carries a much larger population that is dependent on our salmon, than Southeast Alaska has.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game needs to stop their attempts to dilute recovery efforts with their presentation of false assumptions that managed stocks are not as healthy as “wild stocks”. These distinctions do not hold up to scrutiny. The realities of a salmon’s years spent in the ocean sort out the inferior genetics and commercial fisheries have been using management methods for the harvest of hatchery stock for years without problems. Local ADF&G managers, biologists and other interested parties need to do their homework to realize that over a hundred years of active salmon enhancement has set a precedent. All salmon species in Alaska have been “enhanced” genetically through active nursery/hatchery programs. Silvers have been "restored" to the Little Su. Records show that active enhancement and nursery stocking from hatcheries programs are more effective than "letting nature take its course". Commercial fisheries have always been about enhancement. It's time for sport, personal and subsistence emphasis.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The largest population of Alaskan residence in the state shall benefit directly from being given first priority to the personal consumption of the resource that the own, rather than seeing commercial fisheries having precedence; through the economic impact of both personal consumption and sport fishing to their communities, and in solutions to the very real food security and nutrition issues that Alaskans face.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Current management and administration officials from within State Government; The continuation of divisive use categories that allow ADF&G to obfuscate and manage resources ineffectively rather than giving top priority and effort to personal use; and the special interest groups that exert efforts on our legislative body and state officials in a manner that reduces opportunities for Alaskan Residence to provide natural healthy food from the resource that we own.

The Upper Cook Inlet are already suffering from the above mentioned practices. We have ignored the issues until they hit us directly. Now we are angry, and we are wondering why our government is ignoring us. We will not be ignored any longer, and if direct actions are not taken

immediately, the management of Fish and Game, as well as the politicians who appoint them, shall suffer at the ballot box, or in the courts.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Anything less than the unifying categorization for all Alaskan residents who use the resources that they collectively own, for personal consumption, as "Personal Use", shall be unsatisfactory and continue to cause divisiveness. Continuation of this practice shall be deemed as efforts to obfuscate, cover up mismanagement, and to divide the users, by ADF&G and the State of Alaska.

Anything less than following FRED Phase I, II, and III deviates from past success in managing all species of salmon in the UCI. Intense efforts shall be utilized, for public awareness of such deviations, their consequences, and the individuals behind the choice to deviate.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game shall pursue excellence in salmon management based upon healthy, abundant returns and stop the misinformation that is circulating with regard to discriminating against nursery stocks and hatchery efforts. The ADF&G shall actively campaign to educate their biologists, managers and administrators to stop the propaganda that is negatively impacting hatchery, nursery and egg enhancement efforts and facilities and shall manage our resource as though we matter.

PROPOSED BY: Thane Humphrey (HQ-F13-073)

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PROPOSAL 313 - 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section and 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section. Adopt a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) established by the department or establish an optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Little Susitna River sockeye salmon, as follows:

This is a request for the Alaska Board of Fisheries to adopt a Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) set by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) or develop and adopt an Optimum Escapement Goal (OEG) for late-run Little Susitna River sockeye salmon. The dramatic drop in measured inriver sockeye salmon abundance shows the precautionary need for this goal.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game has counts of sockeye salmon passing a department weir at a lower river location from 1986–1995, with an additional count in 2012, and an anticipated count for the 2013 season. It is hoped that this proposal will give the ADF&G time to gather and consider past collected Little Susitna River sockeye salmon data, and develop what the department would suggest as an adequate SEG range for late-run Little Susitna River sockeye salmon. Board members could adopt or use a department suggested SEG range in adopting an appropriate OEG for this stock, harvested formerly in significant numbers by both commercial and sport users.

ISSUE: Lack of a late-run Little Susitna River sockeye salmon escapement goal range, and therefore, lack of means of evaluating the health of this salmon stock, and lack of management action to sustain this stock at historical abundance and yield levels.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Late-run Little Susitna River sockeye salmon have declined from thousands of fish passing ADF&G's salmon counting weir in the lower Little Susitna River during the 1980s and 1990s to only 236 sockeye swimming past the weir in 2012. Despite this fact, with no late-run Little Susitna River sockeye salmon escapement goal, there is no current evaluation of the health of this sockeye salmon stock, or management adjustments to return this salmon stock to former levels of abundance and yield.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All harvesters of Little Susitna River sockeye salmon could benefit from an escapement goal range to evaluate the health of this salmon stock, and help return it to former abundance and yield levels.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? All harvesters of Little Susitna River sockeye salmon could see future harvest restrictions necessary to rebuild this salmon stock.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Proposals to adjust both sport and commercial fishing harvests of Little Susitna River sockeye salmon were considered, but the effectiveness of such new regulations should best be considered in regards to a specific Little Susitna River sockeye salmon escapement goal range. It seems logical to develop a goal range as the first priority.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-077)

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PROPOSAL 314 - 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area. Open Little Susitna River sockeye salmon sport fishery by emergency order (EO) and only when escapement of 2,500 sockeye salmon can be projected, as follows:

Little Susitna River sockeye salmon sport harvest-- opened only by emergency order after the department can project an escapement of 2,500 sockeye salmon through the Little Susitna River Weir.

This is a precautionary placeholder proposal I am submitting after seeing the 2012 sockeye escapement level had plummeted to 236 from an escapement that used to number in the thousands of salmon in the 1980s and 1990s when the weir was in a lower river location like now.

ISSUE: Shortage of sockeye salmon spawning escapement to Little Susitna River.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? A bad resource situation could get even worse.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Some sport anglers may not be able to keep a Little Susitna River sockeye salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? All users of Little Susitna River Sockeye salmon may benefit in the long run if the run can be brought back to its former abundance and yield levels.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Andrew Couch (HQ-F13-312)
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PROPOSAL 315 - 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section and 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section. Adopt a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) established by the department or establish an optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Little Susitna River chum salmon, as follows:

This is a request for the board to adopt a Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) set by the ADF&G to develop and adopt an Optimal Escapement Goal (OEG) for Little Susitna River/Northern Cook Inlet chum salmon.

The Department has enumerated Little Susitna River chum salmon passage at the lower river weir site from 1986–1995 and again starting in 2012 and anticipated for 2013 and beyond. In addition the ADF&G has also counted chum salmon passage at an upriver weir site between the years of 1996–2005. This weir collected data represents some of the most accurate chum salmon spawning escapement data collected over a long period of time in all of Upper Cook Inlet. Because of the importance of Little Susitna River sport salmon fisheries for five species of returning salmon there is a high likelihood ADF&G will continue to monitor all salmon species passing through this weir site into the foreseeable future. Little Susitna River produces robust returns of chum salmon with weir counts ranging as high as 41,300 fish to this small river in 2002. Current plans call for the weir to be operated from late May into early September, a timeframe that covers nearly all of the chum salmon return.

For all of these reasons, Little Susitna River weir counts represents the best data upon which a Little Susitna River/Northern Cook Inlet chum salmon goal could currently be established. Therefore, this proposal also represents a request that ADF&G consider and bring suggestions as to an appropriate Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) range for Little Susitna River/Northern Cook Inlet chum salmon as measured by the Little Susitna River weir. This SEG could then be adopted by the Board of fisheries or developed into an OEG for these important chum salmon stock(s).

ISSUE: Lack of Northern Cook Inlet/Little Susitna River Chum Salmon Escapement Goal. Although ADF&G staff maintain that most chum salmon production in Upper Cook Inlet occurs from stream drainages in the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area there is currently not a single chum salmon spawning escapement goal in the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area.

At present the only one chum salmon goal in all of Upper Cook Inlet is at Clearwater Creek closer to the Southern end of Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Alaska Board of Fisheries, and all users harvesting Upper Cook Inlet chum salmon will have no objective measurement as to the stock health of Northern Cook Inlet Management Area chum salmon stocks, and no way to judge proposals or regulation changes in regards to their impacts on Northern Cook Inlet chum salmon.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users harvesting Little Susitna River/Northern Cook Inlet chum salmon stocks could benefit from an objective goal on which to judge the health of these important salmon stocks and upon which to base management decisions to maintain the sustainability and yield from Upper Cook Inlet chum salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? With recently measured chum salmon escapements at decent levels this may provide an opportunity to maintain at least one important Northern Cook Inlet salmon stock with no rebuilding cost. All users could see future restrictions during times of chum salmon shortage in order to maintain optimal or sustainable chum salmon numbers and yields.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Proposals requesting additional escapement goals for important Northern Cook Inlet salmon stocks will also be submitted.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-082)
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<u>PROPOSAL 316</u> - 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area. Require use of four-stroke outboard motors on Little Susitna River and limit the number of outboards on the river per day, as follows:

Only four-stroke outboard motors are allowed on the Little Susitna River. The board should also address limiting the number of outboards on the river per day because the high number of boats per day is a major reason for high hydrocarbons and turbidity.

ISSUE: Reduce the hydrocarbons and turbidity in the Little Susitna River.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Department of Environmental Conservation studies for hydrocarbons and turbidity in the Lower Little Susitna River shows that the lower Little Susitna River is a Class 5 impaired water body caused by outboards. Salmon fry survival is compromised by these impairments.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. The Little Susitna River is impaired to the extent of causing fry mortality and the high catch and release mortality jeopardizes adequate spawning escapement.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone, because the high boat traffic and angler activity is killing the adult and fry salmon off to the extent that future returns are in jeopardy and are producing less than MSY.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Those anglers that selfishly prioritize their recreational wants over having healthy salmon runs.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? No other solutions will solve the problem. We do not want to repeat the mistake of the lower 48.

PROPOSED BY: Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-338)
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PROPOSAL 317 - 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area. Prohibit sport fishing from a boat during the coho salmon season on the Little Susitna River, as follows:

From the report on water quality done in 2008–2011 the hydro carbon levels in the Little Su are many times worse than in the Kenai and are over state standards every weekend. The fishery especially during the coho return should be closed from a motorized boat from 5:00 p.m. on Fridays until 7:00 a.m. on Mondays each week. Or open it every other day and leave Sundays closed and see if that is enough.

ISSUE: The Little Susitna River is in serious jeopardy from overfishing, hydrocarbon and turbidity and human waste dumping. The septic pumping service dumping into the river has been addressed but other problems are being ignored or stonewalled by ADF&G to keep their fishery going and license sales up. Currently the goal is not being met for coho or Chinook.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The resource will be harmed to a point where long closures are necessary.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? N/A.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Wait for the department to act but when sport fish division is involved it seems they rarely do act in a timely fashion.

PROPOSED BY: Steve Tyler (HQ-F13-232)
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PROPOSAL 318 - 5 AAC 77.540. Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Open the Fish Creek personal use fishery unless the sockeye salmon escapement is projected to be less than 50,000 fish, as follows:

(d) salmon may be taken in Fish Creek only as follows (1) dip netting may occur July 10–31 unless the department project the escapement of sockeye salmon into Fish Creek will be less than 50,000 fish.

South Central Dipnetters Association is merely requesting that Fish Creek dipnetters have a regularly scheduled annual fishing opportunity, just like every other user group in Upper Cook Inlet. If there is a shortage of salmon to meet escapement needs, we understand if the fishing opportunity is restricted or even closed for conservation reasons, but we disagree with the concept of entirely closing the Fish Creek dip net fishery with little or no conservation sharing with the major harvesters of this salmon resource. We still agree with the concept of managing this resource to achieve the mid-point of the Sustainable Escapement Goal in order to maintain the resource at a level that should ensure future sustainable returns and yields.

Alaska Department of Fish and Game would retain the commissioner's authority to adjust the fisheries by emergency order; we merely request that sport and commercial users share a similar amount of the conservation burden.

ISSUE: Inadequate personal use dip net fishing opportunity in the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area and specifically at Fish Creek.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? There will likely be many additional years where even though there are plenty of harvestable surplus sockeye salmon available, and all other user groups may have opportunity to harvest some of those fish, personal use dip netters in the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area may continue to get zero days of opportunity to harvest surplus fish on an annual basis. In 2012 over five million sockeye salmon returned to Upper Cook Inlet, yet inadequate sockeye salmon were allowed past all the other users to provide even one day of dip netting in Fish Creek.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. The quality of even the poorest dip net caught salmon would be better than zero dip net caught salmon, because zero salmon have zero value.

Even if salmon were not caught, providing an opportunity to fish would provide some recreational value to dipnetters, while the present regulations at can provide zero recreational value to dipnetters, wherever Fish Creek dip netting is prohibited an entire year at a time.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Northern Dipnetters who would like to have an annual opportunity to dip net salmon in the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area at Fish Creek. This

is currently the only road-accessible dip net fishery located in the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? All additional users may be restricted or closed during times of resource shortage to ensure adequate sockeye escapement into Fish Creek, and to provide a reasonable harvest opportunity for all Alaskans.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED?

a) A proposal was submitted to include Northern Dipnetters and subsistence users in the list of user groups that should be provided a reasonable salmon harvest opportunity in the Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan, with suggested drift harvest area adjustments as well.

b) A proposal to provide a dip net subsistence salmon harvest opportunity in the Yentna River subsistence fishery is also being submitted.

PROPOSED BY: South Central Alaska Dipnetters Association (HQ-F13-154)

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PROPOSAL 319 - 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area. Define area open to fishing within the Jim Creek drainage, limit sport fishing from 6 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the coho salmon season, close specific lakes to fishing, and prohibit continued fishing after taking a bag limit of salmon, as follows:

(8) in the Knik River drainage, including Jim Creek and the Eklutna Tailrace, as follows:

(B) Upper Jim Creek (upstream of Leaf Lake), **Leaf Lake, Mud Lake**, Jim Lake, and McRoberts Creek are closed to sport fishing for salmon**, except as provided in (F) of this paragraph**;

…

(F) in the Jim Creek drainage, from its mouth upstream to Leaf Lake, and all waters within a one-half mile radius of its confluence with the Knik River, and downstream to within 100 yards of the confluence of Bodenburg Creek and the Knik River,

(i) from January 1 – December 31, is open to fishing for all species except king salmon; after taking a bag limit of salmon a person may not sport fish that same day in waters open to salmon fishing

(ii) from the second Saturday in August through December 31, sport fishing is allowed from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.;

ISSUE: In Jim Creek, sport fishing effort has increased since the early 2000s, with sport harvest of coho salmon doubling historical levels by 2006. An average of 9,000 angler-days were expended from 1992–2001, increasing to 19,000 angler-days from 2002–2011. During these 10-year periods, harvest increased from an average of 4,000 to 11,500 fish. Current harvest levels should be reduced in order to ensure sustainable harvests and achievement of escapement goals over most years. The

sustainable escapement goal for this system has not been met 2010–2012 despite specific management actions to reduce sport harvest.

The mouth of Jim Creek is indefinable because the area lacks landmarks from which to clearly define where Jim Creek begins and is separated from the Knik River. Many anglers and enforcement officers have difficulty determining its location. Signage is difficult to keep intact in this area and is susceptible to being taken down or vandalized, requiring extensive effort to keep signs posted. The mouth of Bodenburg Creek is prominent and a good landmark about 1.25 miles downstream of the "general mouth" area of Jim Creek. Typically, this mile of the Knik River is too glacially silted for anglers to successfully fish, but occasionally, the upper section of this area nearer the mouth of Jim Creek is clear enough to fish. For management purposes, any salmon caught in this area are considered part of the Jim Creek stock.

Adult coho salmon stage in Leaf and Mud lakes in large numbers prior to ascending upper Jim and McRoberts creeks to spawn, and are susceptible to catch and harvest for a prolonged period of time. Staging is especially prominent in Leaf Lake because space for spawning is limited in Upper Jim Creek. The department considers these staging fish synonymous to those actively spawning in the creek. Enforcement of closed waters on McRoberts Creek is also difficult because the creek flows into and out of Mud Lake, which is open to fishing. Discerning the creek from the lake is difficult due to an absence of distinct boundaries within this wetland area.

Most of the Knik Arm streams (Cottonwood, Fish, and Wasilla creeks) are only open to fishing from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Jim Creek fishing hours are inconsistent with hours allowed in nearby streams.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? High inriver exploitation of coho salmon would continue during years of average to below-average runs. The department would continue to use its emergency order authority to restrict harvest during such years. Areas open to fishing would continue to be difficult to distinguish and difficult to enforce.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Anglers desiring the opportunity to fish throughout the entire season may benefit if emergency closures are reduced. Enforcement officials and anglers would benefit from a clear boundary of the area opened to fishing.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Anglers who fish prior to 6 a.m. and those who like to fish after 6 p.m. during the coho salmon season.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Reducing bag and possession limits to one coho salmon or reducing the number of days per week open to sport fishing.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-297)

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PROPOSAL 320 - 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area. Limit hours open to sport fishing in Jim Creek from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., as follows:

Fishing is allowed seven days a week from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

ISSUE: Declining salmon returns to Jim Creek.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Salmon returns will continue to decline.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? Yes. Allows for a period of unrestricted escapement. This allows more fish to reach their spawning areas unmolested.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Everyone who wants to catch large numbers of fish in Jim Creek over the long-term.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Everyone who wants to fish after 6:00 p.m. and before 6:00 a.m.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Bait restrictions. Won't be needed if sufficient fish are passing up the creek during the evening and early morning push.

PROPOSED BY: Brian Bohman (HQ-F13-269)

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PROPOSAL 321 - 5 AAC 21.XXX. New Section and 5 AAC 60.XXX. New Section. Adopt a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) established by the department or establish an optimal escapement goal (OEG) for Moose Creek king salmon, as follows:

Since the board can develop and adopt an Optimum Escapement Goal (OEG) this is a request that the board do so for Moose Creek Chinook salmon. This proposal is also a request for ADF&G to develop, using their standard goal development practices, a suggested Moose Creek Chinook Salmon Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) range for adoption or consideration by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in developing a Moose Creek Chinook Salmon OEG at the 2013/2014 Upper Cook Inlet meeting.

ISSUE: Lack of a Moose Creek Chinook salmon spawning escapement goal. Moose Creek is the largest Chinook salmon producing tributary of the Matanuska/Knik River drainage. The Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) currently has no Chinook salmon spawning escapement goals for the entire Matanuska/Knik River drainage. The Department has a long history of Chinook salmon spawning index counts on which a Moose Creek king salmon Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) could be developed using the Department's standard goal development practices. At the 2011 Upper Cook Inlet Board of Fisheries meetings there were two proposals requesting Chinook salmon sport fishing opportunities in the Matanuska/Knik

River drainage, yet despite years of expensive data collection, ADF&G and the Board had no clear objectives upon which to base biological positions in regards to these publicly submitted proposals. It would be beneficial to have clear objectives to evaluate the health of wild Chinook salmon stocks in the Matanuska/Knik River drainage considering impacts from the Eklutna Tailrace sport fishery, Chinook salmon harvests elsewhere in Upper Cook Inlet, and the recent statewide downturn in wild Chinook salmon production.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? The situation of no clear objectives on which to judge the health of Matanuska/Knik River wild Chinook salmon stocks will remain. Potential long-term reduced Chinook salmon production resulting from overharvest/lower than adequate escapements could occur. For lack of an objective goal, sustainable fishing opportunities, and harvestable surpluses could also be lost.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All users, managers, and Board of Fisheries members could benefit from at least one clear objective Chinook salmon goal range upon which to judge the health of wild Matanuska/Knik River drainage Chinook salmon stock when considering proposals and regulation changes.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Users could see harvest restrictions or closures if necessary to achieve a spawning escapement goal during times of resource shortage.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Additional requests for salmon spawning escapement goals in the Northern Cook Inlet Management Area will also be submitted.

PROPOSED BY: Matanuska Valley Fish and Game Advisory Committee (HQ-F13-078)

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<u>PROPOSAL 322</u> - 5 AAC 60.122. Special provisions and localized additions and exceptions to the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area. Amend area open to sport fishing for king salmon in the Eklutna Tailrace, as follows:

(8) in the Knik River drainage, including Jim Creek and the Eklutna Tailrace, as follows:

…

(E) in the Eklutna Tailrace, [FROM ITS CONFLUENCE WITH THE KNIK RIVER UPSTREAM TO AN ADF&G REGULATORY MARKER LOCATED APPROXIMATELY 100 FEET DOWNSTREAM OF THE OLD GLENN HIGHWAY,] and in the waters within a one-half mile radius and downstream a distance of two miles from its confluence with the Knik River, from January 1–December 31, the bag and possession limit for king salmon 20 inches or greater in length is one fish; after taking a bag limit of one king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, a person may not sport fish for any species of finfish on that same day; bait is allowed; annual limit of five fish; a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 60.124;

ISSUE: The area open to sport fishing for king salmon was established in 2005, several years after the department began stocking king salmon into the Eklutna Tailrace. Prior to 2005, the fishery was opened by emergency order every year. The proposed area to reopen (between the Old Glenn Highway and an ADF&G marker) was originally closed because a weir used for coho salmon broodstock collection was in this location and regulations prohibit sport fishing within 300 feet of any weir. The weir is no longer used because broodstock is collected at a different location; therefore, this closed area is unnecessary.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? An area will continue to be closed unnecessarily.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Anglers fishing the Eklutna Tailrace for king salmon.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-298)

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PROPOSAL 323 - 5 AAC 60.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area. Create a youth-only fishery in the Eklutna Tailrace, as follows:

This proposal is a request for the Alaska Board of Fisheries to adopt a youth-only fishery on the Eklutna Tailrace. Anglers 15 years of age and younger may fish for king salmon on Eklutna Tailrace between the confluence with the Knik River and upstream to the Pedestrian Bridge between 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the third Saturday in June each year. General limits apply.

ISSUE: Lack of youth-only Chinook salmon fishing opportunity in Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Youth have limited to no opportunity and could become discouraged or develop negative connotations in regards to sport fishing if we do not make an effort to create a safe environment where they are not competing with adult anglers. We will lose the opportunity to involve and encourage youth to become anglers.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Youth anglers 15 years of age and younger are going to benefit.

Adult anglers 16 years of age and older would benefit from having an opportunity to encourage and help younger generations of anglers participate in fisheries geared specifically towards them. Youth anglers would also benefit from educational activities the authors of this proposal hope to establish during the hours of the proposed youth-only Fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Adult anglers 16 years of age and older who wish to fish at Eklutna Tailrace for Chinook salmon during 6:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. from the confluence with the Knik River up to the Pedestrian Bridge on the third Saturday in June each year would suffer.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Considered other fisheries in UCI but rejected due to native Chinook composition of other fisheries.

Considered having a youth-only fishery that begin at 6:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m. but rejected so that adult anglers 16 years and older would still have reasonable opportunity to fish outside of youth-only fishery times.

Considered liberalizing boundaries of youth-only fishery but rejected so that adult anglers 16 years and older could continue to have reasonable space to fish during youth-only fishery times outside of boundaries.

PROPOSED BY: Jehnifer and Butch Ehmann - Ehmann Outdoors (HQ-F13-272)
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PROPOSAL 324 - 5 AAC 60.120. General provisions for season, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainage Area. Update stocked lakes list for the Knik Arm drainage area, as follows:

(3) rainbow/steelhead trout

…

(B) may be taken in stocked lakes and ponds from January 1 – December 31; bag and possession limit of five fish, of which only one may be 20 inches or greater in length; for the purposes of this subparagraph, "stocked lakes and ponds" include Barley Lake, Bear Paw Lake, Bench Lake, Beverly Lake, Big Beaver Lake, [B-J LAKE,] **Blair Lake,** [BOOT LAKE,] **Brocker Lake,** Bruce Lake, **Buck Lake,** [BUTTERFLY LAKE,] Canoe Lake, Carpenter Lake, Coyote Lake, Dawn Lake, Diamond Lake, Echo Lake (Bradley / Kepler), Farmer Lake, Finger Lake, Florence Lake, Golden **Lake** [POND], **Goober Lake,** Homestead Lake, Honeybee Lake, Ida Lake, Irene Lake, Kepler/Bradley Lakes, Klair Lake, Kalmbach Lake, Knik Lake, Knob Lake, Lalen Lake, Little Beaver Lake, Little Lonely Lake, [LITTLE NO LUCK LAKE,] Loberg (Junction) Lake, Long Lake, (MP 86 Glenn Hwy), Loon Lake, Lorraine Lake, Lucille Lake, Lynne Lake, Marion Lake, Matanuska Lake, Meirs Lake, Memory Lake, Morovro Lake, North Knob Lake, North Rolly Lake, Prator Lake, Ravine Lake, Reed Lake, **Reflections Lake,** Rhein Lake, Rocky Lake, Ruby Lake, **Rush Lake,** Seventeenmile Lake, Seymour Lake, Slipper **(Eska)** Lake, South Rolly Lake, Tanaina Lake, [THREEMILE LAKE,] Twin Island Lake, Vera Lake, Victor Lake, Visnaw Lake, Walby Lake, Weiner Lake, **West Beaver Lake,** and Wolf Lake;

ISSUE: Stocking has been discontinued in several lakes and conversely, stocking was newly initiated in several lakes.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Anglers may miss the benefit of greater bag limits for stocked waters and enforcement would not be able to monitor fisheries appropriately.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? All anglers desiring opportunity to fish almost all year long and enforcement personnel faced with enforcing regulations on these lakes.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? No one.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-300)

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PROPOSAL 325 - 5 AAC 59.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Anchorage Bowl Drainages Area. Reduce bag limit for landlocked king and other salmon in Anchorage stocked lakes, as follows:

(1) king salmon

…

(B) less than 20 inches in length

…

(ii) may be taken in stocked lakes and ponds from January 1 – December 31; bag and possession limit of **5** [10] fish; for purposes of this sub-subparagraph, "stocked lakes and ponds" has the meaning given in (3)(A) of this section;

(2) salmon, other than king salmon,

…

(B) less than 16 inches in length

…

(ii) may be taken in stocked lakes and ponds from January 1 – December 31; bag and possession limit of **5 fish** [10]; for the purposes of this sub-subparagraph, "stocked lakes and ponds" has the [SAME] meaning given in (3)(A) of this section;

PROBLEM: The Anchorage Management Area has 25 lakes and two streams that are stocked with catchable-sized rainbow trout, land-locked king salmon, Arctic char, or Arctic grayling. The most popular fish stocked is the rainbow trout, with a stocking goal of more than 100,000 catchable sized fish. Landlocked king salmon are the second most popular fish, with a stocking goal of approximately 50,000 catchable sized fish into ten lakes. Landlocked king salmon are the only fish currently stocked in the Anchorage Bowl with a ten-fish bag limit. Rainbow trout, Arctic char, and Arctic grayling have a bag and possession limit of five fish.

The new William Jack Hernandez Sport Fish Hatchery has provided very nice catchable fish for Anchorage area lakes for the first time since 2005, when the two old hatcheries lost hot water to rear fish. These easy-to-catch landlocked salmon are stocked just prior to ice-over, specifically for ice fishing, and are rarely caught during the ice-free period from any lake. Reducing the bag limit from 10 per day to five per day would help spread the harvest of these fish more evenly throughout the winter ice-fishing season, and align their bag limit to all other stocked fish in Anchorage Area Lakes.

Additionally, many young or inexperienced anglers have trouble distinguishing between rainbow trout and catchable-sized king salmon. Standardizing the bag limit for fish in stocked lakes would provide regulatory simplicity and help prevent inexperienced anglers from exceeding their rainbow trout bag limit due to misidentification.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Anglers will continue to have decreasing catch rates for these land-locked king salmon throughout the winter.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? No

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? The public and enforcement personnel.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Anglers who wish to catch and harvest more of these landlocked salmon early in the winter.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? None.

PROPOSED BY: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (HQ-F13-301)

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<u>PROPOSAL 376</u> - 5 AAC 60.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Knik Arm Drainages Area. Create a youth-only coho salmon fishery in the Eklutna Tailrace, as follows:

This proposal is a request for the Alaska Board of Fisheries to adopt a youth-only coho fishery on the Eklutna Tailrace. Anglers 15 years of age and younger may fish for coho salmon on Eklutna Tailrace between the confluence with the Knik River and upstream to the Pedestrian Bridge between 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the third Saturday in June each year. General limits apply.

ISSUE: Lack of youth-only coho salmon fishing opportunity in Upper Cook Inlet.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF NOTHING IS DONE? Youth have limited to no opportunity and could become discouraged or develop negative connotations in regards to sport fishing if we do not make an effort to create a safe environment where they are not competing with adult anglers. We will lose the opportunity to involve and encourage youth to become anglers.

WILL THE QUALITY OF THE RESOURCE HARVESTED OR THE PRODUCTS PRODUCED BE IMPROVED? N/A.

WHO IS LIKELY TO BENEFIT? Youth anglers 15 years of age and younger are going to benefit.

Adult anglers 16 years of age and older would benefit from having an opportunity to encourage and help younger generations of anglers participate in fisheries geared specifically towards them. Youth anglers would also benefit from educational activities the authors of this proposal hope to establish during the hours of the proposed youth-only fishery.

WHO IS LIKELY TO SUFFER? Adult anglers 16 years of age and older who wish to fish at Eklutna Tailrace for coho salmon during 6:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m. from the confluence with the Knik River up to the Pedestrian Bridge on the third Saturday in June each year would suffer.

OTHER SOLUTIONS CONSIDERED? Considered other fisheries in UCI but rejected due to native coho composition of other fisheries.

Considered having a youth-only fishery that begin at 6:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m. but rejected so that adult anglers 16 years and older would still have reasonable opportunity to fish outside of youth-only fishery times.

Considered liberalizing boundaries of youth-only fishery but rejected so that adult anglers 16 years and older could continue to have reasonable space to fish during youth-only fishery times outside of boundaries.

PROPOSED BY: Jehnifer and Butch Ehmann - Ehmann Outdoors (EF041013433)

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