

RC 133

**Amended Proposal 324**

During the month of July guide boats may carry no more than 5 persons including the guide, clients, and other passengers downstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake.

Submitted by Andy Szczesny

*Kenai River Professional Guide Association*

RC# 134

Clarification regarding Proposal #233

The Kenai River Professional Guide Association would like to clarify for the board that we would like to see NO ACTION regarding this proposal. Current regulations adequately address the issue contained in this proposal. After further consultation with the Department of Law, we have discovered that once a vessel is grounded with the bottom of the river adjacent to shore, the definition of vessel does not apply and anchor use is allowed. In layman's terms, boat anglers who row their boat to the North shore of People's Hole and ground their boat on the rocks are legally able to deploy their anchor while landing a fish. Rather than create additional regulations regarding this issue, we believe education among users will adequately address this issue: in particular, urging anglers to use the North shore to ground and land fish.

*Kenai River Professional Guide Association*

RC# 135

Motion to withdrawal Proposal #279

The Kenai River Professional Guide Association would like to withdrawal proposal #279 which asks to increase the bag limit for silver salmon in Kenai Peninsula freshwater streams from two fish per day to three fish per day.

In lieu of additional information presented in Committee E by ADF&G, we accept that current stock assessment does not justify an increase in harvest.

**Clarification regarding Proposals #152, #100, and #101**

-Current escapement numbers in most West Cook Inlet drainages are at very fragile levels.

-The only three rivers that monitor chinook escapement on the West Side of Cook Inlet are the Chuit, the Theodore and the Lewis Rivers. None of these rivers met escapement during the 2007 season.

-Severe sport fish restrictions exist on both the Lewis and the Theodore and have been in place for the past six seasons.

-Sportfish season lengths on these three systems have been reduced for the past 12 years due to low abundance of king salmon in these rivers.

-Area restrictions still exist on the Chuit River and only the lower eight miles of the river are open to king salmon fishing.

*Kenai River Professional Guide Association*

-Proposal #152 is seeking to expand both time, area and gear pertaining to the current Big River Sockeye Salmon Management Plan. It also seeks to expand the number of incidental Chinook harvested from 1000 to 1500 fish. This translates into a 50% increase in harvest on these already vulnerable stocks.

-The stocks of sockeye salmon in question are primarily returning to the South Fork of Big River and Wolverine Creek. This sport fishery currently supports an average of 10,000 user days per season and represents a multi-million dollar visitor industry.

-Wolverine Creek represents one of the most popular bear viewing locations in the entire state and increased commercial harvest of these sockeye salmon stocks could potentially displace this important bear population and greatly affect the popularity of bear viewing in this area.

RC 137

Error in Committee D Report - Proposal 213 (pg 6.)

Position of Kenai-Soldotna AC was erroneously represented as in support of this proposal. The AC is in fact opposed.

Submitted by: Mike Crawford, AC vice-chair

**5 AAC 21.365 KASILOF RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Specify setnet use of the Kasilof Special Harvest Area (KSHA) as follows:

- 1- Establish a 300 foot minimum distance between gear.
- 2- Apportion the available space in the setnet area by GPS coordinates and thus determine the number of setnet sites possible and the location of each site. This should produce approximately 70 to 100 sites and each site would be identified by GPS coordinates.
- 3- Develop a preseason lottery that awards specific sites for KSHA "openings." Entry in the lottery would require a Limited Entry Setnet permit for Cook Inlet. Drawings would award one site per permit, per openings. Lottery tickets would be \$10 each. Winning tickets would be an additional \$25. The purpose of these fees is to make this program a revenue neutral event for the state.
- 4- For KSHA setnet sites, a closed period of at least 1 hour will be implemented between "openings" to allow for site users to pull anchors and leave, and for new site users to arrive and set up anchors.
- 5- Establish uniform requirements for anchors, anchor lines, buoys, and include the use of trailer buoys with identification tags.
- 6- Expand the setnet area seaward to 900 feet from Mean High Tide to allow setnets to be 2 tiers deep.

## Kenai Early-run Kings Fishery Changes

### Problem

- A. In the early run, percentages and numbers of large fish vary. Recent numbers of large fish are generally less than in the 1980s (Figure 1). Recent numbers of small fish are generally greater now than in the 1980s (Figure 2).
- B. It is unclear whether changes in size composition are due to long term selectivity effects or normal cyclical variation but a 44"-55" protected slot regulation was enacted in 2003 as a precautionary measure to protect the large fish.
- C. This slot limit has protected the majority of the large 5-ocean fish as intended. It has produced the unintended consequence of increasing fishery selectivity for females (Figure 3), particularly the 4-ocean females which are responsible for most of the population fecundity. This occurs because 4-ocean females are typically smaller than 4 ocean males.
- D. The slot limit does not address the issue of increasing numbers of small kings which could also be related to consistent underfishing in relation to their abundance.
- E. Seasonal closures at the mouths of Slikok Creek, Funny River, and Killey River through July 14 provide a sanctuary for early run kings staging before entering spawning tributaries. This has helped reduce the selective harvest of big kings by anglers through catch and release sorting. The current sanctuary does not provide adequate protection – early run kings are still around after July 14 between the current sanctuary and Torpedo Island.
- F. At the same time, escapements of early-run kings are consistently exceeding the current OEG range (Figure 4), even with early bait openers. The run could support significantly higher harvest than currently occurs.

### **Submitted by:**

Kenai Area Fisheries Coalition  
Kenai River Sportfishing Association  
Kenai River Professional Guide Association  
Cooper Landing Advisory Committee



## Solution

1. Increase slot limit from 44"-55" to 46"-55" to increase harvest of 4-ocean males and reduce the undesirable fishery selectivity for females. The new 46" minimum protects the majority of 5-ocean fish while providing access to the majority of the 4-ocean fish including males (Figure 5, Table 1). [Amended Proposal 261]
2. Increase harvest of the underexploited 2-ocean fish in the early run by allowing retention of one additional fish 28" or smaller per day. [Proposal 255]
  - a. Anglers may retain one fish larger than 28" and one fish 28" or less per day.
  - b. Anglers may continue to fish after retaining one fish 28" or less.
  - c. Anglers must cease fishing for the day after retaining a fish larger than 28".
  - d. There would be no annual limit on early run kings 28" or smaller.
  - e. Current annual limits and tag recording requirements for kings larger than 28" would stay the same.
3. Extend tributary sanctuary closures from January 1 through July 31 and extend the Killey sanctuary to upstream areas adjacent to the lower end of Torpedo Island [amended Proposal 269].
4. Increase harvest in the early run by opening the season with bait allowed. Earlier use of bait will increase angler catch rates, harvest, and possibly angler effort. Effort and harvest are both reduced from current levels (Figure 7, Figure 8). [amended 267]
  - a. Include provision for going back to a single hook - no bait restriction, or catch and release, based on in-season estimates of abundance where needed to ensure that escapements do not fall below the OEG.

## Analysis

- ✓ Emergency orders allowing the use of bait below the confluence of the Moose River are being issued earlier in the season in recent years (6/18 in 2005, 6/10 in 2006, 6/12 in 2007). The majority of the early run (60%) comes in after June 10 (Figure 6). Only about 15% of the early run comes in before June 1.
- ✓ Recent harvest rates are averaging about 20% (Figure 9). Harvest rates will increase with season-long bait use due to increased angler effectiveness and possibly an increase in effort. This analysis assumes a harvest rate of 30% with bait. The increase in harvest rate is projected to increase harvest by about 1,500 fish in an average return year (relative to a no bait fishery).
- ✓ About 6% of the run is 28" or below. This segment includes about 31% of the 2-ocean fish (virtually all males) and <1% of the 3-ocean fish. In an average run year, there are about 950 fish 28" or less. Allowing harvest of additional fish 28" or smaller is projected to increase harvest (with bait) by about 300 fish. Note that about 20% of the fish in this size range that were previously released would have been lost to catch and release mortality under the old regulations.
- ✓ The Department's hindcast of the effects of the 28" regulation indicate that the current OEG would continue to have been met with the additional harvest in 21 of the last 22 years. The only exception would have been 1988 when record effort and harvests occurred. Current effort is less than half the level seen in 1988.
- ✓ About .8% of the run is of 44-45" inch fish that would become available to the fishery if the protected slot minimum is raised to 46" (about 1,300 fish in an average run). The 46" regulation would protect 70% of the 5-ocean fish while providing angler access to 70% of the 4-ocean fish. Allowing harvest of additional fish 44-45" is projected to increase harvest (with bait) by about 400 fish on average. Note that about 7% of the fish in this size range that were previously released would have been lost to catch and release mortality under the old regulations.
- ✓ This combination of regulations is projected to increase harvest on an average run (16,000) from about 3,200 to about 5,400. Even with this increased harvest, escapement would continue to exceed the OEG of 5,300-9,000 in an average return year. In only two of the last 22 run years, would in-season fishing restrictions have been required to meet the low end of the OEG under the proposed fishing schedule.

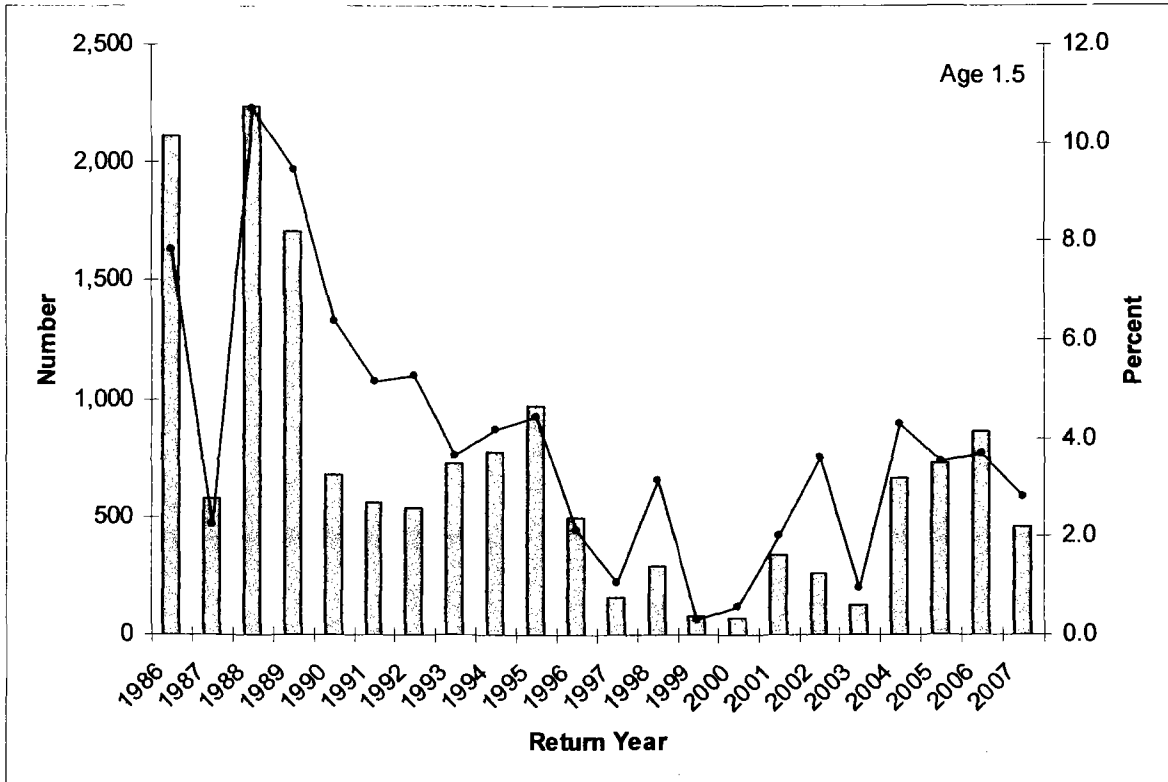


Figure 1. Number (gray bars) and percent (lines) of early run Kenai River Chinook salmon aged 1.5 in the total return. [ADFG RC 36 pg 31]

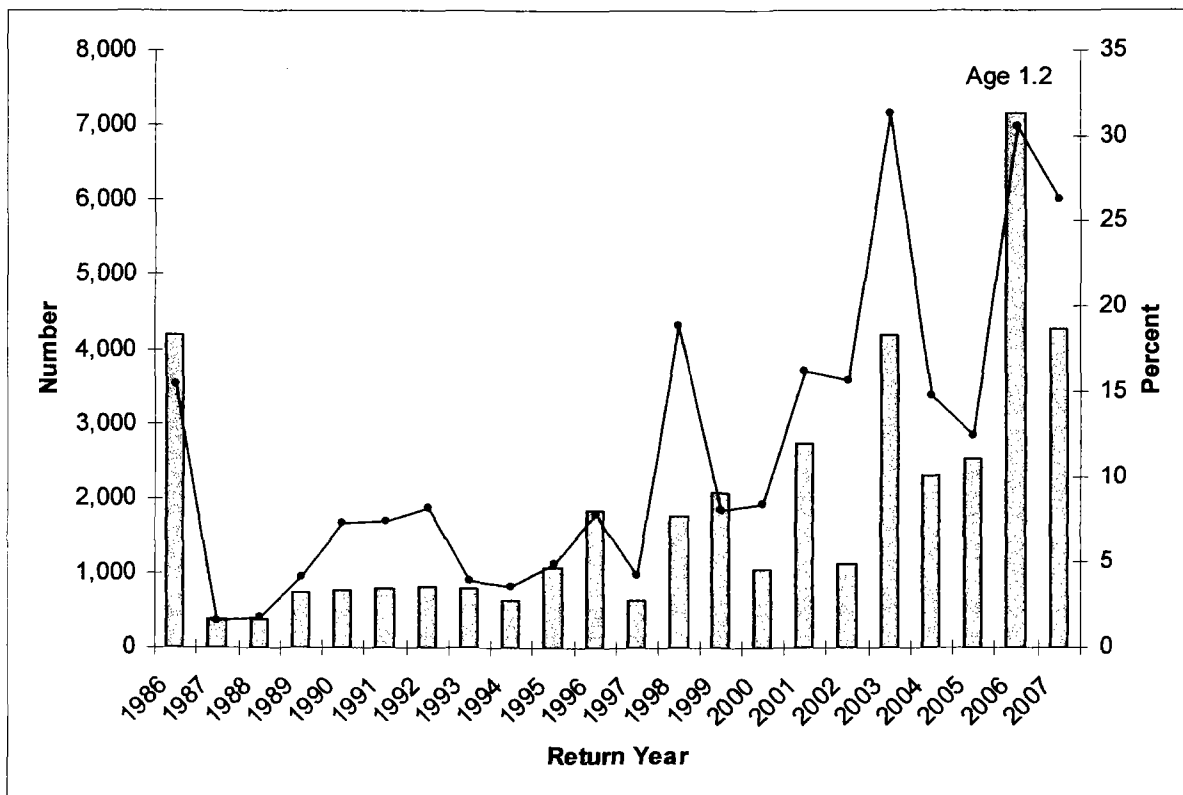


Figure 2. Number (gray bars) and percent (lines) of early run Kenai River Chinook salmon aged 1.2 in the total return. [ADFG RC 36 pg 30]

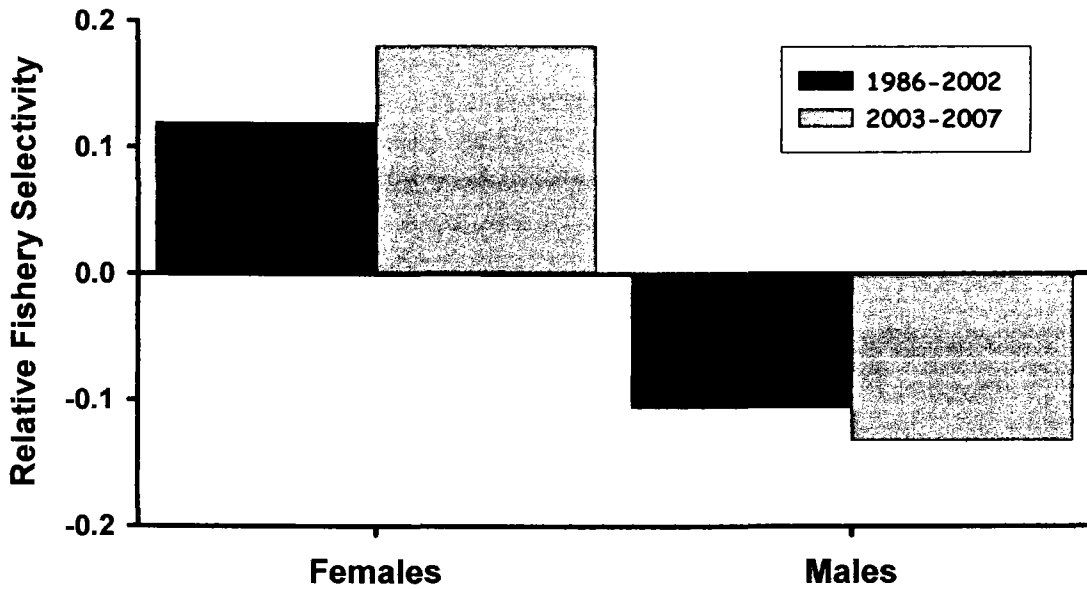


Figure 3. Relative sex-selective harvest of the Kenai River sport fishery on the early run of Chinook salmon before (1986-2002) and after (2003-2007) the slot limit was in effect. Bars above the line show where anglers are selecting for a sex (i.e. where the proportion in the harvest is greater than the proportion in the run). Bars below the line show where anglers are selecting against a sex. Relative selectivity is  $[(\text{proportion in creel} / \text{proportion in run}) - 1]$ .

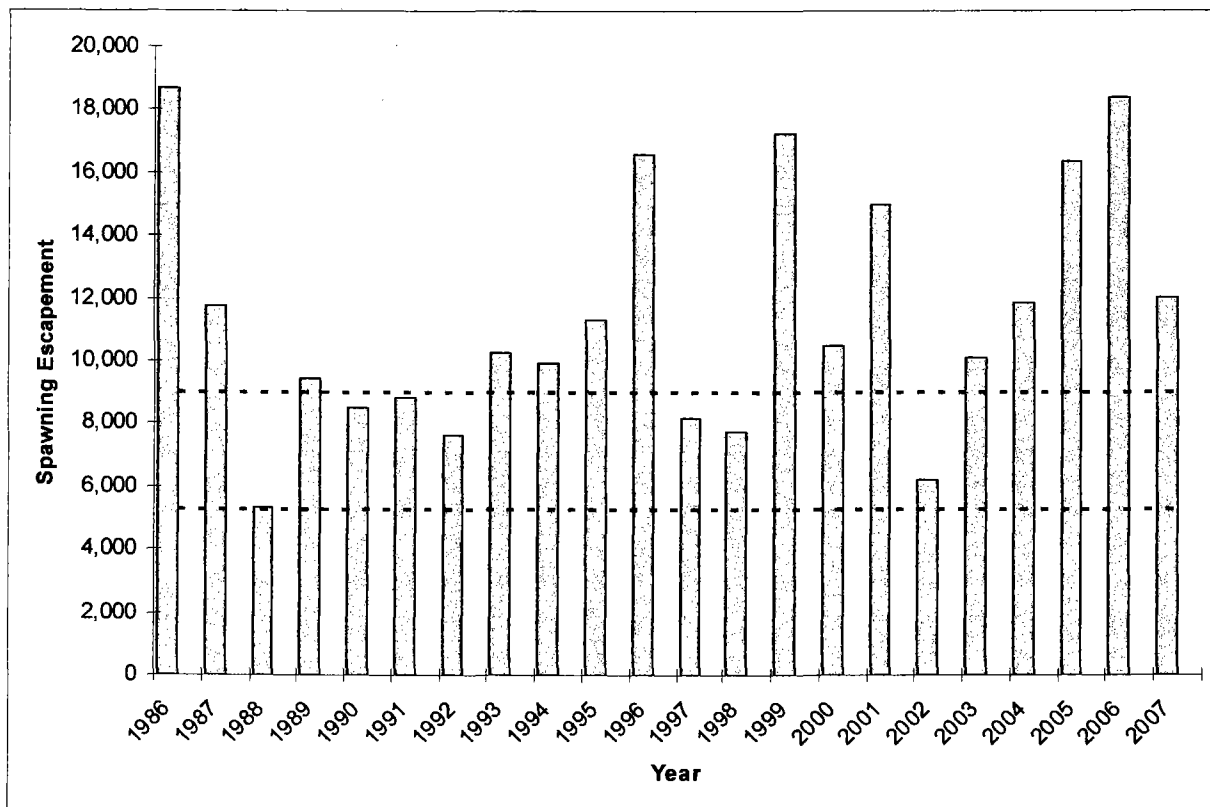


Figure 4. Spawning escapements of early-run Kenai River chinook salmon. Dashed lines indicate lower and upper values of the OEG range in effect beginning in 2005. [see ADFG RC 36 pg. 23]

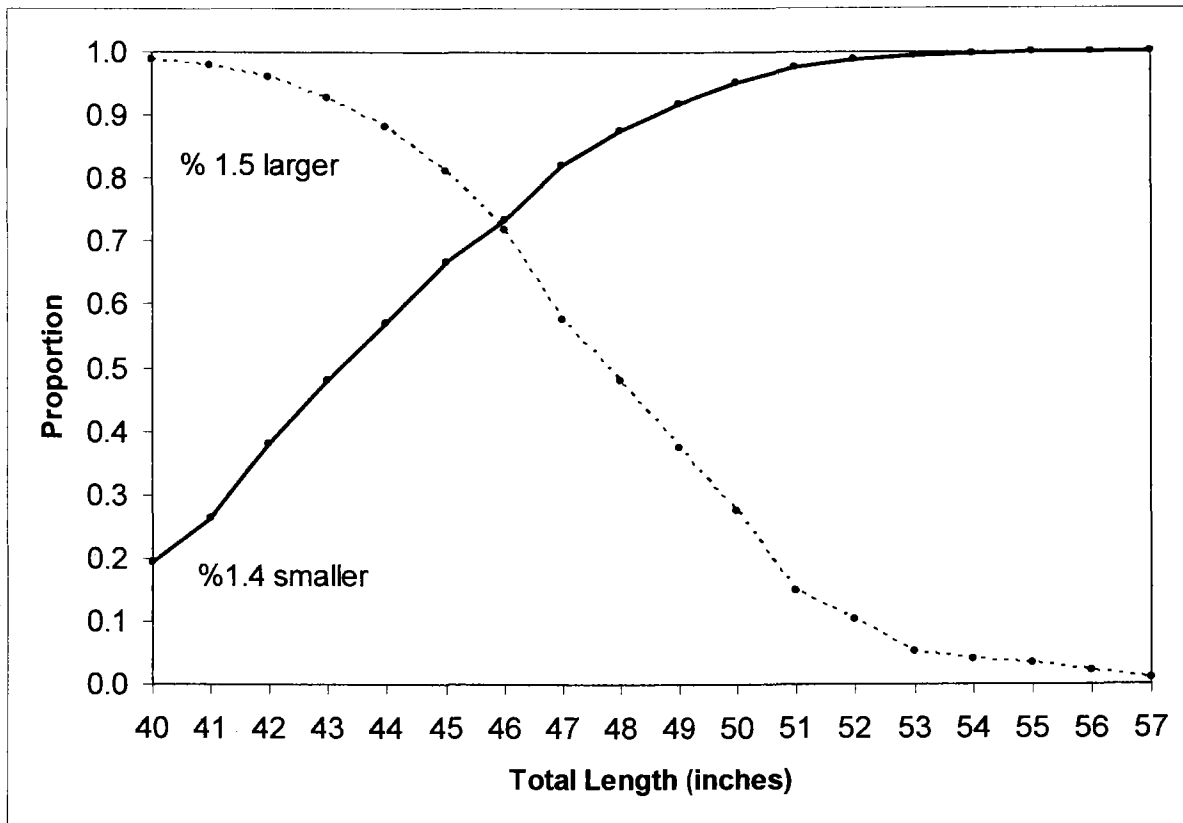


Figure 5. Cumulative proportion of early-run Kenai River Chinook salmon that aged 1.4 that are smaller (solid line), and those aged 1.5 that are larger (dotted line), than each 1-inch increment between 40 inches and 60 inches total length.

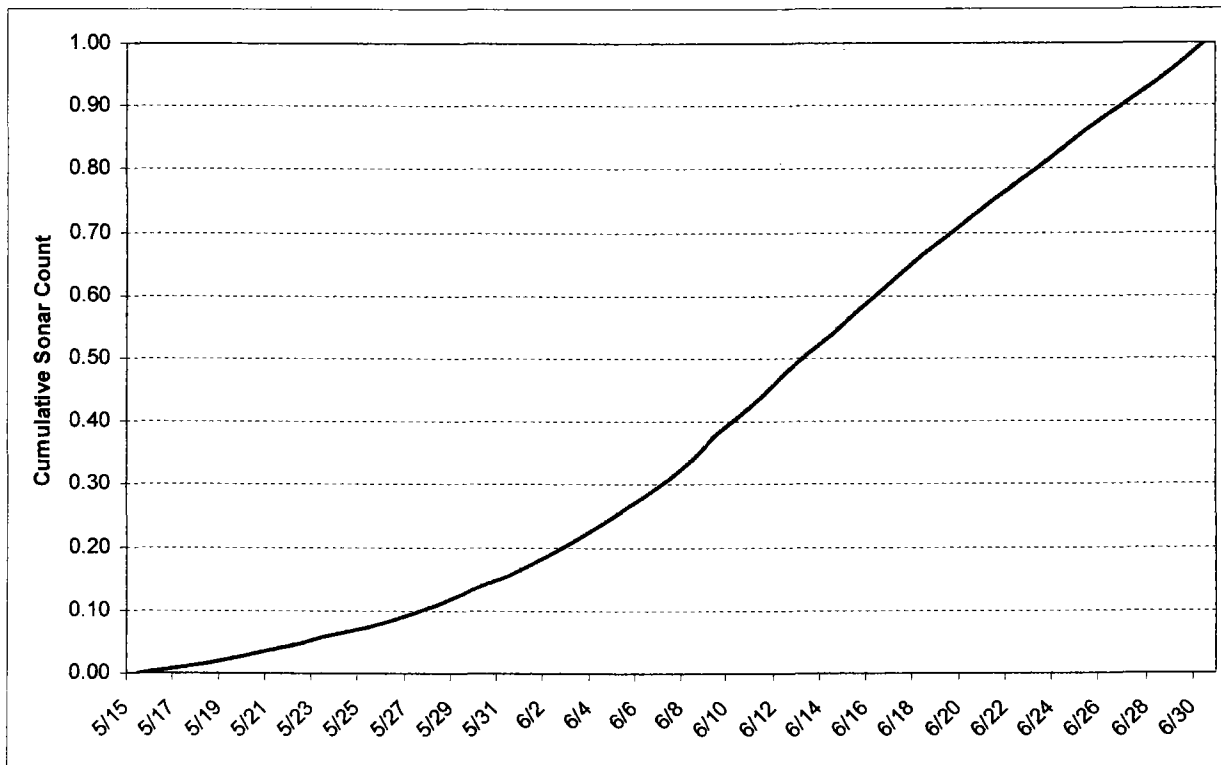


Figure 6. Run timing of early run Kenai kings at the sonar, 1988-2006 average.

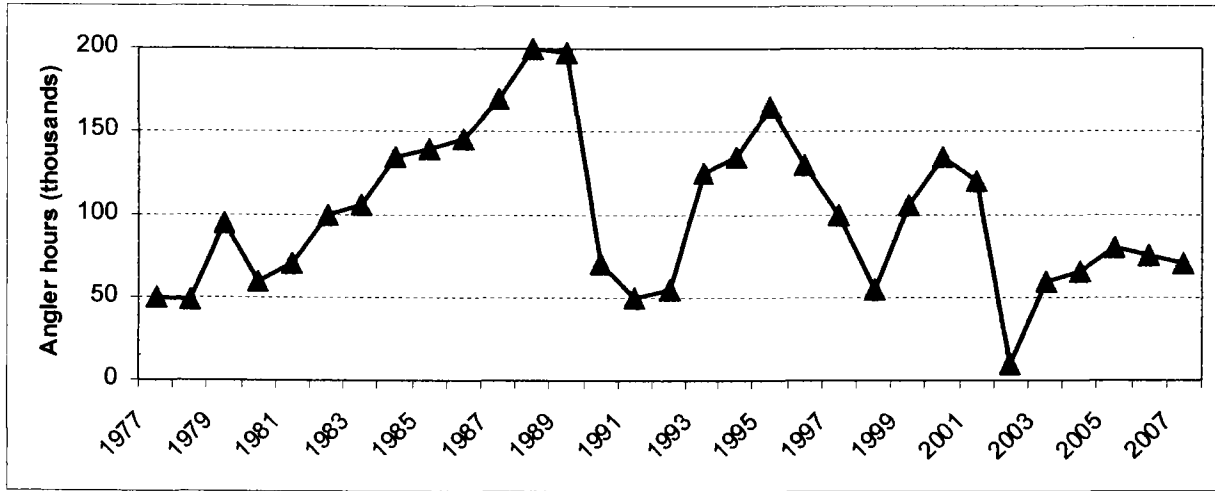


Figure 7. Early-run effort between Soldotna Bridge and Warren Ames Bridge. (as in RC 36 pg 22)

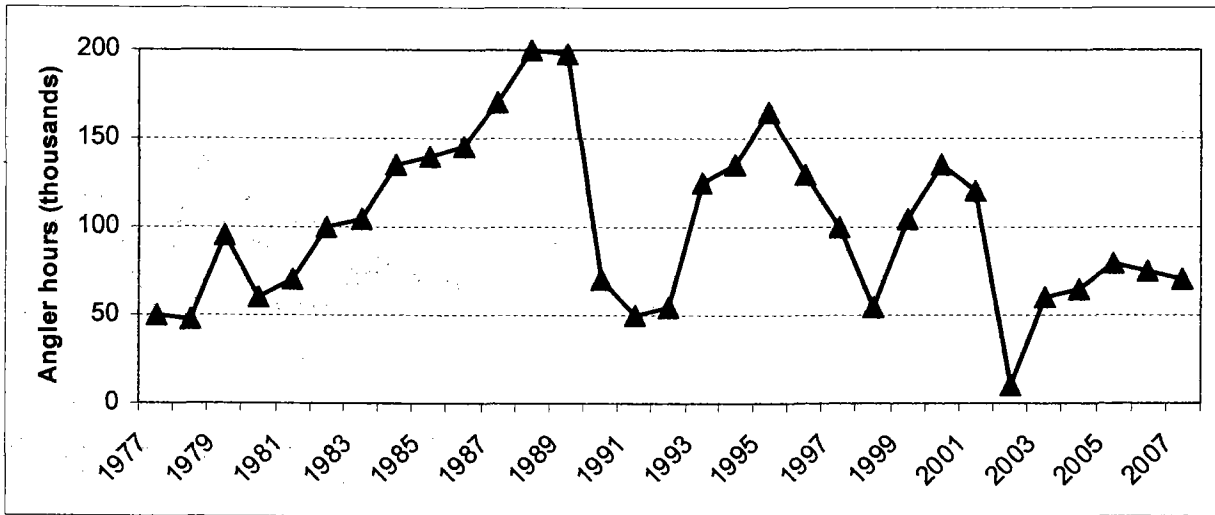


Figure 8. Historic harvest of early-run Kenai River Chinook salmon between the Soldotna Bride and the warren Ames Bridge. (as in ADFG RC 36 pg 22)

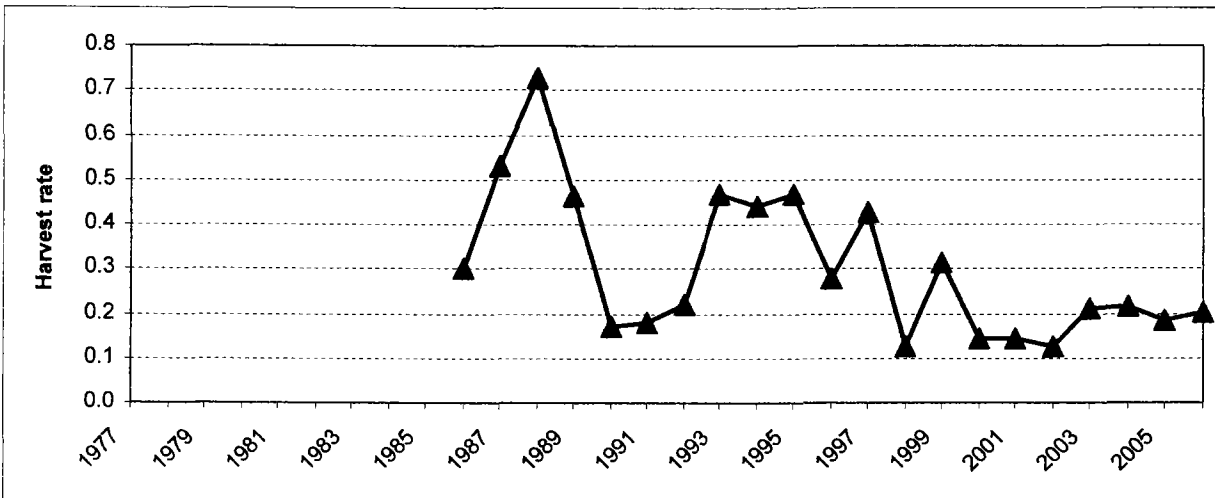


Figure 9. Annual sport fishery harvest rate of early-run Kenai Chinook.

Table 1. Percent and number (based on a 10-year average run of 15,937) less than or equal to total length in inches. (as in ADFG RC 36 pg 29)

Early Run King Data (from Committee E Deliberation Material)

Cumulative % by age (1986-2007)					Avg number by age (1998-2007 run & age comp)				
1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	total	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	total
0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3	0	0	0	3
0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	12	0	0	0	12
0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	18	0	0	0	18
1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	35	0	0	0	35
2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	73	0	0	0	73
3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	108	0	0	0	108
6.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	181	0	0	0	181
10.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	315	0	0	0	315
18.5%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	540	5	0	0	546
<b>31.8%</b>	<b>0.4%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>0.0%</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>929</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>950</b>
54.4%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	10.3%	1,589	59	0	0	1,648
74.8%	2.4%	0.1%	0.0%	14.6%	2,185	128	7	0	2,320
90.7%	4.4%	0.1%	0.0%	18.1%	2,649	234	7	0	2,891
96.7%	8.2%	0.2%	0.0%	20.6%	2,825	436	15	0	3,275
98.8%	15.7%	0.3%	0.0%	23.5%	2,886	835	22	0	3,743
99.5%	25.2%	0.5%	0.0%	26.9%	2,906	1,340	37	0	4,283
99.6%	38.1%	1.0%	0.0%	31.4%	2,909	2,027	73	0	5,009
99.7%	51.9%	2.2%	0.0%	36.6%	2,912	2,761	161	0	5,834
99.8%	66.9%	4.9%	0.0%	42.9%	2,915	3,558	358	0	6,832
99.8%	79.3%	8.4%	0.0%	48.6%	2,915	4,218	614	0	7,747
99.9%	86.2%	12.2%	0.4%	52.7%	2,918	4,585	892	2	8,396
100.0%	91.8%	19.5%	1.3%	57.9%	2,921	4,883	1,425	5	9,234
100.0%	95.1%	26.6%	1.9%	62.3%	2,921	5,058	1,944	7	9,931
100.0%	97.7%	38.4%	3.9%	68.6%	2,921	5,197	2,806	15	10,939
100.0%	98.8%	48.2%	7.1%	73.6%	2,921	5,255	3,522	28	11,726
<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99.3%</b>	<b>57.3%</b>	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>78.0%</b>	<b>2,921</b>	<b>5,282</b>	<b>4,187</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>12,437</b>
100.0%	99.6%	67.0%	19.2%	82.8%	2,921	5,298	4,896	75	13,190
<b>100.0%</b>	<b>99.7%</b>	<b>73.9%</b>	<b>28.2%</b>	<b>86.2%</b>	<b>2,921</b>	<b>5,303</b>	<b>5,401</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>13,734</b>
100.0%	99.8%	82.5%	42.8%	90.5%	2,921	5,308	6,029	166	14,425
100.0%	99.9%	87.7%	52.5%	93.2%	2,921	5,314	6,409	204	14,848
100.0%	99.9%	91.9%	63.1%	95.4%	2,921	5,314	6,716	245	15,196
100.0%	100.0%	95.1%	73.0%	97.1%	2,921	5,319	6,950	284	15,474
100.0%	100.0%	97.8%	85.5%	98.6%	2,921	5,319	7,147	333	15,720
100.0%	100.0%	98.8%	89.8%	99.2%	2,921	5,319	7,220	349	15,810
100.0%	100.0%	99.5%	94.8%	99.6%	2,921	5,319	7,271	369	15,880
100.0%	100.0%	99.8%	96.1%	99.8%	2,921	5,319	7,293	374	15,907
100.0%	100.0%	99.9%	96.8%	99.9%	2,921	5,319	7,301	377	15,917
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	98.1%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	382	15,930
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.1%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	385	15,933
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.6%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	387	15,935
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	389	15,937
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	389	15,937
100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	389	15,937

## Example Revised Language

### **5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River drainage area.**

Unless otherwise specified in 5 AAC 57.121 - 5 AAC 57.123 or by an emergency order issued under AS 16.05.060 , the following are the general seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means that apply to sport fishing for finfish in the Kenai River Drainage Area:

- (1) salmon may be landed only with the aid of a landing net or by hand;
- (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 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 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 ~~44~~ 46 inches in length or 55 inches or greater in length may be retained;
    - (ii) if retention is permitted under this subparagraph, a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length that is removed from the water must be retained and becomes part of the bag limit of the person originally hooking it; a person may not remove a king salmon from the water before releasing the fish; there is an annual limit of two king salmon and a harvest record is required as specified in 5 AAC 57.124;
    - (iii) a king salmon 55 inches or greater in length taken from the Kenai River from January 1 - July 31 must be sealed as specified in 5 AAC 57.160;
  - (B) king salmon 20 inches or greater in length may not be taken
    - (i) in the Kenai River upstream of the outlet of Skilak Lake, including Kenai Lake; and
    - (ii) in the Kenai River drainage lakes and tributaries including Kenai Lake tributaries, except the lower Moose River;
  - (C) ~~from January 1 - June 30,~~ a person, after taking and retaining a king salmon ~~20 inches or greater than 28 inches~~ in length from the Kenai River, may not sport fish from a boat in the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake for any species of fish on that same day;
  - (~~C~~ D) from July 1 - July 31, 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 Skilak Lake for any species of fish on that same day;



**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**

Unless otherwise specified by an emergency order issued under AS 16.05.060 , the following are the special provisions and localized exceptions to the general seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means set out in 5 AAC 57.120 and 5 AAC 75 for the Lower Section of the Kenai River Drainage Area:

(1) sport fishing gear restrictions:

(A) from January 1 - ~~June 30~~ April 30, in the Kenai River, only one unbaited single-hook, artificial lure may be used;

(B) from ~~July 1~~ May 1 - 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;

(C) from September 1 - December 31, in the Kenai River from the mouth of the Upper Killey River upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the outlet of Skilak Lake, only unbaited, artificial lures may be used;

(D) from November 1 - December 31, in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake, only unbaited artificial lures may be used;

(E) from May 15 - August 15, the Moose River from its confluence with the Kenai River upstream to the upstream edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge, and the waters of the Kenai River within a 100-yard radius of the Moose River, are fly-fishing-only waters;

(F) from January 1 - ~~July 14~~ July 31, the following waters are fly-fishing-only waters:

(i) that portion of 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 approximately 100 yards upstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek;

(ii) that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one mile downstream from the mouth of Funny River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 200 yards upstream from the mouth of the Funny River;

(G) from June 25 - ~~July 14~~ July 31, that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately three-quarters of a mile downstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the downstream end of Torpedo Island ~~approximately one-half mile~~ upstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River, is fly-fishing-only waters;

(H) in Hidden Lake Creek, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used;

(I) in Mackey Lakes, Derks Lake, Sevena Lake, Cisca Lake, Union Lake, and the unnamed lakes on Tote Road, five lines may be used to fish for northern pike through the ice;

(2) the following waters of the Kenai River are closed to sport fishing, as follows:

(A) from April 15 - August 15, Slikok Creek;

(B) from January 1 - December 31, the flowing waters of Soldotna Creek upstream of ADF&G markers located approximately 100 feet upstream from its confluence with the Kenai River;

(C) from May 2 - June 10, the flowing waters of Soldotna Creek downstream from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 100 feet upstream from its confluence with the Kenai River;

(D) from January 1 - ~~July 14~~ July 31, that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one mile downstream from the mouth of the Funny River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 200 yards upstream from the mouth of the Funny River, is closed to the taking of king salmon;

(E) from June 11 - August 14, the Funny River from the Kenai River upstream to the Funny River Road Bridge;

(F) from May 2 - June 10, the flowing waters of Moose River upstream of the upper edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge;

(G) from June 25 - ~~July 14~~ July 31, that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately three-quarters of a mile downstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the downstream end of Torpedo Island ~~approximately one half mile upstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River~~, is closed to the taking of king salmon;

(H) from May 2 - June 10, Hidden Lake Creek;

(I) from July 1 - August 15, the Kenai River riparian habitats described in 5 AAC 57.180(d) are closed to all sport fishing, except to sport fishing from a boat that is more than 10 feet from shore and is not connected to the shore or any riparian habitat;

(J) from January 1 - ~~July 14~~ July 31, the waters in that portion of 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 approximately 100 yards upstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek is closed to the taking of king salmon;

(3) a person may not sport fish from a boat

(A) on any Monday in May, June, and July, except Memorial Day, in that portion of the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to 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;

(B) from January 1 - ~~July 14~~ July 31, in the following waters:

(i) in that portion of 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 approximately 100 yards upstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek;

(ii) in that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one mile downstream from the mouth of the Funny River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 200 yards upstream from the mouth of Funny River;

(C) from May 15 until the end of the king salmon season, or July 31, whichever is later, in the following waters:

(i) in that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 250 yards downstream from the upper breakwater at Centennial Park boat launch, upstream to the Sterling Highway Bridge at Soldotna;

(ii) in that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 100 yards downstream from the landing at Morgan's Hole, at river mile 31, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the north section line of Section 28, Township 5 North, Range 9 West, Seward Meridian;

(iii) in that portion of the Kenai River within a 100-yard radius of the mouth of the Moose River, and the Moose River upstream to the upstream edge of the Sterling Highway Bridge;

(D) from June 25 - ~~July 14~~ July 31, in that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately three-quarters of a mile downstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located at the downstream end of Torpedo Island ~~approximately one-half mile upstream from the mouth of the Lower Upper Killey River;~~

(4) sport fishing from guided vessels is restricted in waters of the Kenai River as specified in 5 AAC 57.140(c) and 5 AAC 57.170(b) (2);

(5) Hidden Lake is closed to sport fishing for burbot;

(6) in Hidden Lake, the bag and possession limit for lake trout is two fish, with no size limit.

**5 AAC 57.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Kenai River Drainage Area**

(a) The following provisions regarding harvest records and annual limits apply to taking and retaining king salmon 20 inches or greater in length in the waters of the Kenai River Drainage Area that are open to sport fishing for king salmon:

(1) a nontransferable harvest record is required and must be in the possession of each person taking and retaining 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 region;

(2) ~~immediately upon landing a king salmon 20 inches or greater in length,~~ the angler shall enter the date, location (body of water fished), and species of the catch, in ink, on the harvest record immediately upon landing a king salmon;

(A) greater than 28 inches in length from May 1-June 30.

(B) 20 inches or greater in length from July 1-31.

(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 58.024, 5 AAC 59.124, 5 AAC 60.124, 5 AAC 61.124, and 5 AAC 62.124 are five king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, not more than 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.

(A) Except that king salmon 28 inches or less in length taken from the Kenai River from May 1-June 30 do not apply to the annual limit; One king salmon 20-28 inches taken from the Kenai River from May 1-June 30 in length may be retained per day in addition to one king salmon greater than 28 inches in length.

**5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan**

(a) The purpose of this management plan is to ensure an adequate escapement of early-run king salmon into the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers, to conserve the unique large size early-run king salmon in the Kenai River, and to provide the department with management guidelines.

(b) The department shall manage the Kenai River early-run king salmon sport and guided sport fisheries to achieve the optimal escapement goal, 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 in 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 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) ~~44~~ 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) (C) if the spawning escapement is projected to exceed the upper end of the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner shall, by emergency order, liberalize the~~

~~sport fishery downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake, by allowing~~ restrict the use of bait to achieve the optimal escapement goal; only king salmon less than ~~44~~ 46 inches in length or 55 inches or greater in length may be retained;

(4 ~~3~~) 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.

(e) In the Kasilof River, the seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and other special provisions for king salmon are set out in 5 AAC 56.120(a) and 5 AAC 56.122(8) .

February 8, 2008

RC 140

Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Upper Cook Inlet Finfish  
Committee G: Northern Cook Inlet Sport Fisheries  
Board Members: Webster (chair), Jensen, Williams.

Ladies & Gentleman:

RE: Proposal 358: Upper Cook Inlet (Beluga) Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan,  
Alaska Board of Fisheries 2007/2008.

I am the author of Proposal 358. This is a second (2<sup>nd</sup>) amendment to the proposal and I would appreciate your consideration to add a Personal Use Dip Net Fishery on the Beluga River for Senior Residents. This fishery is not intended to replace the prior modification requesting a Personal Use Gill Net Fishery for Seniors on Three Mile and Cotton Wood Beaches. This Dip Net Fishery on the Beluga River will be difficult because of access and might provide an opportunity, but probably not result in a very high harvest. The later dates with the Beach Gill nets would be a fallback, if this Beluga River Fishery is not successful. Between these two (2) opportunities, seniors would at least have a chance of harvesting enough fish to maintain their quality of life and reduce their expenses.

This amendment should alleviate the escapement problem and excessive fishing pressure as it is a fishery within a river that does not appear to have these problems. In fact, the Department does not currently actively monitor this water shed and based on personal experience it does have a decent salmon return. This river has almost no fishing pressure because of the dangerous currents, hidden obstacles and access issues. There is some access in the vicinity of the Beluga River bridge and some down stream toward the river mouth.

These modifications should address concerns such as targeting higher quality species, escapement problems and excessive fishing pressure on the smaller streams. The scope is reduced to protect the resources and still allow Senior personnel a chance of maintaining their quality of life while reducing pressure on the other smaller streams.

I propose the following additional modifications to Proposal 358:

**Proposal:** Add a Senior Resident Personal Use Dip Net Fishery on the Beluga River.

**Age:** Restrict the fishery to Residents-only who are at least sixty (60) years old.

**Area:** Open a dip net fishery one-half (1/2) mile upstream of the Beluga River Bridge and down stream at least one (1) mile. The area adjacent to and on either side of the bridge is accessible via the a road and within a reasonable walking distant. Areas further up or down stream would require additional effort. Down stream there is a trail to an old oil well that could give additional down river access. Access to the mouth would be best, but this might not meet Department requirements.

Please see attached map identifying this area.

**Gear:** Dip net definitions and requirement same as other comparable dip net fisheries.

**Time:** The Personal Use Dip Net fishery should be between June 1 and September 1, or other times as defined by Department policy. Open days and time are flexible, but based on constancy could follow other like areas. A long time and/or date span would be appreciated.

**Target species:** Because this river has little research data and appears to be healthy, I recommend the ability to harvest high quality salmon and high enough quantities for annual needs..

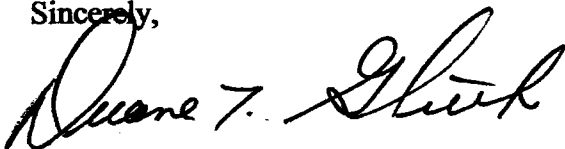
**Harvest quantity:** The allowance should follow other comparable Dip Net Fisheries or as determined by the Department.

**Permit requirements:** A Department permit must be requested and a harvest report must be submitted at the end of season, but not later than Sept 30.

**Additional comments:** The tails must be cut off as required by existing regulations.

All applicable Personal Use Dip requirements must be adhered to.

Sincerely,



Duane T. Gluth  
7021 Foothill Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99504-2627

email [dgluth@att.net](mailto:dgluth@att.net)

Phone 907-338-0401

Attachment: Map showing the Beluga River Bridge and surrounding area.





KPFA  
Submitted by  
Paul A. Shadura II  
RC 141

**Commercial Fishing  
S04H Set Net and S03H Drift  
Resident and Non Resident**

**S04H Set Net Residents – 739 Permits**

**607/ 82% S04H permit holders live within the State.**

**372/ 50% Kenai Peninsula; Anchor Point (10), Clam Gulch (24), Homer (25), Kasilof (81), Kenai (113), Nikiski (27), Ninilchik (29), Soldotna (59), Sterling (4)**

**113/ 15% Anchorage**

**83/ 11% Outside of Anchorage; Big Lake (6), Chugiak (16), Eagle River (7), Girdwood (4), Indian (1), Palmer (14), Sutton (1), Talkeetna (3), Trapper Creek (3), Wasilla (22), Willow (6)**

**36/ 5% Other Cook Inlet; Nanwalek (5), Seldovia (15), Tyonek (16)**

**3/ less than 1% within the State; Barrow (1), Cordova (1), Fairbanks (1)**

**Non Residents/Unknown**

**132/ 18% Unknown or live outside of Alaska, Unknown (17) have Alaska addresses, States; AL (1), AZ (4), CA (17), DE (2), FL(2), HI (1), ID (5), IL (1), LA (7), MN (3), MT (3), NY (5), OK (3), OR (9), PA (1), TX (5), UT (10), WA (33), WI (2), BC Canada (1)**

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**S03H Drift Residents – 573 Permits**

**400/ 70% S03H permit holders live within the State.**

**306/ 53% Kenai Peninsula; Clam Gulch (2), Homer (129), Kasilof (26), Kenai (62), Nikiski (13), Nikolaevsk (9), Ninilchik (10), Seward (2) Soldotna (45), Sterling (8)**

**41/ 7% Anchorage**

**22/ Less than 1% outside of Anchorage; Eagle River (7),  
Girdwood (1), Palmer (2), Wasilla (11), Willow (1)**

**8/ Less than 1% other Cook Inlet; Halibut Cove (3), Port  
Graham (2), Seldovia (3)**

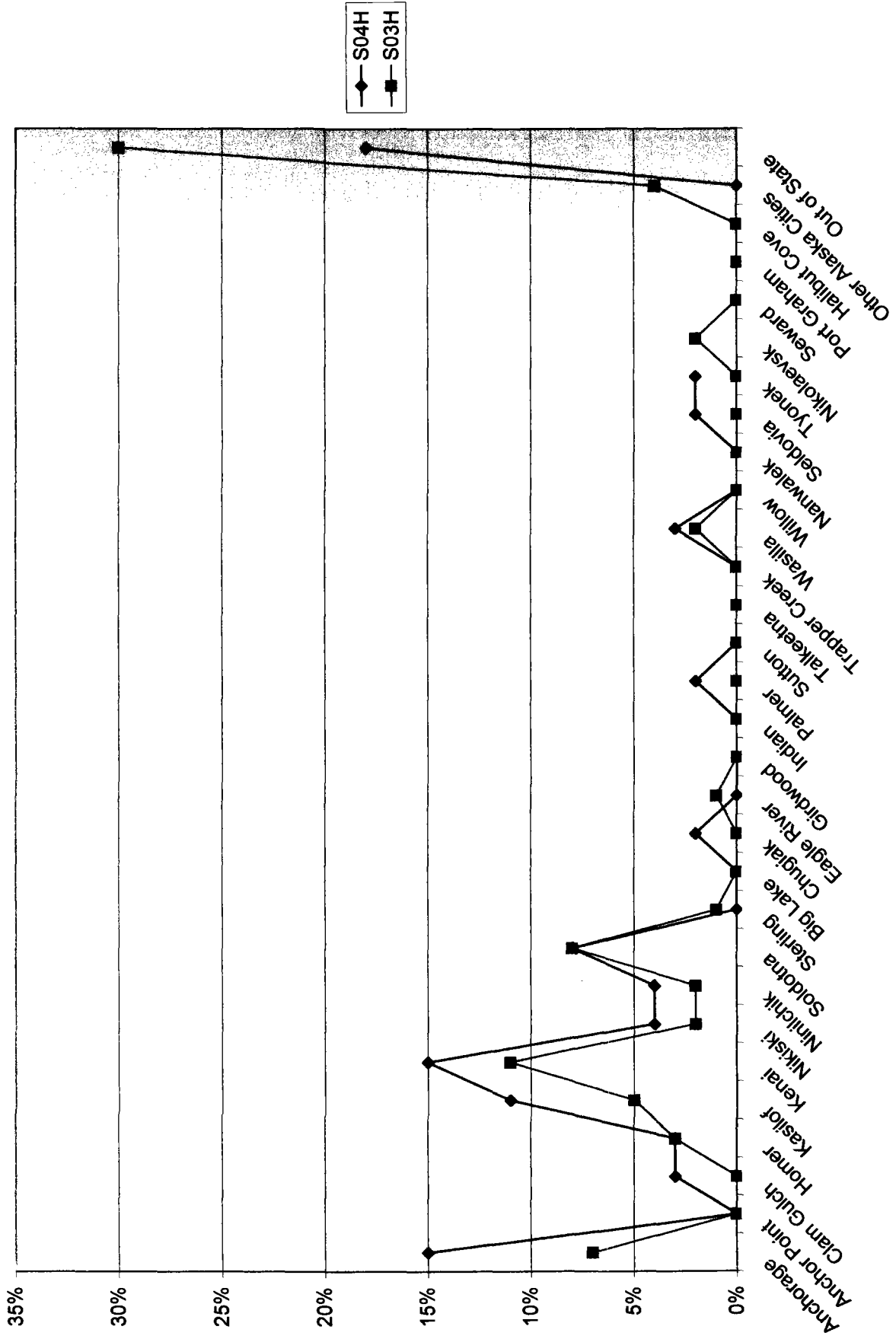
**23/ 4% Within the State; Auke Bay (1), Delta Jct (5),  
Fairbanks (1), Fritz Creek (3), Juneau (2), Kodiak (8),  
Nome (1), Sitka (2)**

**Non Residents/Unknown**

**173/ 30% Unknown or live outside of Alaska; Unknown (10) have  
Alaska addresses, States; CA (11), CO (2), FL(1), HI (2), IA (4),  
IN (1), MA (1), MD (1), MI (7), MN (6), MO (1), NM (2), NV (2)  
NY (4), OK (3), OR (47), TX (4), VA (2), WA (60), WI (2)**

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S04H Set No. 3H Drift  
Resident vs Non Resident



	S04H	S03H
Anchorage	15%	7%
Anchor Point	Less 1%	0
Clam Gulch	3%	Less 1%
Homer	3%	3%
Kasilof	11%	5%
Kenai	15%	11%
Nikiski	4%	2%
Ninilchik	4%	2%
Soldotna	8%	8%
Sterling	Less 1%	1%
Big Lake	Less 1%	0
Chugiak	2%	0
Eagle River	Less 1%	1%
Girdwood	Less 1%	Less 1%
Indian	Less 1%	0
Palmer	2%	Less 1%
Sutton	Less 1%	0
Talkeetna	Less 1%	0
Trapper Creek	Less 1%	0
Wasilla	3%	2%
Willow	Less 1%	Less 1%
Nanwalek	Less 1%	Less 1%
Seldovia	2%	0
Tyonek	2%	0
Nikolaevsk		2%
Seward		Less 1%
Port Graham		Less 1%
Halibut Cove		Less 1%
Other Alaska Cities	Less 1%	4%
Out of State	18%	30%

Reference CFEC Database

Prepared by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game

## Update on Limited Entry Program For Sport Fishing Guides

In 2006 Commissioner Campbell requested staff to form a task force to formulate options for implementation of a limited entry program for sport fishing guides. In late-November 2007, the Sport Fish Guide Limited Entry Task Force recommended that the creation of a Sport Fish Guide Services Board (similar to the Big Game Commercial Services Board) would be an appropriate first step to limiting sport fishing guide activities in Alaska, rather than going immediately to a limited entry system. This recommendation was based on potential legal issues associated with the issuance of limited entry permits to the business owners rather than the guides (fishermen), as initially recommended by the task force.

The creation of a Sport Fish Guide Services Board will not raise constitutional issues, but would require legislation and regulations to implement. This type of program would categorize and professionally license the charter industry as guides, outfitters or transporters and would provide an opportunity to gather accounting information on levels of participation and of fish being harvested within each of these groups. Participants believed this approach would increase professional standards within the industry and as a result may serve to reduce entry over time and slow down the current growth in the sport fish guide industry. Participants also felt this was a necessary first step towards developing a more formal limited entry or concessionaire program for the sport fish guide industry.

Participants also felt it was necessary to develop workable definitions for guiding and related activities such as outfitting and transporting before any legislation is introduced. In discussing definitions, the group discussed the different types of business models and definitions for the various types of activities.

The timeline for implementing this initiative would likely remain as originally proposed, with appropriate legislation introduced during the 2009 Legislative session. Steps previously proposed under the recommendation of a limited entry approach would apply as well.

During a January 2008 meeting, the nine member Task Force was presented with a draft of the proposed language geared toward developing a Sport Fish Guide Services Board. Task force members and staff detailed the issues and definitions that would require additional review. ADF&G staff have taken this draft version and have initiated a rewrite of the language that reflects Task Force comments. Upon completion, this second draft will be e-mailed to Task Force members for further review and comment.

Once ADF&G receives comments from the Task Force, a new draft will be prepared for discussion during the next scheduled Task Force meeting in April, 2008. In addition, this

## Mat-Su Mayor's Blue Ribbon Sportsmen's Committee

Mr. Chairman and Board of Fishery members –

Having listened to testimony and committee discussions to this point in the proceedings our committee would like to tender the following observations:

- 1) It is of the utmost importance to declare Susitna, Yentna and Fish Ck. Sockeye as a "stock of concern". While this has been our position for a year or more, Mr. Tarbox's testimony to that effect during Committee 'A' discussions underscored that regardless of how one reaches the conclusion, those stocks meet the criteria for stock of concern on a yield basis during this Board cycle and the time for an Action Plan is now.
- 2) Continuation of the genetic studies of Northern District Sockeye is the fundamental component of any action/management plan regarding those stocks and there is strong support for funding these studies in the Legislature as indicated by the letter from the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House (RC # 95). We believe a transmittal from the Board in favor of pursuing the ADF&G's February 4, 2008 list of proposed studies for those stocks will fall on open ears.
- 3) As testimony before the partial Board of Fisheries in Wasilla on January 30<sup>th</sup> indicated, diminishing returns of salmon to the Northern District are causing economic hardship in the Mat-Su Borough. That sentiment is echoed in the Mat-Su Borough's Resolution in support of Stock of Concern designation passed in January 2008, and is very much the reason Mayor Menard reinstated this committee.
- 4) While we are reluctant to risk the Stock of Concern declaration for Susitna, Yentna, and Fish Ck. Sockeye by coupling the designation with provision of an escapement corridor, we would ask that in light of the economic impact to the Mat-Su nad with regard to the precautionary principle of the Sustainable Salmon Policy that the Board consider establishing an opportunity for Northern Stocks to move through the Central District between July 9<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> as part of either the appropriate Management Plan or an Action Plan pursuant to the Stock of Concern designation.

Tom Kluberton, Chairman



Mat-Su Mayor's Blue Ribbon Sportsmen's Committee

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# Pink Salmon Fishery

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## **Recommendations for Board Action**

- 1. Adopt ADFG proposal #153 to restore the area description as per the original plan (Figure 1).**

*This is a housekeeping proposal to add the area description back into the plan. Otherwise the Department will have to continue to describe the open area by emergency order.*

- 2. Take no action to expand east-side set net fisheries in August.**

*An August set net fishery would be a mixed species fishery catching large numbers of coho. This fishery would come just as coho are beginning to build to fishable numbers in the Kenai sport fishery and would delay and constrict coho fisheries in the river. Significant coho catches in the east-side set net fishery in August would be contrary to the sport fish priority for Northern District and Kenai coho [5 AAC 21.360].*

*The east side set net fishery is already afforded a significant opportunity to harvest pinks through August 10. Recent pink salmon harvest shares in the east-side set net fishery are similar to historical numbers (41% of the Upper Cook Inlet commercial pink total in 2002-2006 and a 37% average harvest share in 1966-2006).*

- 3. Amend the Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan 5 AAC 21.356 to require the use of Pink gear.**

*Use of pink gear will reduce harvest of coho and increase harvest of the high-value females in the pink run.*

(3) drift gillnets may not exceed 150 fathoms in length and 45 meshes in depth, and gillnet mesh size may not exceed four and three-quarters inches during periods established by emergency order.



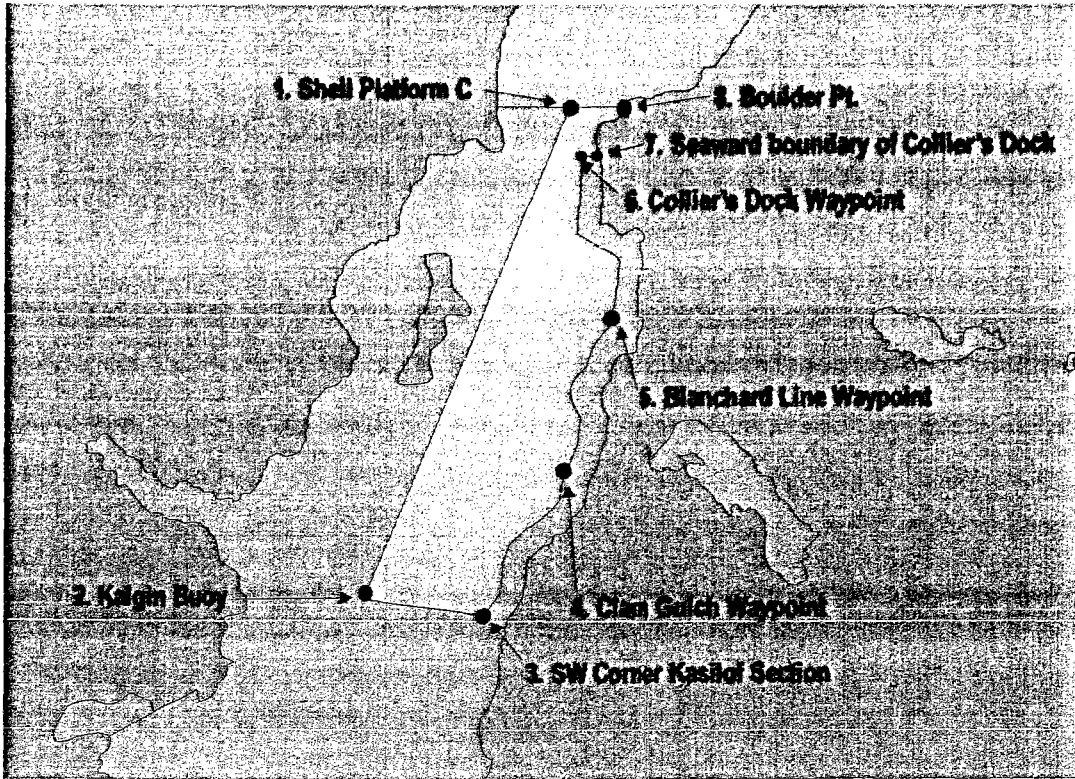


Figure 1. Pink salmon target fishery area authorized by the plan.

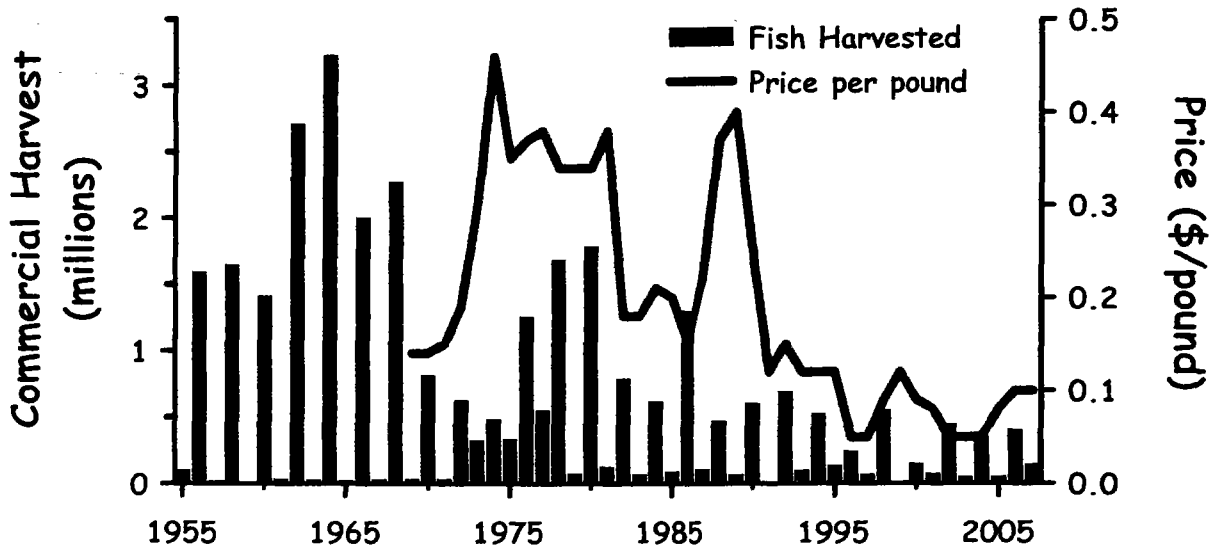


Figure 2. Trends in pink salmon harvest and value in Upper Cook Inlet commercial fisheries. (No price adjustments for inflation).

## **BACKGROUND**

- ❑ A Cook Inlet Pink Salmon Management Plan [5 AAC 21.356] was adopted in 2002 and reauthorized in 2005 to provide fishery opportunity for this commercial priority species in August.
- ❑ This plan provides access to pink salmon and minimizes harvest of Northern District and Kenai coho consistent with the sportfishery priority for coho.
- ❑ The plan authorizes a drift net fishery after August 9 in an area off the Kenai and Kasilof.

### ***Runs***

- ❑ Large numbers return to streams and rivers throughout the inlet. The Kenai and Susitna rivers have big populations.
- ❑ Pinks return in late July and early August, overlapping in run timing with sockeye, Chinook, coho, and chum runs.
- ❑ Escapement of pink salmon is not indexed except in a few systems incidental to monitoring for other species.
- ❑ Escapement goals have not been established for pink salmon in Upper Cook Inlet.

### ***Fisheries***

- ❑ Annual landings of pink salmon historically exceeded those of sockeye until the 1970s when sockeye numbers increased and pink markets began to fade.
- ❑ Total value of UCI pink salmon landings has dropped from a peak of over \$2 million per year in 1978 and 1980 to approximately \$70,000 in 2004 and \$175,000 in 2006.
- ❑ Pinks typically account for about 1% or less of the UCI commercial salmon ex-vessel value.
- ❑ Pink salmon prices have fallen as low as \$0.05/lb and were \$0.10/lb during the last couple years (\$0.36 per fish).
- ❑ Significant numbers of pinks continue to be harvested in sockeye target fisheries in the later part of July, particularly in the drift net fishery.
- ❑ Participation in the August pink fishery authorized by this plan has been very limited. In 2006, just 17,000 pinks were harvested during 3 periods (4% of the pink total for the year). In 2004, participation was practically nil on three open dates. In 2002, only four boats participated and only on the first period.
- ❑ Very low pink salmon values currently provide little incentive for commercial drifters to capitalize on pink salmon fishing opportunities afforded by this plan. In fact, low prices result in many drift gill netters actively avoiding harvest of pinks when other species are available (Fox and Shields 2003).
- ❑ Coho have comprised a significant portion of the salmon harvest in the special pink salmon drift fishery authorized by this plan. In 2004, one coho was harvested for every 0.4 pinks. In 2006, the ratio was one coho for every 5 pinks. Total coho numbers have not been high because effort has been low.

February 6, 2008

Matanuska Valley AC change suggestions for Upper Cook Inlet Fisheries:

Unanimously approved 14 -0 -0

1. Stock of Concern: Yentna / Susitna sockeye salmon on yield basis of Northern District Set Net Fishery. Develop action plan. Identify research projects. Secure funding.
2. Northern District Set net -- Eastern and General subdistricts fish every late June -- August 6 scheduled Monday and Thursday opening (with reduced net(s) when deemed necessary for conservation reasons by ADF&G manager). Some support from Eastside setnetters and Drifters.
3. Yentna / Susitna system sockeye salmon sport limit could be set to follow number of nets fished in the Northern District by Emergency order? or another option from Committee would be to set the limit at 3 sockeye daily for the season -- Matanuska Valley AC would suggest reducing this limit to 0 if Northern District set net fishery closed.
4. Central District Commercial -- Maintain season starting and ending dates. If Northern District set netters are allowed to fish (even with reduced net(s) then Central District commercial fisheries would be expected to more equally share in conservation burden for Yentna / Susitna sockeye as measured by the Bendix Sonar (or other Board approved methods). Since adoption of liberalized regulations in the Drift Fishery Management Plan at the 2005 BOF meeting increased allocation to the Drift fishery and seems to have a direct connection to reduced Yentna / Susitna sockeye escapements the Advisory Committee would suggest limiting the Drift fishery to the Kasilof and Kenai sections of the Upper subdistrict during at least one regular period between July 9 - 16 and then continuing the current practice of having then fish south of Kalgin Island for a couple following periods. Clarification for ADF&G management should be made that meeting lower end of Yentna sockeye goal has priority over exceeding upper end of late run Kenai or Kasilof River sockeye goals. Clarify which goal(s) in relation to the 3 tiered Kenai goals. Liberalization of Kasilof targeted commercial set net fishery as proposed by Kenai River Sport Fishing Association with some modification so that all commercial permit holders could participate in some manner outside of the terminal area. (consider addition of one day earlier to eastside beaches above Blanchard Line in exchange for EO day reduction the following week).

Adaptive management if failure to meet lower end Yentna / Susinta Sockeye Goal?

Reduce Yentna / Susitna sport fishery bag limit following year to match number of nets fished in Northern District set net fishery.

N. D. Set Net Reduced net(s) from previous year or one Monday or Thursday closure.

One additional regular drift period restricted to Kenai and Kasilof sections or closure following year.

East side set net -- reduced net (s) or one regular period closure.

Northern District Coho Salmon

August 7 - December 31 Northern District set netters remain at 2 regular periods per week. Emergency reduction/ closure and/or liberalizations, when necessary, determined by Deshka River Weir, Little Susitna River Weir, or other ADF&G coho escapement indicators. Number of nets / length for this portion of the season would match sport wild coho daily limit on East Susitna/ Knik Arm/ Anchorage Area Road system.

Northern District King Salmon Management Plan -- remain unchanged (except as with the past change in schedule -- one opening could be scheduled in May with two additional openings in June or all 3 openings could be scheduled in June -- the Northern District Setnetters Association could choose at the board meeting). Present area where regulation only allows one opening would remain unchanged.

#### Northern Sport King Salmon changes

1. Reduce Alexander Creek time and area to open each Saturday, Sunday, and Monday only through the season closure date and allow fishing up to the ADF&G marker within 1/4 mile of the mouth.
2. Deshka King salmon -- A. provide 24 hour fishery (subject to inseason change with Deshka River Weir) B. Provide season extension through July 31 when weir count exceeds midpoint of escapement range by July 10. C. Inform public by Feb. 1 of ADF&G preseason forecast/projection and regulation changes based on previous season weir data.

Central District Sport and Dipnet: Maintain present windows management to allow consistent and predictable harvest opportunity throughout the season length on Kenai and Kasilof Rivers. Adjust Kasilof River special harvest area management in conjunction with Liberalization of commercial Kasilof setnet fishery to allow more consistent and predictable harvest opportunity for dipnet fishery and for better inriver escapement of king salmon.

Consideration of how to harvest present in river surplus sockeye salmon: Past concession 36 rather than 48 hour window? See Bracketed Central District set net idea, 1 day drift commercial fishery with in mouth closure area -- scheduled as to minimize damage to window system - perhaps after the king salmon season AND where it would allow minimal impact on the dip net fishery. -- use harvest from a commercial opening to apportion in river sonar on even numbered years (sockeye/pinks)? Liberalization of Dipnet fishery - sport fishery through bag limit and seasons.

*Andy Couch*  
*Matanuska Valley AC*

Matanuska Valley AC comments to Committee D report Feb. 8, 2008

Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee supports the concept of liberalizing the Kenai and Kasilof personal use dip net fisheries through both added season length and increased bag and possession limits as a primary tool to harvest larger than desired escapements of sockeye salmon to both river systems. With that thought in mind, a suggested trigger for expanding the fishery could be when a minimum in river goal has been met and / or can be projected.

Since commercial fisheries have no catch limits, they are already allowed to catch more salmon during times of high abundance as their catch per effort increases, however, when warranted by large escapements it may also be necessary to increase commercial opportunity. Such an increase in commercial opportunity should only be allowed in a manner that will not endanger the Yentna / Susitna sockeye escapement goal or significantly disrupt the Kenai and Kasilof River dip net and sport fisheries.

Suggestions for such an expanded commercial opportunity include allowing a limited increased harvest in terminal areas-- but done in such a manner as to protect discreet salmon stocks and in river users as much as possible. An additional day of use of the current Kasilof terminal harvest and a one day opportunity for the commercial fleet to harvest within the two mile closed area at the mouth of the Kenai River could possibly harvest more sockeye salmon in that one day than any increases in dip net season or bag limit. If such a one day opportunity were to occur in early August (after the sport king salmon season closure and in such a manner as to not take away a dip netting window) impacts on other salmon stocks and in river users would be minimized. Since such an expanded opportunity would be conducted in a smaller terminal area after a significant portion of Northern bound salmon had an opportunity to pass through the Central District, impacts on Northern bound salmon stocks would also be lessened.

Thank You for your careful consideration of these suggestions,

*Andy Couch*

Andy Couch, Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee

Emergency Hours Used and Window Periods Implemented in the Upper Subdistrict Set Gillnet Fishery, 2004-2007

Year	Week	Emergency Hours		Notes	Windows		Notes	
		In Plan	Used		In Plan	Actual		
2004	6/20 - 6/26	48	48	season opened 6/25 based on 50,000	48	48	met by not fishing 6/20 - 6/24	
	6/27 - 7/3	48	48		48	48		
	7/4 - 7/10	48	48		48	48	Dept. petitioned BOF twice during season	
	7/11 - 7/17	36	36		48	48	single largest esc. day in Kasilof history on this window	
	7/18 - 7/24	60	60		36	12	window reduction approved through BOF petition	
	7/25 - 7/31	60	60		36	12	window reduction approved through BOF petition	
	8/1 - 8/7	24	84		additional hours approved by commissione	na	na	season closing date of 8/7 and only one 24 hr EO
2005	6/19 - 6/25	48	60		48	38		
	6/26 - 7/2	48	61		48	36		
	7/3 - 7/9	48	57		48	36		
	7/10 - 7/16	51	60		24	24	extra 9 hours used in Kasilof Section only	
	7/17 - 7/23	51	51		36	36	only 27 hour window in Kasilof Section	
					24	24		
	7/24 - 7/30	84	84		run size increased inseason	36	36	24-hour window not in effect on runs > 4 million
	7/31 - 8/6	84	79			36	36	
8/7 - 8/13	84	84		36	36			
2006	6/25 - 7/1	48	48		48	48		
	7/2 - 7/8	48	48		48	48		
	7/9 - 7/15	24+24	22		2 <sup>nd</sup> 24 hrs allowed in 1/2 mile fishery only	none		no mandatory windows in runs < 2 million
	7/16 - 7/22	24+24	48		all 48 hrs used in 1/2 mile fishery only	none		no mandatory windows in runs < 2 million
	7/23 - 7/29	24+24	0		KRSHA used extensively all of July	none		no mandatory windows in runs < 2 million
	7/30 - 8/5	24+24	54		commissioner allowed 30 hrs beyond plans	none		no mandatory windows in runs < 2 million
	8/6 - 8/11	51	51		Kenai run exceeds 2 million; plan changes	24	24	
2007	6/24 - 6/30	48	48		48	48		
	7/1 - 7/7	48	25		48	48		
	7/8 - 7/14	51	25		24	24		
					36	36		
	7/15 - 7/21	51	41		24	24	21 of EO hours in Kasilof Section only	
					36	36	10 hrs fished during window in Kasilof 1/2 mile	
	7/22 - 7/28	51	51		24	24		
					36	36	12 hrs fished during window in Kasilof 1/2 mile	
7/29 - 8/4	51	39	24	24				
			36	36				
8/5 - 8/11	51	51	24	24				
			36	36				

20148

KPFA  
Submitted by  
Christine Brandt  
RC 149

**Presentation:** 30 Years of Limited Entry

**Event:** *Alaska's Fishing Communities: Harvesting the Future*, a conference sponsored by NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, September 21-22, 2006, Anchorage

**Presenter:** Frank Homan, Chairman, State of Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission

Several early attempts at fishery limitation occurred in the 1960s. Each ran into the Alaska Constitution provision of *No Exclusive Right of Fishery*, Article VIII, Section 15. In 1972, the people of Alaska voted to amend the State Constitution to allow for a restriction on entry to Alaska's fisheries for certain purposes: conservation, prevention of economic distress, and promotion of aquaculture. The amended section reads as follows (amendment underlined).

*"No exclusive right or special privilege of fishery shall be created or authorized in the natural waters of the State. This section does not restrict the power of the State to limit entry into any fishery for purposes of resource conservation, to prevent economic distress among fishermen and those dependent upon them for a livelihood and to promote the efficient development of aquaculture in the State."*

The Limited Entry law was enacted in 1973. Some key features of the program were to 1) require issuance to natural persons only, 2) prohibit permit leasing, 3) prevent the use of permits as collateral for loans, and 4) allow for free transferability. The Limited Entry law also defined entry permits as a use-privilege that can be modified by the legislature without compensation. Free transferability has resulted in maintaining high percentages of residents within Alaska's fisheries and has been upheld by Alaska's Supreme Court. Permit holders are free to transfer their permits to family members or any other individual who is able to participate in the fishery by means of gift, inheritance or sale.

Through 2005, a total of 16,264 limited entry permits have been issued in 65 fisheries. Over 80 percent of permits issued were initially issued to Alaska residents. As of year-end 2005, there were 14,536 remaining entry permits. Between initial issuance and the end of 2005, 1,728 had been eliminated, primarily due to cancellation of non-transferable permits (non-transferable salmon hand troll permits account for over 1,000). Distribution of permits at year-end 2005 was as follows:

- 23% held by nonresidents,
- 38% held by rural Alaskans who live in the area of their permit fishery,
- 6% held by rural Alaskans who live in an area that is not local to their permit fishery,
- 24% held by Alaskans who live in an urban community local to their permit fishery, and
- 9% held by Alaskans who live in an urban community that is not local to their permit fishery.

This distribution has changed over time. Total permit holdings by nonresidents has risen since initial issuance. The reason is mainly due to migration (Alaskan permit holders moving out of state), however, and not permit sales from Alaskans to non-Alaskans. Permit holdings by nonresidents have declined as the net result of transfer activity by nearly 100 permits since initial allocation.

The most significant decline in permit holdings among Alaska resident types is from rural Alaskan permit holders living in an area local to their fishery (ARLs). Migrations of permit holders within and outside Alaska have led to a net decline in permit holdings by rural and urban Alaskans local to their fishery. Permit holdings of ARLs have also declined due to net transfer activity. Total permit holdings by ARLs have declined by 605 permits due to net transfer activity, 728 as the net result of migration, and 600 due to cancellation. However, of all permits held by Alaskans, Alaska rural residents hold more than 50%.

Across all years and fisheries, permits have been transferred at a rate of 9%. The annual transfer rate has ranged from 6% to 13%, with lower rates in recent years and higher rates in earlier years of Limited Entry. According to 1980 through 2005 Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission transfer survey data, nearly 50% of those permits that have transferred to rural Alaskans local to their fishery have been transferred as gifts. Approximately 50% of transfers to rural Alaskans local to their fishery are from immediate family. The same resident type has received only 45% of their permit transfers through sales. All other resident types have received their permits as gifts at a rate of 27-29% and through a sale type transaction at a rate of 65-67%. Of those permits sold to Alaskans, 27% (2,836) have been financed by state authorized lenders. This is an option only available to Alaska residents, and it has clearly been helpful to Alaskan fishermen purchasing permits.

A finer breakdown of permit holdings within Alaska shows the highest numbers of permits were issued to fishers residing in the following locations: Ketchikan, Anchorage, Juneau, Cordova, Petersburg, Kodiak, Sitka, Wrangell, Togiak, and Dillingham. Over time there has been little change in the communities holding the highest number of entry permits. As of year-end 2005, the list of communities with the highest number of permits is roughly the same. Homer is now in the top ten communities, replacing Dillingham.

Some communities have had large declines in permit holdings due to cancellation, migration, or transfer. Communities with the greatest decline of permits (a decrease more than 100 permits) are Ketchikan, Juneau, Cordova, and Dillingham. Increases in permit holdings have occurred at the highest level (more than 100 permits) in Homer, Kasilof, Petersburg, and Wasilla.

Communities with the highest number of permits per capita are Elfin Cove, Point Baker, Meyers Chuck, Ugashik, Togiak, Kasilof, Nelson Lagoon, and South Naknek. Residents in each of these communities held a total number of permits summing to more than 30 percent of the community's 2000 US Census population.



The Limited Entry law has withstood constitutional challenges despite severe constitutional constraints. Limited Entry has been beneficial to Alaska's fisheries in several ways. Implementation of Limited Entry protected Alaska's fisheries from an influx of new fishermen from West Coast fisheries where fishing opportunities have been severely reduced by court decisions and stock conditions. Net economic benefits have accrued that may not have existed under open access.

Despite the successes, the program has many limitations. Traditional Limited Entry was designed for Alaska's salmon fisheries which are characterized by owner/operator participants and escapement goal management. The system has been less useful in the context of fisheries managed through guideline harvest levels or quota. If fishermen would like to develop different types of programs to better fit their fisheries, legislation will be needed to allow for implementation.

As refinements are explored, fishermen need to be aware of legal constraints on options. Several Alaska Supreme Court decisions enforce equal protection and equal access clauses of the State Constitution. In particular, *Ostrosky* (1983) and *Johns* (1988) provide the primary governing principle for the limited entry system as follows:

*"[T]o be constitutional, a limited entry system should impinge as little as possible on the open fishery clauses consistent with the constitutional purposes of limited entry, namely, prevention of economic distress to fishermen and resource conservation."*

A recent case of significant importance is the *Grunert* (2005) decision, in which the court states that allowing persons who are not actually fishing to benefit from the fishery resource is "inconsistent with the Limited Entry Act's purpose and policy." And finally, *Enserch* (1989) and *McDowell* (1989) decisions point to the strength of the equal protection and equal access clauses of Alaska's Constitution. The Court has held that discrimination, for or against people, on the basis of where they live is not permissible.

Brent Johnson  
Submitted by  
Christine Koski  
RC 150

February 8, 2008

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Board of Fisheries  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

**Subject: Proposals 170, 173 and 182**

Chairman Morris,

The authors of the above proposals would like to amend and to condense their proposals for deliberative consideration.

The "advisors" of committee "C" relayed a consensus of support for melding of the proposals and to the purpose of the proposals.

Support from individual groups for each proposal;

170 - Kenai/Soldotna AC (12-0), UCIDA  
173 - Anchorage AC, UCIDA, KPFA  
182 - KPFA

Suggested language would be amended to:

**5 AAC 21.365 Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan (f)**

The Kasilof section (244-31,244-22,244-21), shall open at minimum as designated in (f) (1) when the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area (KRSHA) opens by emergency order. Area outside of KRSHA will comply with **5 AAC 21.335 Minimum distance between units of gear.**

This regulation does not in any way restrict the department in using any area within the established distance in 5 AAC 21.365 (c) (3).

This proposal is not intended to interfere with attaining the minimum goals as defined in 5 AAC 21.360 or in exceeding the top end of the goal defined in 5 AAC 21.365.

Authors:	Proposal 170	<u>Paul A. Shadura</u>	Paul Shadura
	Proposal 173	<u>Joel Doner</u>	Joel Doner
	Proposal 182	<u>Brent Johnson</u>	Brent Johnson

Motion to amend Proposal #321.

Kenai Profession Guide Association is proposing to amend proposal 321 requesting three Sundays in May or June for charitable events. Currently there are two Sundays available by regulation B57.140 in May for charitable events. At this time one Sunday in May is used for the "Take a kid fishing day" charitable event. KRPGA would like to use an additional Sunday in May and June for events such as the Wounded Warrior or Kenai River Festival.

# STATE OF ALASKA

## DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

RC 152  
SARAH PALIN, GOVERNOR

P.O. BOX 115526  
JUNEAU, AK 99811-5526  
PHONE: (907) 465-4100  
FAX: (907) 465-2332

February 4, 2008

The Honorable Bill Thomas  
Alaska House of Representatives  
Mailstop 3100  
State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Thomas:

The enclosed list of projects is in response to your January 17, 2008, request for "a list of research, enhancement, and infrastructure projects for the Mat-Su region" that would allow effective management of salmon in the area and provide answers to many of the frequently asked questions. A similar request was made by Representative Johnson at the December 27, 2007, House Finance Fish and Game Subcommittee hearing in Palmer. Details of the projects including line item budgets by year are also attached.

The high priority projects listed here would provide information important for management of sockeye, chum, coho, and Chinook salmon in the Susitna River, Little Susitna River, and Fish Creek watersheds. We focused our attention on these watersheds because they represent the major salmon producing and recreation areas in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough. The annual costs for these projects are projected out over a five year period. A number of these projects, such as the weirs and smolt counts really need to be run well beyond five years in order to provide full value. Please note also that two of these projects, the Susitna fish passage restoration and Little Susitna chum salmon spawner distribution could be completed earlier than five years.

Please feel free to contact either John Hilsinger (907-465-4210) or Charlie Swanton (907-465-4180) with any questions you may have regarding these projects.

Sincerely,



Denby S. Lloyd  
Commissioner

Enclosures

cc: Karen Rehfeld, Director, Office of Management and Budget, Office of the Governor

**Table 1. Summary of fishery projects proposed for the Mat-Su Area**

Project <sup>1</sup>	Thousands of Dollars					
	FY 09	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	Total
Susitna River sockeye salmon major system weirs	\$236.0	\$171.6	\$171.6	\$171.6	\$186.3	\$937.1
Susitna River Sockeye salmon additional system weirs	\$236.0	\$171.6	\$171.6	\$171.6	\$186.3	\$937.1
Susitna River sockeye salmon major system smolt production	\$193.3	\$171.6	\$171.6	\$171.6	\$186.3	\$894.4
Susitna River Sockeye salmon additional system smolt production	\$193.3	\$171.6	\$171.6	\$171.6	\$186.3	\$894.4
Fish Creek Sockeye salmon production	\$65.4	\$65.4	\$65.4	\$65.4	\$65.4	\$327.0
Susitna River coho and chum salmon distribution	\$276.7	\$450.3	\$467.6	\$484.9	\$502.2	\$2,181.7
Susitna River Chinook Salmon distribution	\$273.0	\$394.1	\$409.3	\$424.4	\$439.6	\$1,940.4
Little Susitna River weir inseason assessment	\$98.0	\$51.8	\$53.3	\$54.9	\$56.6	\$314.6
Susitna River fish passage restoration (3-year project)	\$215.0	\$365.0	\$365.0	\$0	\$0	\$945.0
Little Susitna River chum salmon escapement	\$13.2	\$13.6	\$14.0	\$14.4	\$14.9	\$70.1
Little Susitna River chum salmon spawner distribution (4-year project)	\$126.0	\$121.3	\$124.9	\$128.7	\$0	\$500.9
Total	\$1,925.9	\$2,147.9	\$2,185.9	\$1,859.1	\$1,823.9	\$9,942.7

<sup>1</sup> All projects are five years duration unless otherwise noted.

**MAT-SU REGION SALMON PROJECT DETAIL**  
**Fiscal Years 2009 through 2013**

**PROJECT: SUSITNA RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON MAJOR SYSTEM ADULT WEIRS**

Location: Susitna River watershed

Primary Objective: To estimate the abundance of sockeye salmon spawners entering 7 major rearing lakes in the Susitna River watershed.

Description: Adult weirs will be collaboratively operated by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association on 7 major sockeye salmon rearing lakes (Chelatna, Shell, Byers, Swan, Larson, Stephan, and Judd lakes) in the Susitna River watershed to estimate spawner abundance. ADF&G will provide a crew leader at each weir, and CIAA will provide college interns. The age, sex, and length composition of the adult sockeye salmon escapement will be estimated at each weir from samples collected each day. Environmental conditions will also be measured each day, i.e. percent cloud cover, precipitation (nearest mm), stream and air temperature. Sockeye salmon spawner abundance estimates will be used to (1) evaluate the accuracy of sockeye salmon escapement estimates from the Yentna River sonar project, (2) help set escapement goals, and (3) estimate freshwater production of sockeye salmon in the watershed (in conjunction with smolt production estimates).

Duration: Five years

Line Item Budget:

<b>Susitna R. sockeye salmon major system adult weirs</b>						
<b>Line Item</b>	<b>FY 09</b>	<b>FY 10</b>	<b>FY 11</b>	<b>FY 12</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>Total</b>
100 Personnel	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$545.0
200 Travel	\$9.9	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9.9
300 Contractual	\$68.7	\$50.6	\$50.6	\$50.6	\$65.3	\$285.8
400 Supplies	\$48.4	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$96.4
500 Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$236.0</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$186.3</b>	<b>\$937.1</b>

**PROJECT: SUSITNA RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON ADDITIONAL SYSTEM ADULT WEIRS**

Location: Susitna River watershed

Primary Objective: To estimate the abundance of sockeye salmon spawners entering 7 additional rearing lakes in the Susitna River watershed.

Description: Adult weirs will be collaboratively operated by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) on 7 additional sockeye salmon rearing lakes (Whiskey, Hewitt, Lockwood, Trapper, Red Shirt, Spink, and Trinity lakes) in the Susitna River watershed to estimate spawner abundance. ADF&G will provide a crew leader at each weir, and CIAA will provide college interns. The age, sex, and length composition of the adult sockeye salmon escapement will be estimated at each weir from samples collected each day. Environmental conditions will also be measured each day, i.e. percent cloud cover, precipitation (nearest mm), stream and air temperature. Sockeye salmon spawner abundance estimates will be used to (1) evaluate the accuracy of sockeye salmon escapement estimates from the Yentna sonar project, (2) help set escapement goals, and (3) estimate freshwater production of sockeye salmon in the watershed (in conjunction with smolt production estimates).

Duration: Five years

Line Item Budget:

<b>Susitna River sockeye salmon additional system adult weirs</b>						
<b>Line Item</b>	<b>FY 09</b>	<b>FY 10</b>	<b>FY 11</b>	<b>FY 12</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>Total</b>
100 Personnel	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$545.0
200 Travel	\$9.9	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$9.9
300 Contractual	\$68.7	\$50.5	\$50.5	\$50.5	\$65.2	\$285.8
400 Supplies	\$48.3	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$96.4
500 Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$236.0</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$186.3</b>	<b>\$937.1</b>

**PROJECT: SUSITNA RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON MAJOR SYSTEM SMOLT PRODUCTION**

Location: Susitna River watershed

Primary Objective: To estimate the abundance of sockeye salmon smolts emigrating from 7 major rearing lakes in the Susitna River watershed.

Description: The abundance of sockeye salmon smolts emigrating from 7 major sockeye salmon rearing lakes (Chelatna, Shell, Byers, Swan, Larson, Stephan, and Judd lakes) in the Susitna River watershed will be collaboratively estimated by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association. ADF&G will provide a crew leader at each site, and CIAA will provide college interns. Fyke nets will be operated from late May through June at 13 of the lakes. At these lakes, all smolts will be directed into a live box by wings extending from the shoreline to the front of the fyke trap providing a total smolt enumeration. At Chelatna Lake, three inclined-plane traps will be operated from late May through August, and smolt population size will be estimated using standard mark-recapture techniques. Age, weight and length of smolts will be estimated from samples collected daily at each site. Smolt abundance estimates will be used to (1) forecast adult returns, and (2) estimate freshwater production of sockeye salmon in the watershed (in conjunction with adult escapement estimates).

Duration: Five years

Line Item Budget:

<b>Susitna River sockeye salmon major system smolt production</b>						
<b>Line Item</b>	<b>FY 09</b>	<b>FY 10</b>	<b>FY 11</b>	<b>FY 12</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>Total</b>
100 Personnel	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$545.0
200 Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
300 Contractual	\$65.3	\$50.6	\$50.6	\$50.6	\$65.3	\$282.4
400 Supplies	\$19.0	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$67.0
500 Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$193.3</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$186.3</b>	<b>\$894.4</b>



**PROJECT: SUSITNA RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON ADDITIONAL SYSTEM SMOLT PRODUCTION**

Location: Susitna River watershed

Primary Objective: To estimate the abundance of sockeye salmon smolts emigrating from 7 additional rearing lakes in the Susitna River watershed.

Description: The abundance of sockeye salmon smolts emigrating from 7 additional sockeye salmon rearing lakes (Whiskey, Hewitt, Lockwood, Trapper, Red Shirt, Spink, and Trinity lakes) in the Susitna River watershed will be collaboratively estimated by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association. ADF&G will provide a crew leader at each site, and CIAA will provide college interns. Fyke nets will be operated from late May through June at these lakes. All smolts will be directed into a live box by wings extending from the shoreline to the front of the fyke trap providing a total smolt enumeration. Age, weight and length of smolts will be estimated from samples collected daily at each site. Smolt abundance estimates will be used to (1) forecast adult returns, and (2) estimate freshwater production of sockeye salmon in the watershed (in conjunction with adult escapement estimates).

Duration: Five years

Line Item Budget:

<b>Susitna River sockeye salmon additional system smolt production</b>						
<b>Line Item</b>	<b>FY 09</b>	<b>FY 10</b>	<b>FY 11</b>	<b>FY 12</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>Total</b>
100 Personnel	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$109.0	\$545.0
200 Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
300 Contractual	\$65.3	\$50.6	\$50.6	\$50.6	\$65.3	\$282.4
400 Supplies	\$19.0	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$12.0	\$67.0
500 Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$193.3</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$171.6</b>	<b>\$186.3</b>	<b>\$894.4</b>

**PROJECT: FISH CREEK SOCKEYE SALMON PRODUCTION**

Location: Fish Creek in Knik Arm

Primary Objective: To estimate the freshwater production of sockeye salmon in the Fish Creek watershed and determine limits to production.

Description: This project will estimate the freshwater production of sockeye salmon in the Fish Creek watershed from potential egg deposition to smolt over a five year period. An adult weir, currently operated on Fish Creek, will provide estimates of spawner abundance, as well as, age, sex, and length composition of the escapement. Otoliths will be collected from the escapement to estimate hatchery contribution. Limnological samples will be collected monthly from May through September each year to estimate the rearing potential of Big Lake. Measured parameters will include water temperature, dissolved oxygen, light penetration, nutrients, phytoplankton and zooplankton density and species composition. Hydroacoustic and tow net surveys will be conducted in September to estimate the sockeye salmon fry abundance in Big Lake. Tow netting with a mid-water trawl will be conducted in conjunction with acoustic surveys at night to estimate the species composition of ensonified targets, the mean size of each species of juvenile fish and the age composition of juvenile sockeye salmon in the lake. The abundance of sockeye salmon smolts emigrating from the watershed will be estimated by Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association using a fyke net. All smolts will be directed into the live box by wings extending from the shoreline to the front of the fyke trap providing a total smolt enumeration. Otoliths will be collected from a sample of fall fry and smolts to estimate hatchery contribution. Fall fry and smolt samples will be analyzed at the ADF&G pathology laboratory to estimate the incidence of disease and parasites in juveniles. Fall fry samples will also be analyzed to estimate the occurrence of enzymes produced when the fish are exposed to hydrocarbons. Project results will be used to (1) estimate survival from potential egg deposition to smolt, (2) evaluate limits to sockeye salmon production and identify potential restoration actions, (3) help set an escapement goal, and (4) forecast adult returns.

Duration: Five years.

Line Item Budget:

<b>Fish Creek sockeye salmon production</b>						
<b>Line Item</b>	<b>FY 09</b>	<b>FY 10</b>	<b>FY 11</b>	<b>FY 12</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>Total</b>
100 Personnel	\$27.4	\$27.4	\$27.4	\$27.4	\$27.4	137.0
200 Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
300 Contractual	\$34.2	\$34.2	\$34.2	\$34.2	\$34.2	\$171.0
400 Supplies	\$3.8	\$3.8	\$3.8	\$3.8	\$3.8	\$19.0
500 Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$65.4</b>	<b>\$65.4</b>	<b>\$65.4</b>	<b>\$65.4</b>	<b>\$65.4</b>	<b>\$327.0</b>

**PROJECT: SUSITNA RIVER COHO AND CHUM SALMON DISTRIBUTION**

Location: Susitna River watershed

**Primary Objective:** To estimate the spawning distribution and stock composition of coho and chum salmon in the Susitna River watershed.

**Description:** Four fish wheels will be operated at Flathorn (Susitna River kilometer 31) each year to capture and apply radio tags to coho (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) and chum (*O. keta*) salmon. Salmon will be captured and tagged throughout the day for the duration of the run (July through mid-September) to account for differential migration timing. Tags will be deployed based on individual fish wheel catch rates to account for differential catchability. The age, sex, and length composition of the adult coho and chum salmon escapement will be estimated from samples collected each day. Tissue samples will also be collected for genetic baseline development. Radio tagged salmon will be tracked using a fixed-wing aircraft multiple times throughout the season. Coho and chum salmon distribution estimates will be used to 1) better understand coho and chum salmon spawning distribution in the Susitna River watershed, and 2) evaluate stock composition of escapements throughout the Susitna watershed.

**Duration:** Five years

**Line Item Budget:**

Susitna River coho and chum salmon distribution						
Line Item	FY 09	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	Total
100 Personnel	\$66.5	\$230.6	\$239.5	\$248.3	\$257.2	\$1,042.0
200 Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
300 Contractual	\$0	\$47.0	\$48.8	\$50.6	\$52.4	\$198.9
400 Supplies	\$174.2	\$172.7	\$179.3	\$186.0	\$192.6	\$904.8
500 Equipment	\$36.0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$36.0
Total Cost	\$276.7	\$450.3	\$467.6	\$484.9	\$502.2	\$2,181.7

**PROJECT: SUSITNA RIVER CHINOOK SALMON DISTRIBUTION**

Location: Susitna River watershed

Primary Objective: To estimate the spawning distribution and stock composition of Chinook salmon in the Susitna River watershed.

Description: Drift gillnets will be used at Flathorn (Susitna River kilometer 31) each year to capture and apply radio tags to Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*). Chinook salmon will be captured and tagged for the duration of the run (May through July) to account for differential migration timing. Tags will be deployed based on relative abundance among channels and fishing sites to account for differential catchability. The age, sex, and length composition of the adult Chinook salmon escapement will be estimated from samples collected each day. Tissue samples will also be collected for genetic baseline development. Radio tagged salmon will be tracked using a fixed-wing aircraft multiple times throughout the season. Chinook salmon distribution estimates will be used to 1) better understand Chinook salmon spawning distribution in the Susitna River watershed, and 2) evaluate stock composition of escapements throughout the Susitna watershed.

Duration: Five years

Line Item Budget:

<b>Susitna River Chinook salmon distribution</b>						
<b>Line Item</b>	<b>FY 09</b>	<b>FY 10</b>	<b>FY 11</b>	<b>FY 12</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>Total</b>
100 Personnel	\$105.7	\$230.6	\$239.5	\$248.3	\$257.2	\$1,081.2
200 Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
300 Contractual	\$2.0	\$47.0	\$48.8	\$50.6	\$52.4	\$200.9
400 Supplies	\$129.3	\$116.5	\$121.0	\$125.5	\$130.0	\$622.3
500 Equipment	\$36.0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$36.0
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$273.0</b>	<b>\$394.1</b>	<b>\$409.3</b>	<b>\$424.4</b>	<b>\$439.6</b>	<b>\$1,940.4</b>

**PROJECT: LITTLE SUSITNA RIVER WEIR INSEASON ASSESSMENT**

Location: Little Susitna River watershed

Primary Objective: To count the coho salmon escapement and obtain a partial count of chum salmon escapement into the Little Susitna River.

Description: A weir to count coho salmon currently operates on the Little Susitna River at river kilometer 115. The weir is too far upstream to provide data for inseason assessment of run strength. Previously, the weir was operated at river kilometer 51 but was moved to river kilometer 115 at the public's request. However, weir counts at river kilometer 115 are too late for inseason management and it is not certain what proportion of the coho and chum salmon escapements spawn below river kilometer 115. The weir will be moved back to river kilometer 51 to remedy these concerns. The change in location will require a wider weir (spanning larger stream channel) and a remote field camp. Additional staffing will be required to accommodate the heavy boat traffic at river kilometer 51.

Duration: Five years

Line Item Budget: The table below shows only the additional funds needed to operate the weir at river kilometer 51, the balance will be derived using existing project funds currently expended at the existing river kilometer 115 site.

<b>Little Susitna River weir inseason assessment</b>						
<b>Line Item</b>	<b>FY 09</b>	<b>FY 10</b>	<b>FY 11</b>	<b>FY 12</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>Total</b>
100 Personnel	\$69.9	\$44.4	\$45.7	\$47.1	\$48.5	\$255.6
200 Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
300 Contractual	\$1.7	\$1.8	\$1.8	\$1.8	\$1.9	\$9.0
400 Supplies	\$18.4	\$5.6	\$5.8	\$6.0	\$6.2	\$42.0
500 Equipment	\$8.0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8.0
Total Cost	\$98.0	\$51.8	\$53.3	\$54.9	\$56.6	\$314.6

**PROJECT: SUSITNA RIVER FISH PASSAGE RESTORATION**

Location: Lower Susitna River watershed

Primary Objective: To restore and improve salmonid access to upstream spawning and rearing habitats in the lower Susitna River.

Description: In the lower Susitna River watershed, improving salmon habitat is one management strategy to enhance salmon resource values. This project would reestablish upstream access to historically occupied salmonid habitats in the project area by removing culvert barriers or other in-stream obstructions. As many as 10 upstream fish passage barriers will be identified, prioritized according to cost-benefit analyses of fishery values and project costs, and upstream access improved and restored. During construction and after the fish passage restoration projects have been completed, an established monitoring protocol will be used to track individual restoration project performance.

Duration: Three years

Line Item Budget:

<b>Susitna River fish passage restoration</b>						
<b>Line Item</b>	<b>FY 09</b>	<b>FY 10</b>	<b>FY 11</b>	<b>FY 12</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>Total</b>
100 Personnel	\$150.0	\$75.0	\$75.0	\$0	\$0	\$300.0
200 Travel	\$20.0	\$10.0	\$10.0	\$0	\$0	\$40.0
300 Contractual	\$15.0	\$200.0	\$200.0	\$0	\$0	\$415.0
400 Supplies	\$10.0	\$75.0	\$75.0	\$0	\$0	\$160.0
500 Equipment	\$20.0	\$5.0	\$5.0	\$0	\$0	\$30.0
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$215.0</b>	<b>\$365.0</b>	<b>\$365.0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$945.0</b>

**PROJECT: LITTLE SUSITNA CHUM SALMON ESCAPEMENT**

Location: Little Susitna River watershed

Primary Objective: To count the escapement of chum salmon in the Little Susitna River.

Description: The total escapement of chum salmon into the Little Susitna River is currently not assessed. A weir used to count the escapement of coho salmon into the Little Susitna River is installed in late July, which provides only a partial count of the chum salmon escapement. This project would initiate weir activities on approximately July 10 to count the entire chum salmon escapement. Age, sex, and length data will also be collected from chum salmon.

Duration: Five years

Line Item Budget: The table below depicts funds necessary to extend the duration of the existing counting weir.

<b>Little Susitna River chum salmon escapement</b>						
<b>Line Item</b>	<b>FY 09</b>	<b>FY 10</b>	<b>FY 11</b>	<b>FY 12</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>Total</b>
100 Personnel	\$9.4	\$9.7	\$10.0	\$10.3	\$10.6	\$50.0
200 Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2.7	\$2.8	\$5.5
300 Contractual	\$2.5	\$2.6	\$2.6	\$0	\$0	\$7.7
400 Supplies	\$1.3	\$1.3	\$1.4	\$1.4	\$1.5	\$6.9
500 Equipment	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$13.2</b>	<b>\$13.6</b>	<b>\$14.0</b>	<b>\$14.4</b>	<b>\$14.9</b>	<b>\$70.1</b>

**PROJECT: LITTLE SUSITNA RIVER CHUM SALMON SPAWNER DISTRIBUTION**

Location: Little Susitna River watershed

Primary Objective: To estimate the distribution of spawning chum salmon in the Little Susitna River.

Description: The distribution and locations of spawning habitat for chum salmon in the Little Susitna River is not well documented. To better understand where chum salmon spawn, adult chum salmon will be captured in the lower Little Susitna River and marked with a radio tag. Tagged fish will be monitored throughout the spawning season. Mobile tracking will be done by boat and aircraft to identify and define important spawning areas. Two stationary monitoring sites, one each at river kilometer 51 and 115, would provide the distribution of spawners relative to these locations. These locations are the former and current locations, respectively, of a weir used to assess coho salmon and partial assessment of chum salmon escapement.

Duration: Four years

Line Item Budget:

<b>Little Susitna River chum salmon spawner distribution</b>						
<b>Line Item</b>	<b>FY 09</b>	<b>FY 10</b>	<b>FY 11</b>	<b>FY 12</b>	<b>FY 13</b>	<b>Total</b>
100 Personnel	\$60.3	\$91.6	\$94.4	\$97.2	\$0	\$343.5
200 Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
300 Contractual	\$3.0	\$3.4	\$3.5	\$3.6	\$0	\$13.5
400 Supplies	\$31.7	\$26.3	\$27.0	\$27.9	\$0	\$112.9
500 Equipment	\$31.0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$31.0
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>\$126.0</b>	<b>\$121.3</b>	<b>\$124.9</b>	<b>\$128.7</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$500.9</b>



RC 153

February 8, 2008

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Board of Fisheries  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Submitted by  
Dwight Kramer  
Rowland Maw  
Paul A. Shadura II

**Subject: Proposal 206**

Chairman Morris,

The intentions of this ADF&G proposal is to give relief to the sport fishing public in the event of low returns of Late Kenai River run sockeye. The bag and possession limit reduction of 3 to 1 would still impact achieving the minimum in river goal currently set at 650k. In runs of less than 2 million, the in-river harvest will be greatly reduced.

Harvest efficiency could be in the low teens. Certainly with low concentrations of sockeye entering the River the CPUE will be very low.

We understand the burden of conservation when the yields are diminished and believe that the leniency of this proposal should also include relief for the commercial fishery.

Amendments to this proposal would say:

**5 AAC 21.360 (c) (1) (A), (h)**

(A) the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of [650,000] 600,000 - 850,000 sockeye past the sonar counter at river mile 19; and

(h) If the projected inriver goal of sockeye salmon is less than [650,000] 600,000 and the inriver sport harvest is projected to result in an escapement below the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, reduce the bag and possession limit for sockeye salmon in the sport fishery, as specified in 75.003 (1)(A)

Submitted By:

Kenai Area Fisherman's Coalition Dwight Kramer Dwight Kramer

United Cook Inlet Drift Association Rowland Maw Rowland Maw

Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association Paul A. Shadura Paul Shadura

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH & GAME**



**PRELIMINARY DRAFT OF SUSITNA  
SOCKEYE SALMON ACTION PLAN**

(to be discussed if BOF determines the stock meets the  
criteria as stated in the SSFP)

February 8, 2008

# DRAFT

## SUSITNA RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON STOCK STATUS AND ACTION PLAN, 2008

### INTRODUCTION

#### SYNOPSIS

In response to the guidelines established in the Sustainable Salmon Fisheries Policy (SSFP; 5 AAC 39.222), the Board of Fisheries has identified the Susitna River sockeye salmon stock as a stock of yield concern. For this determination, the estimated Susitna River commercial harvest for the most recent 5-year average was compared to the previous 10- and 20-year averages for the Central District drift and Northern District fisheries. Identification of Susitna River sockeye salmon as a stock of yield concern is based on the definition of “yield concern” contained in SSFP. A “yield concern” is defined as “a concern arising from a chronic inability, despite the use of specific management measures, to maintain expected yields, or harvestable surpluses, above a stock’s escapement needs; a yield concern is less severe than a management concern, which is less severe than a conservation concern” [5 AAC 39.222 (f) (42)]. The policy defines “chronic inability” as “the continuing or anticipated inability to meet escapement thresholds over a four to five year period, which is approximately the generation time of most salmon species” [5 AAC 39.222 (f) (5)].

This report describes the existing management plans and Emergency Order authority that the department follows to conserve Susitna River sockeye salmon. In addition to the existing management plans, options have been presented regarding management of the Northern District set gillnet fishery and Susitna River sport fishery. In light of increased uncertainty of the department’s ability to accurately assess escapements of sockeye salmon into the Susitna River, a research plan has been developed to improve the department’s ability to assess sockeye salmon stocks within the drainage. With these ongoing studies, the department will have better information on the productivity and sustainability of the stock at the 2011 Upper Cook Inlet Board of Fisheries meeting.

#### STOCK ASSESSMENT

Since 1981 the Yentna River daily sonar estimates have been used as an indicator of sockeye salmon escapement into the Susitna River drainage. The sockeye salmon escapement in the Yentna River has been thought to be approximately one half of the total Susitna River sockeye salmon escapement based on a combination of 1981–1985 capture-recapture abundance estimates passing Sunshine (1982-1985; Susitna River rkm 116), and sonar abundance estimates passing Yentna (1981-1985; Yentna River rkm 7) and Susitna Station (1981; Susitna River rkm 116; Westerman and Willette 2006).

Based on Bendix sonar estimates since 1981, the number of Yentna River spawners has ranged from approximately 37,000 to 181,000 sockeye salmon. The sonar estimate of sockeye salmon escapement into the Yentna River has not met the current SEG range of 90,000 to 160,000 for 5 of the past 8 years.

Although sockeye salmon escapements are estimated via a Bendix sonar system, there is great uncertainty surrounding their accuracy and precision. The high variability observed between

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various methods of escapement assessment (i.e., ongoing Bendix estimates compared with recent estimates from capture-recapture and DIDSON sonar projects; Yanusz et al. 2007) has added to the uncertainty regarding our previous assessments.

In the Central District drift gillnet fishery, the estimated commercial harvest of Susitna River sockeye salmon for the most recent 5-year average (2003–2007) is 59% of the previous 10-year (1993–2002) average and 49% of the previous 20-year (1983–2002) average. In the Northern District, the most recent 5-year average is 31% of the previous 10-year average and 22% of the previous 20-year average. Since the total Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) commercial harvest averages 2.9 million sockeye salmon and the age composition allocation model estimate of the Susitna sockeye salmon harvest is only 8.4% of the total, the department has low confidence in the accuracy of our estimate of the Susitna sockeye salmon harvest.

## ESCAPEMENT GOAL HISTORY

An escapement goal of 200,000 sockeye salmon was established for the Susitna River in 1979. It was set using a return-per-spawner value of 4, and an assumption that the Susitna River could produce about 800,000 adult sockeye salmon. A review of the goal in 1989 based on euphotic volume of rearing lakes suggested the existing goal was valid. In 1986, the sonar site at Susitna Station was destroyed by a flood, and no alternative hydroacoustic site could be found on the mainstem of the Susitna. Therefore, hydroacoustic estimates from a Yentna River site were used to assess total Susitna River escapement. Based on comparisons of estimates for the Yentna and the Susitna Rivers over 5 years, 1981–1985, it was decided that an escapement of 100,000 to 150,000 sockeye salmon into the Yentna River should result in a total escapement of at least 200,000 sockeye salmon into the entire Susitna drainage (Fried 1994). This was based on the average proportion of the total Susitna River escapement, which entered the Yentna River (49%) during the 5 years studied, as well as the range of annual proportions (41–59%) for these 5 years.

In 2001, the biological escapement goal for the Yentna River was changed to a sustainable escapement goal of 90,000–160,000 sockeye salmon based on Yentna sonar data from 1981–2000, because reliable estimates of total return to the system were not available (Bue and Hasbrouck *Unpublished*). Escapement goal reviews since 2001 have resulted in no change recommended to this goal type or range (Hasbrouck and Edmundson 2007, Fair et al. 2007). In 2005, an optimal escapement goal of 75,000–180,000 Yentna River sockeye salmon was adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries contingent on the sockeye salmon run to the Kenai River being projected to exceed 4 million.

## ACTION PLAN FOR ADDRESSING STOCK OF CONCERN

### MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

#### Commercial Fisheries

There are currently no actions in the Central District Upper Subdistrict (Eastside) set gillnet fishery for the conservation of northern bound salmon stocks. However, in the Northern District set gillnet fishery, the department's primary tools to reduce exploitation on Susitna stocks is to reduce gear from three nets to two or one from July 20 through July 31, or to close the commercial fishery. In practice, the department has done both concurrently, but most commonly the fishery has been closed. For example, from 2005 through 2007, the department closed the

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entire Northern District 17 times. In the Central District drift gillnet fishery two regular drift gillnet fishing periods between July 9-15 are restricted to Area 1 (Figure 1) to conserve Susitna sockeye salmon stocks. Furthermore, from July 16-31 the drift gillnet fishery is to be restricted for two regular fishing periods to drift Area 1 when Kenai River sockeye salmon runs are less than two million fish, or drift Area 1 & 2 (Figure 1) when Kenai runs are between two and four million sockeye salmon. These restrictions are for both sockeye and coho salmon conservation. The department will continue to conserve Susitna River sockeye salmon through prescribed management plans and the use of Emergency Order authority.

## CURRENT ACTIONS IN NORTHERN DISTRICT SALMON PLAN FOR SALMON CONSERVATION

5 AAC 21.358 **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 fisherman 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.

(b) The department shall manage the Northern District commercial salmon fisheries based on the abundance of Yentna River sockeye salmon, the Yentna River escapement goal, or other salmon abundance indices as it deems appropriate. Achievement of the lower end of the Yentna River optimal escapement goal shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River escapement goal. When the sockeye salmon returns to the Kenai River are four million or greater, the optimal escapement goal is 75,000 to 180,000 sockeye salmon in the Yentna River.

**(c) From July 20 through July 31, if the department's assessment of abundance indicates that restrictions are necessary to achieve the escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, close the commercial set gillnet fishery in the Northern District and immediately reopen the season during which the number of set gillnets that may be used is limited to the following options selected at the discretion of the commissioner:**

- (1) three set gillnets that are not more than 105 fathoms in aggregate length;**
- (2) two set gillnets that are not more than 70 fathoms in aggregate length;**
- (3) one set gillnet that is not more than 35 fathoms in length.**

(d) In addition to the provisions specified in (b) and (c) of this section, the department shall manage the Northern District commercial salmon fisheries to minimize the incidental take of coho salmon stocks bound for the Northern District in the following manner:

- (1) additional fishing periods, other than the weekly fishing periods described in 5 AAC 21.320(a) (1), may not be provided when coho salmon are expected to be the most abundant species harvested during that period; additional fishing periods may not be provided based on the abundance of Northern District coho salmon;
- (2) after August 15, the department shall limit the harvest of coho salmon in the Northern

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District by limiting commercial fishing time to the weekly fishing periods described in 5 AAC 21.320(a) (1).

## **Potential Modifications to 5 AAC 21.358 Northern District Salmon Management Plan**

(c) In light of recent department data revealing concerns about the validity of Yentna River sockeye salmon enumeration data, it is the intent of the Board that Susitna River sockeye salmon stocks will be conservatively managed while the Department continues its studies in this drainage. Until the UCI BOF finfish meeting in 2011, Susitna River sockeye salmon will be managed as follows:

(1) From the beginning of the regular commercial salmon fishing season, which occurs on or after June 25, through July 19, the Northern District set gillnet fishery will fish no more than two regular 12-hour Monday and Thursday fishing periods per week.

(2) From July 20 through August 7, the Northern District set gillnet fishery will fish regular 12-hour Monday and Thursday fishing periods, but will be limited to no more than one 35-fathom set gillnet per permit. If it is determined by the Department that the Yentna River sockeye salmon [SEG or OEG] will be achieved during this time frame, the Department may increase the allowable fishing gear from one 35-fathom set gillnet per permit to two 35-fathom set gillnets per permit or the full complement of three set gillnets that are not more than 105 fathoms in aggregate length per permit.

(3) On the first regular fishing period after August 7, and thereafter, the Northern District set gillnet fishery will again return to a full complement of fishing gear of three set gillnets that are not more than 105 fathoms in aggregate length per permit, unless restricted or closed by emergency order.

(4) The Central District drift gillnet fishery will be managed to conserve Susitna drainage sockeye salmon as follows:

(i) The Department will implement all of the provisions of 5AAC 21.353 Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery management plan.

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## CURRENT ACTIONS IN DRIFT GILLNET PLAN FOR SALMON CONSERVATION

For the Central District drift gillnet fishery, there are two types of possible restrictions currently in place designed to conserve northern bound stocks. First, beginning July 9 the department must restrict the drift gillnet fishing fleet to Area 1 (Figure 1) of the Central District (section A below), which is that area south of the south end of Kalgin Island, and to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections (the corridor). Prior to 2005, restrictions were made to the drift fleet for one period to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections during this time frame, and for one inlet-wide period. In 2005 the BOF also provided the department with an option of an additional period in Area 1 during this time, if the Kenai River sockeye salmon run was greater than 2 million. This option has never been used.

Secondly, restrictions to the drift fleet for the conservation of Susitna stocks can occur from July 16-31 (section B below). For Kenai River sockeye salmon runs less than 2 million, the department must restrict the drift fleet to Area 1 (and the Kenai and Kasilof Sections); for runs of 2 million to 4 million, the drift fleet is restricted to Area 1 and Area 2 (and the Kenai and Kasilof Sections); and for runs greater than 4 million there are no mandatory restrictions. These restrictions apply to any two regular periods during this time frame. The purpose of the July 9-15 restrictions are to allow for the passage of northern-bound sockeye salmon, while the July 16-31 restrictions are primarily for northern-bound sockeye and coho salmon.

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

(a) 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,**

**(i) fishing during the two regular fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections and Drift Gillnet Area 1;**

(ii) at run strengths greater than 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 2,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during the two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict and Drift Gillnet Area 1;**

**(ii) at run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during the two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict and Drift Gillnet Areas 1 and 2;**

**(iii) at run strengths greater than 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, there will be no mandatory restrictions during regular fishing periods;**

(C) from August 11 until closed by emergency order,

(i) Drift Gillnet Areas 3 and 4 are open for fishing during regular fishing periods;

(ii) through the 2007 fishing season, Chinitna Bay may be opened by emergency order.

(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.;

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(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.

## Sport Fisheries

### 5 AAC 75.003. Emergency order authority

The commissioner may, by emergency order, change bag and possession limits and annual limits and alter methods and means in sport fisheries. These changes may not reduce the allocation of harvest among other user groups. An emergency order may not supersede bag and possession limits or methods and means established in regulatory management plans established by the Board of Fisheries. The commissioner will use emergency order authority to manage sport fishing opportunity in the following circumstances:

(1) The commissioner or an authorized designee may decrease sport fish bag and possession limits and annual limits and restrict methods and means of harvest by emergency order when

(A) the total escapement of a species of anadromous fish is projected to be less than the escapement goal for that species listed in management plans that have been adopted by the Board of Fisheries or established by the department; or

(B) the recreational harvest must be curtailed in any fishery for conservation reasons; the department may issue a "catch and release only" emergency order when the estimated hooking mortality is not projected to reduce the population of fish below the number required for spawning escapement or, in the case of resident species, below the level required for maintenance of the desired age and size distribution of the population; "catch and release" as a tool to address conservation under this section shall be labeled "conservation catch and release" to differentiate from catch and release regulations adopted by the Board of Fisheries for special management to create diversity in sport fisheries.

(2) The commissioner or an authorized designee may increase sport fish bag and possession limits and annual limits and liberalize methods and means of harvest by emergency order when

(A) the total escapement of a species of anadromous fish is projected to exceed the escapement goal for that species listed in management plans that have been adopted by the Board of Fisheries or established by the department, if the total harvest under the increased bag and possession limit will not reduce the escapement below the escapement goal; or



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(B) hatchery-produced fish escape through existing fisheries to designated harvest areas in numbers that exceed broodstock needs, any natural spawning requirements, or cost recovery goals of private nonprofit hatcheries; the intent of this subparagraph is to allow harvest when there are no other competing user groups.

(3) For purposes of data collection to improve harvest or stock assessment, or for purposes of enforcement of bag and size limits, the commissioner or an authorized designee may establish, by emergency order, times and areas when anglers may not fillet, mutilate, or otherwise disfigure a specific species of fish in a manner that would prevent species identification, examination of the adipose fin of salmonids, recovery of tags, or determination of the number, sex, age, or length of fish taken until the fish are brought to shore and offloaded from a vessel or removed from a shoreline fishing site. The commissioner or an authorized designee may also require in the emergency order that certain parts of a fish remain attached for the purpose of species identification or data collection. However, during these periods, an angler may gill and gut a fish before the fish is brought to shore and offloaded from a vessel or removed from a shoreline fishing site. This section does not prohibit the consumption or preservation of fish aboard a vessel. For the purposes of this section, "shoreline fishing site" means the shoreline where the fish is hooked and removed from the water and becomes part of the angler's bag limit.

## **Potential Modification to Sport Fishery in Susitna River drainage**

(5) The sockeye salmon sport fishery in the Susitna River drainage will be prosecuted with a bag limit of 3 fish. If the Northern District set gillnet fishery is closed to conserve sockeye salmon, the Susitna River drainage sport fisheries will remain open unless the board directs otherwise. The Susitna River sport harvest is not used to determine spawning escapement or in the development of escapement goals.

## **RESEARCH PLAN**

The department currently assesses Yentna River sockeye salmon escapement and commercial and sport harvests annually. The following research projects include current and proposed projects used to gather detailed information about sockeye salmon stocks in the Susitna River.

### **CURRENT SUSITNA RIVER DRAINAGE SOCKEYE SALMON RESEARCH PROJECTS**

#### *YENTNA RIVER SALMON ESCAPEMENT*

*Objectives:* The primary objectives of this project are to estimate (1) the daily and cumulative escapement of sockeye salmon into the Yentna River, and (2) the age, length, and sex composition of those escapements.

*Description:* Fish passage into the Yentna River is estimated using side-looking (formerly referred to as side-scanning) Bendix sonar. Fish caught and sampled at companion fish wheels are used to apportion sonar counts to estimate species composition of fish passage (i.e., estimate abundance of sockeye salmon) and the age, length, and sex composition of the inriver sockeye salmon run.

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## *COMPARING BENDIX AND DIDSON SONAR PASSAGE ESTIMATES IN THE YENTNA RIVER*

*Objective:* The primary objective of this project is to compare the Bendix sonar estimates of migrating salmon in the Yentna River with estimates from a Dual frequency Identification SONar (DIDSON).

*Description:* A DIDSON sonar is placed on both banks of the Yentna River to collect fish passage data independent of the existing Bendix sonar. Both types of sonar equipment are operated at the same time and ensonify the same/similar area of the river so that the passage data is directly comparable.

## *INRIVER ABUNDANCE AND SPAWNER DISTRIBUTION OF SUSITNA RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON*

*Objectives:* The primary objectives of this study are to (1) estimate the inriver abundance of adult sockeye salmon migrating into the Susitna River with a capture-recapture experiment, and (2) identify sockeye salmon spawning areas in the Susitna River.

*Description:* In 2006-2008, a capture-recapture experiment is conducted to estimate sockeye salmon abundance in the entire Susitna River. Radio telemetry is used to estimate the spawning distribution throughout the watershed.

## *EVALUATION OF SOCKEYE SALMON PRODUCTION FROM LAKES IN THE SUSITNA RIVER WATERSHED*

*Objectives:* The primary objectives of this study are to (1) evaluate limnological conditions in seven lakes considered important (major) to sockeye salmon production and compare current conditions to those observed in the 1980s and 1990s, (2) estimate the abundance and mean body size of juvenile sockeye salmon and other juvenile fishes rearing in each lake in the fall, (3) estimate the age composition of the juvenile sockeye salmon in each lake, and (4) evaluate the survival from potential egg deposition to fall fry and from fall fry to smolt.

*Description:* Estimates of smolt and fall fry abundance, and limnological characteristics such as water chemistry and zooplankton abundance by species are collected (Chelatna, Shell, Byers, Swan, Larson, Stephan, and Judd lakes). Analyses focus on determining carrying capacity of the lakes for sockeye salmon fry and assessing the adequacy of spawning escapements over time.

## *BIOLOGICAL COMPOSITION OF COMMERCIAL SOCKEYE SALMON HARVEST IN UPPER COOK INLET*

*Objective:* The primary objective of this project is to estimate the age and sex composition of the commercial salmon harvest.

*Description:* Sockeye salmon harvested in various commercial fisheries in UCI are sampled using a stratified systematic sampling design. Area strata are determined *a priori* using established fishery districts and subdistricts. Temporal stratification is determined post season based on catch patterns in each fishery and the number of samples collected.

## *STOCK COMPOSITION OF THE UPPER COOK INLET SOCKEYE SALMON COMMERCIAL HARVEST*

*Objectives:* The primary objectives of this study are to (1) estimate the stock composition of sockeye salmon harvested in major commercial fisheries in spatial/time strata, and (2) compare

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stock composition among substrata (i.e., fish processors for the drift gillnet fishery and beaches within each management subdistrict for the set gillnet fishery).

*Description:* This project uses new single nucleotide polymorphism (SNPs) genetic stock identification (GSI) methods to estimate stock-specific composition of the commercial harvest in UCI.

## **PROPOSED SUSITNA RIVER DRAINAGE SOCKEYE SALMON RESEARCH PROJECTS**

A recent review of Division of Commercial Fisheries and Sport Fish Division programs in the Susitna River drainage identified the need for improved escapement, smolt, and habitat information for sockeye salmon. The following research programs are planned to gather further detailed information about sockeye salmon stocks in the Susitna River drainage:

### *SUSITNA RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON MAJOR SYSTEM ADULT WEIRS*

*Objective:* The primary objective of this project is to estimate the abundance of sockeye salmon spawners entering 7 major rearing lakes in the Susitna River watershed.

*Description:* Adult weirs will be collaboratively operated by the Department and the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) on 7 major sockeye salmon rearing lakes (Chelatna, Shell, Byers, Swan, Larson, Stephan, and Judd lakes) in the Susitna River watershed to estimate spawner abundance. The age, sex, and length composition of the adult sockeye salmon escapement will be estimated at each weir. Environmental conditions will be recorded daily (i.e., percent cloud cover, precipitation, and stream and air temperature). Sockeye salmon spawner abundance estimates will be used to (1) evaluate the accuracy of sockeye salmon passage estimates from the Yentna River sonar project, (2) help set escapement goals, and (3) estimate freshwater production of sockeye salmon in the watershed (in conjunction with smolt production project described below).

### *SUSITNA RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON ADDITIONAL SYSTEM ADULT WEIRS*

*Objective:* The primary objective of this project is to estimate the abundance of sockeye salmon spawners entering 7 additional rearing lakes in the Susitna River watershed.

*Description:* Adult weirs will be collaboratively operated by the Department and CIAA on 7 additional sockeye salmon rearing lakes (Whiskey, Hewitt, Lockwood, Trapper, Red Shirt, Spink, and Trinity lakes) in the Susitna River watershed to estimate spawner abundance. The age, sex, and length composition of the adult sockeye salmon escapement will be estimated at each weir. Environmental conditions will be recorded daily (i.e., percent cloud cover, precipitation, and stream and air temperature). Sockeye salmon spawner abundance estimates will be used to (1) evaluate the accuracy of sockeye salmon passage estimates from the Yentna River sonar project, (2) help set escapement goals, and (3) estimate freshwater production of sockeye salmon in the watershed (in conjunction with smolt production project described below).

### *SUSITNA RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON MAJOR SYSTEM SMOLT PRODUCTION*

*Objective:* The primary objective of this project is to estimate the abundance of sockeye salmon smolt emigrating from 7 major rearing lakes in the Susitna River watershed.

*Description:* The abundance of sockeye salmon smolt emigrating from 7 major sockeye salmon rearing lakes (Chelatna, Shell, Byers, Swan, Larson, Stephan, and Judd lakes) in the Susitna River watershed will be collaboratively estimated by the Department and CIAA. Fyke nets will be operated from late May through June at 6 of the lakes to provide a total smolt enumeration. At the remaining lake (Chelatna Lake), three inclined-plane traps will be operated from late May

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through August, and smolt population size will be estimated using standard mark-recapture techniques. Age, weight and length of smolts will be estimated from samples collected daily at each site. Smolt abundance estimates will be used to (1) forecast adult returns, and (2) estimate freshwater production of sockeye salmon in the watershed (in conjunction with adult escapement estimates).

## *SUSITNA RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON ADDITIONAL SYSTEM SMOLT PRODUCTION*

*Objective:* The primary objective of this project is to estimate the abundance of sockeye salmon smolt emigrating from 7 additional rearing lakes in the Susitna River watershed.

*Description:* The abundance of sockeye salmon smolt emigrating from 7 additional sockeye salmon rearing lakes (Whiskey, Hewitt, Lockwood, Trapper, Red Shirt, Spink, and Trinity lakes) in the Susitna River watershed will be collaboratively estimated by the Department and CIAA. Fyke nets will be operated from late May through June at all of these lakes to provide a total smolt enumeration. Age, weight and length of smolts will be estimated from samples collected daily at each site. Smolt abundance estimates will be used to (1) forecast adult returns, and (2) estimate freshwater production of sockeye salmon in the watershed (in conjunction with adult escapement estimates).

## *SUSITNA RIVER FISH PASSAGE RESTORATION*

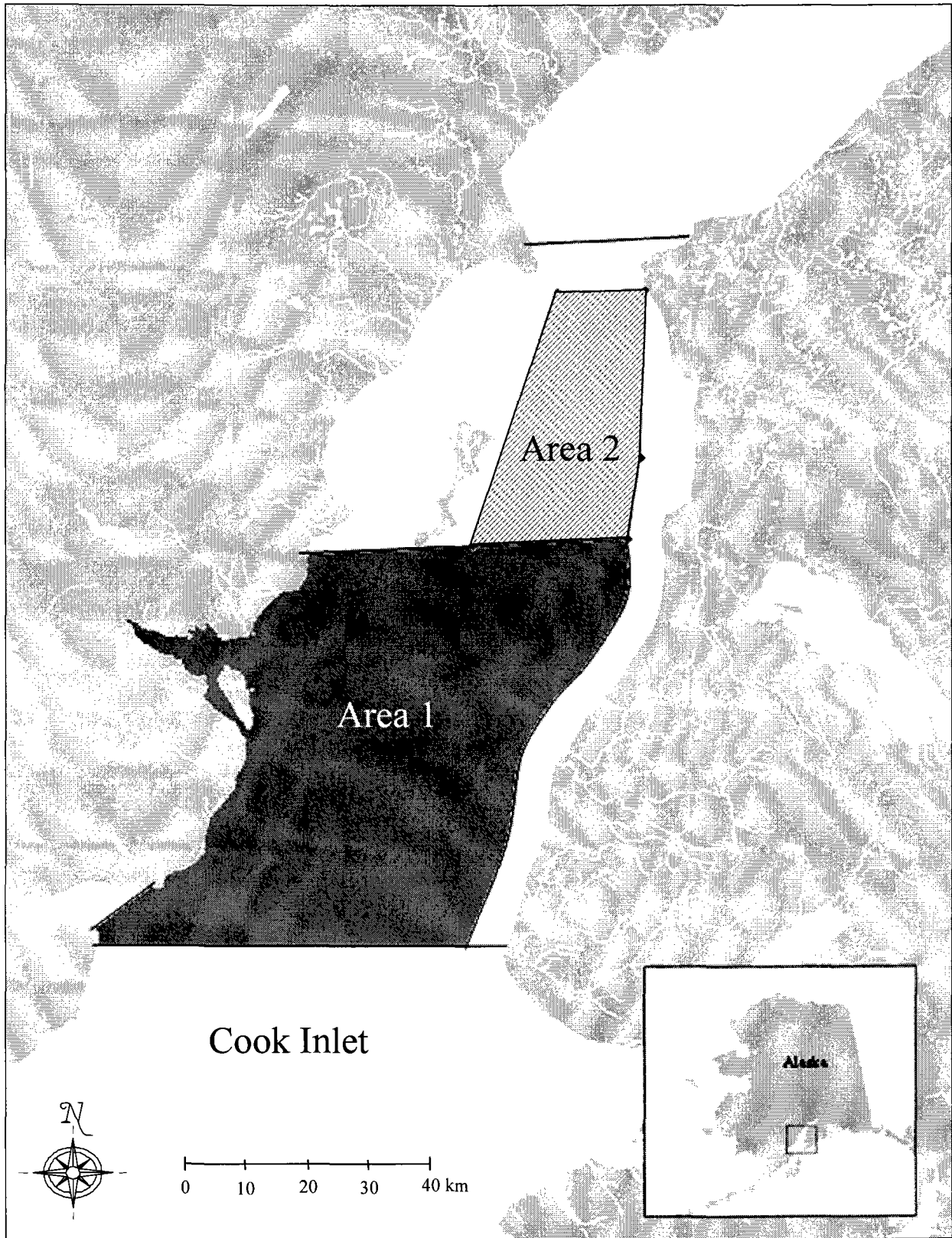
*Objective:* The primary objective of this project is to restore and improve salmonid access to upstream spawning and rearing habitats in the lower Susitna River.

*Description:* Upstream access to historically occupied salmonid habitats will be evaluated in the lower Susitna River to facilitate removal of culvert barriers or other in-stream obstructions. As many as 10 upstream fish passage barriers will be identified, prioritized according to cost-benefit analyses of fishery values and project costs, and upstream access improved and restored. During construction and after the fish passage restoration projects have been completed, an established monitoring protocol will be used to track individual restoration project performance.

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**Figure 1.**—Map of Central Cook Inlet showing management fishing boundaries for Area 1 and Area 2 for drift gillnet fisheries.

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## Kasilof River Salmon Management Plan Refinements

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### ***Recommendations for Board Action (Amended Proposal 169)***

1. Conservation: Achieving the low ends of the Yentna, Kenai and Kasilof sockeye escapement goals takes priority over not exceeding the top ends of any goal.
  - ✓ Falling below the goals poses obvious biological and yield risks.
  - ✓ Current harvest rates on these sockeye are already among the highest in the state. Significant expansion of harvest on these stocks before current research is completed is premature.
  
2. Allocation: A fixed 36-hour window for weekend fisheries takes priority over not exceeding the upper end of the OEG.
  - ✓ A 36-hour window is a reduction the current 48-hour window. Fixing it provides for predictable in-river opportunity.
  - ✓ This provides important personal use and sport fishery opportunity to share in large Kasilof runs.
  - ✓ The window is particularly important for conservation of Kasilof Kings for which escapement is not monitored in-season.
  
3. Harvest: Additional management flexibility is needed to harvest Kasilof sockeye in large run years without having to use the special terminal harvest area.
  - ✓ Provide additional fishing time from the beginning of the fishing season.
  - ✓ Replace the 48-hour window with one fixed 36-hour and one floating 24-hour window.
  - ✓ Give up the floating 24-hour window when the inriver goal for the Kasilof is projected to be exceeded.
  - ✓ Provide set net fishing opportunity on Kasilof sockeye within ½ mile of the Kasilof beaches when the Kasilof run is projected to exceed the OEG but the Kenai is projected to be less than 2 million.
  - ✓ Reconfigure the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area.

## **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) **Priorities are as follows:**

**(1) 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 range of 150,000 to 300,000 sockeye salmon.**

**(2) Achieving the lower end of the Kasilof River sockeye salmon optimal escapement goal range shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River in-river goal range.**

**(3) A prescriptive 36-hour window beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of Kenai River in-river escapement goal range and Kasilof River optimal escapement goal range.**

(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~~ **51** hours of additional fishing time per week;

(B) the fishery in the Kasilof section, including the special harvest area, shall remain closed for at least one continuous ~~48~~ **36**-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday and for an additional continuous 24-hour period during the same management week.

(3) ~~beginning July 8, the set gillnet fishery in the Kasilof Section will be managed as specified in 5 AAC 21.360(e); in addition to the provisions of 5 AAC 21.360(e), 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;~~

(4) ~~after July 15, if the department determines that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon run strength is projected to be less than two million fish and the 300,000 optimal escapement goal for the Kasilof River sockeye salmon may be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open fishing for an additional 24~~ **15**-hours per week ~~in the Kasilof Section within one-half mile of shore and as specified in 5 AAC 21.360(e) and eliminate the additional continuous 24-hour closure window.~~

**(5) if the department determines that the Kenai River late-run sockeye salmon run strength is projected to be greater than four million fish and the lower end of the Kasilof OEG is projected to be met, the commissioner may, by emergency order, allow extra fishing periods of no more than 84 hours per week in the Kasilof Section and the Kasilof section 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 personal use fishery will be managed as specified in 5 AAC 77.540(b) and (c).

(e) In addition to the provisions of 5 AAC 56 and 5 AAC 57.160 applicable to the Kasilof River, from January 1 through July 31, the guided sport fishery for early-run and late-run Kasilof River king salmon will be managed as follows:

(1) a sport fishing guide may not sport fish while a client is present or is within the sport fishing guide's control or responsibility; notwithstanding the provisions of this subsection, a sport fishing guide may provide assistance to a client with a disability in order to enable the client to engage in sport fishing; in this paragraph, "disability" has the same meaning given in 42 U.S.C. 12102(2)(A) and (C), as amended as of February 8, 1994;

(2) during any one day, a sport fishing guide may guide only that client or group of clients initially guided by the sport fishing guide that day; different or additional clients may not be guided;

(3) repealed 2/10/2005.

(f) The commissioner may, by emergency order, open the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area to the taking of salmon by gillnets when it is projected that the Kasilof River sockeye salmon escapement will exceed 275,000 fish. 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 (b)(3)(C)(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) For the purposes of this section,

(1) "client" has the meaning given in 5 AAC 75.995;

(2) "sport fishing guide" has the meaning given in 5 AAC 75.995;

(3) "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.



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## Kenai River Late-run Sockeye Management Plan Refinements

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### ***Recommendations for Board Action (Amended Proposal 202)***

1. Achieving the low ends of the Yentna, Kenai, and Kasilof sockeye escapement goals takes priority over not exceeding the top ends of any goal.
  - ✓ Low escapements pose obvious yield and biological risks.
  - ✓ Significant expansion of harvest on these heavily-fished stocks would be premature pending completion of current research.
2. Establish the top end of the inriver goal at 1.1 million for Kenai late run sockeye at all abundance levels identified in the plan.
  - ✓ This eliminates conflicting direction to the manager due to differences between the OEG and the in-river goals.
  - ✓ The in-river goal distributes escapement within the OEG, provides for in-river harvest, and shares large returns between fisheries and escapement.
  - ✓ The manager still has the flexibility to manage within the in-river goal range. This avoids the need to consider out-of-plan actions when the in-river goal is exceeded for a given run size.
3. Prioritize the fixed Friday 36-hour window over not exceeding the top end of the inriver goal. If the inriver goal is projected to be exceeded, then the 24 hour floating window may be removed.
  - ✓ The fixed window is critical for consistent in-river opportunities for sockeye and kings. The windows are primarily allocative but also provide biological benefits.
4. Provide Department authority to increase sport fishery (Proposals 206 and 208) and personal use (Proposal 215) limits in years of large sockeye runs with an abundance trigger.
  - ✓ Provides management flexibility to share large runs and regulate escapement.

## **5 AAC 21.356. Kenai River Late-run Sockeye Salmon Management Plan**

(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 to provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with a reasonable opportunity 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 (OEG) range of 500,000 - 1,000,000 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 with the OEG range, in proportion to the size of the run.

(4) Achieving the lower end of the Yentna and Kaslof River sockeye salmon optimal escapement goal range shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River in-river goal range; and

(5) A prescriptive 36-hour window beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday shall take priority over not exceeding the upper end of the Kenai River in-river escapement goal range and the Kaslof River optimal escapement goal range.

(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 2,000,000 sockeye salmon,

(A) the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 650,000 - ~~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, 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 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 sockeye salmon,

(A) the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 750,000 - ~~950,000~~ 1,100,000 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 an additional 24-hour period during the same management week;

(D) if the department determines that the Kenai River late-run in-river goal range may be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, open fishing for an additional 15-hours per week and eliminate the additional 24-hour closure window.

(3) at run strengths greater than 4,000,000 sockeye salmon,

(A) the department shall manage for an inriver goal range of 850,000 - 1,100,000 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; and

(2) the bag and possession limit for the sport fishery is three sockeye salmon, unless the department determines that the abundance of late-run sockeye exceeds 2,000,000 salmon, at which time the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag ~~and possession~~ limit to six sockeye salmon daily and 12 in possession.

(3) If the department determines that the Kenai Late-run sockeye inriver goal range may be exceeded, the commissioner may, by emergency order, increase the bag limit to nine sockeye salmon daily and 18 in possession.

(4) If the projected inriver goal of sockeye salmon is less than 650,000 and the inriver sport fishery harvest is projected to result in an escapement below the optimal escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, reduce the bag and possession limit for sockeye salmon in the sport fishery as specified in 75.003 (1)(A).

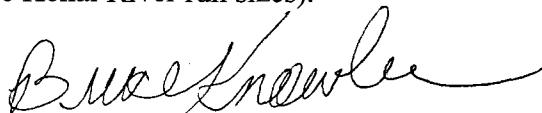
(i) For the purposes of this section, "week" means a calendar week, a period of time beginning at 12:00:01 a.m. Sunday and ending at 12:00 midnight the following Saturday.

## Northern District Fisheries

### ***Recommendations for Board Action***

- 1) Stock of Concern for Yentna Sockeye.
- 2) Continue to use Yentna sonar until the Board approves alternative management tools.
- 3) Share the burden of conservation [5 AAC 39.222 (c) (4) (D)].
  - a) Northern District
    - i) Give the Department authority to limit gear (number of nets.)
    - ii) Give the Department authority to adjust time (reduce length of commercial periods).
  - b) Central District Drift
    - i) Use the corridor, no more than one area-wide regular period per week in the Central District prior to July 20.
      - (1) 5 AAC 21.353 Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan (a) (1) (A)
        - (ii) Delete reference to Drift Area 2.
      - (2) Amend (a) (2) (B) (iii) of 5 AAC 21.353 Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan to require one of the two regular periods be in the Kenai and Kasilof section of the Upper Sub-District
      - (3) Eliminate Area 1 from July 9 –July 15.
  - c) Central District Set Net
    - i) Maintain the mandatory 36-hour window referenced for Kenai and Kasilof.
- 4) Amend 5AAC 21.358 (b) to read ...."the upper end of the Kenai River inriver escapement goal"
- 5) Maintain the Yentna SEG at 90,000 – 130,000 at all run sizes (delete the reference to the OEG at large Kenai River run sizes).

Submitted by:



Susitna Valley AC

Mt. Yenlo AC

Anchorage AC

Cooper Landing AC

Prepared by **Alaska Department of Fish and Game**

Substitute Language for Proposal 255

Summary of proposed Kenai River early-run king salmon regulation changes:

1. Increase the slot limit from 44"-55" to 46"-55"
2. Modify the Kenai River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan to allow the use of bait earlier in the season by emergency order.
3. No annual limit for king salmon less than 28".
4. Extend sanctuary closures through July 31 (an additional 17 days). In addition, increase the area of the Killey River sanctuary by approximately 500 yards.

**1. Change in slot limit:**

5 AAC 57.120. General provisions for seasons, bag, possession, and size limits, and methods and means for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

(2) king salmon 20 inches or greater in length, as follows:

(A) may be taken from only from January 1 – July 31, in the Kenai River from its mouth 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, 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 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 [44] inches in length or 55 inches or greater in length may be retained;

**2. Change in bait:**

5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan.

(d) In the Kenai River,

(3) if the spawning escapement is projected to **be within** [EXCEED THE UPPER END OF] 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 the increased liberalization will not reduce the escapement below** [TO ACHIEVE] the optimal escapement goal; only king salmon less than 46 [44] inches in length or 55 inches or greater in length may be retained;

**3. Change in annual limit for king salmon less than 28 inches in length:**

5 AAC 57.124. Harvest record required; annual limits for the Kenai River Drainage Area.

(a) The following provisions regarding harvest records and annual limits apply to taking and retaining king salmon 20 inches or greater in length in the waters of the Kenai River Drainage Area that are open to sport fishing for king salmon:

(1) a nontransferable harvest record is required and must be in the possession of each person taking and retaining 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 region;

(2) [IMMEDIATELY UPON LANDING A KING SALMON 20 INCHES OR GREATER IN LENGTH,] the angler shall enter the date, location (body of water fished), and species of the catch, in ink, on the harvest record immediately upon landing a king salmon  
(A) 28 inches or greater in length from May 1 – June 30, and  
(B) 20 inches or greater in length from July 1 – 31.

**4. Extend sanctuary closures through July 31:**

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.

(1) sport fishing gear restrictions:

(F) from January 1 – July 31 [14], the following waters are fly-fishing-only waters:

(G) from June 25 – July 31 [14], that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately three-quarters of a mile downstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one [ONE-HALF] mile upstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River, is fly-fishing-only waters;

(2) the following waters of the Kenai River are closed to sport fishing, as follows:

(D) from January 1 – July 31 [14], that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one mile downstream from the mouth of the Funny River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 200 yards upstream from the mouth of the Funny River, is closed to the taking of king salmon;

(G) from June 25 – July 31 [14], that portion of the Kenai River from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately three-quarters of a mile downstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River, upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately one [ONE-HALF] mile upstream from the mouth of the Lower Killey River, is fly-fishing-only waters;

In Committee "A", Proposal 93 was not discussed because of similarities between it and Proposal 83. While time constraints make that lack of discussion sensible, there remains an opportunity available via Proposal 93, which would allow for a harvest of Kasilof sockeye stocks. Proposal 93 asks to change the 50,000 trigger for beginning the setnet season in the Kasilof section, to a 25,000 trigger. While this is justifiable for the entire Kasilof section, it is especially important for the Ninilchik stat area.

The Kasilof section is made up of three stat areas: South K-Beach (a 4-mile stretch between the Blanchard line and Kasilof River), Cohoe Beach, (a 12-mile stretch between Kasilof River and Clam Gulch Beach Road) and Ninilchik Beach (a 14-mile stretch between Clam Gulch Beach Road and Ninilchik. In late June, Ninilchik Beach has a long history of meaningful sockeye harvests, a minimal king catch and coho are not present at all. The Ninilchik Beach stat area has its northern boundary at Clam Gulch Beach Road, which is 12 miles south of the Kasilof River. The entire 12-mile Cohoe Beach would separate the Ninilchik stat area from the June 15-25 Personal Use setnet fishery, at the mouth of the Kasilof River. **Either a starting date of June 15 or a trigger of 25,000, would be useful for harvesting Kasilof sockeye in the Ninilchik stat area.**

Brent Johnson



Jim Colver  
P.O. Box 427  
Palmer, AK 99645  
(907) 746-5300

RC160

Alaska Board of Fisheries

February 7, 2008

**Re: NO NET LOSS FOR PERSONAL USE**  
UCI 2008 Plan

Dear Honorable Board Members:

The Upper Cook Inlet is an accessible **Personal Use fishery for a majority of Alaskan residents**, an aggregate population of 400,000 people. There is no biological reason to change the PU fishery, status quo works.

My neighbors here in the **Mat-Su region depend on the Kenai- Kasilof runs** to put salmon in our freezers, because there is **no PU fishery in the northern region**. The Kenai- Kasilof also provides Kenai and Anchorage residents their PU fishery as well.\*

**PU ISSUES:**

- **Windows are essential** so PU fishers can have a reasonable opportunity to harvest Personal Use salmon, especially dip netters during the weekends- **Friday thru Sunday**
  - **Minimize EO authority**
- **Kasilof Personal Use Set Gillnet Fishery- Maintain Status Quo.**

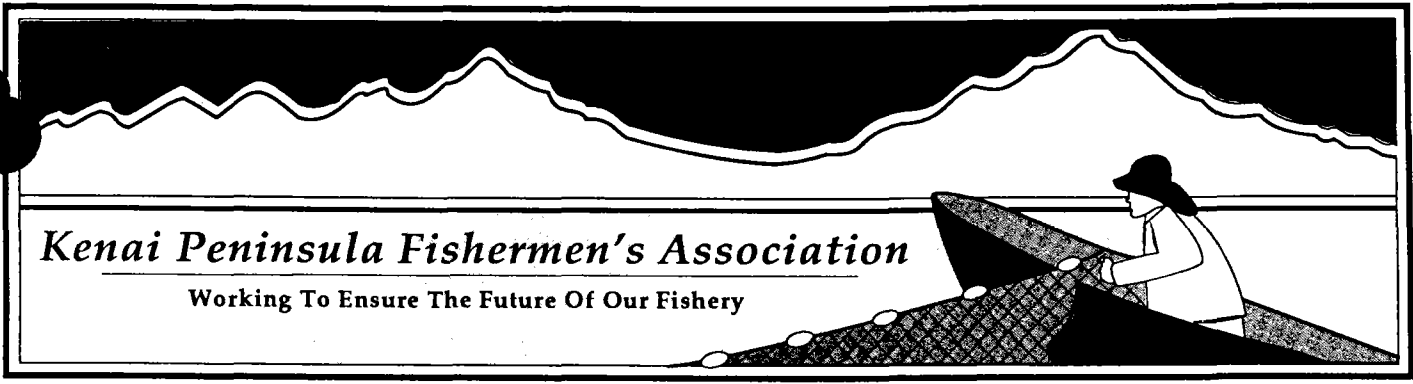
This is an important and culturally valuable fishery for **Alaskan families to participate** as a family, especially young children assisting in the harvest and cleaning of primarily sockeye caught in shore nets. Dip netting is not an option for young kids to actively participate.

  - **Chinook Retention- Maintain Status Quo** An average of only 179 Kings are harvested annually\*
  - **Season & Harvest – Maintain Status Quo**
    - Shortest Season of UCI PU fisheries\* – June 15-25 by regulation
      - Hold harmless from of other issues such as % of harvest based on escapement and Eastside set net seasons and allocations
    - Fishery only averages an annual harvest of 26,964 sockeye\*
- **Management Plans**
  - Equal standing for PU fisheries
  - **Increase predictability of season openings, schedule by regulation**
    - Do not base PU harvest limits upon run predictions which are frequently exceeded
  - 16,600 Alaskan are PU fishery participants\*

\*ADF&G Report #07-88 Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Fisheries 2004-2006

(C) from a boat, except that salmon may not be taken from a boat powered by a 2-stroke motor, other than Direct Fuel Injection, in an area from an ADF&G regulatory marker located near the Kenai city dock upstream to the downstream side of the Warren Ames Bridge.

RC162



43961 Kalifornsky Beach Road • Suite F • Soldotna, Alaska 99669  
(907) 262-2492 • Fax: (907) 262-2898 • E Mail: kpfa@alaska.net

February 8, 2008

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Board of Fisheries  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

**Subject: Committee A**

**KPFA Comments on Proposals 73,80,83,88,93,95,98,107**

Chairman Morris,

KPFA would like to offer their support and clarification of our position on several proposals and subsequent committee comments.

**Proposal 73**

*Support* - This gives the fisher more flexibility and the department more information in managing this fishery. We highly encourage minimizing language in regulations to enhance understanding.

**Proposal 80 - KPFA submitted this proposal (Please refer to PC 63, pg. 7)**

*Support* - The committee did not directly address the request for an earlier opening date.

Committee notes did not reflect the previous agreement with the Board of Fisheries (BOF) that by starting one week latter in July that the remaining time for stat areas (244-32,244-41,244-42) would remain open without restriction until the end of the season. Since this agreement was ratified, this area has been restricted by windows, emergency order hour limitations, and an earlier closing date ( which at the time was August 15<sup>th</sup>).

Fishing areas south of the above mentioned stat numbers open as early as June 20<sup>th</sup> on inriver triggers. Historical entry patterns of King salmon indicate low numbers entering the rivers in the end of June.

This proposal would open this area July 1<sup>st</sup> and close this area on August 15<sup>th</sup>.

King salmon escapements to the Kenai River have remained within the goal since 1986. They have exceeded the median escapement goal 11 times in the same time period. They have exceeded the top end twice, went under 20 thousand twice and for 20 times have escaped above 22.5 thousand.

There is no justification for not opening this area July 1<sup>st</sup> because of a "conservation concern" with Kings.

New "genetics" information suggest a wider mix of Kasilof and Kenai fish in the North K-Bch and Salamantof stat areas.

**Proposal 83 - KPFA submitted this proposal (Please refer to PC 63, pgs. 5-7)**

*Support* - This proposal is similar to #80 in that it requests the board to rectify the late season ending date for the ESSN fishery.

The department has calculated that the effects of one day to the total return of Kenai Coho when the majority of setnets were fishing all day would be less than 1% reduction from the total return.

Exploitation rates for in river Kenai Coho average about 50 - 60 %. Additional harvest time for ESSN would be predicated on the strength of late run sockeye into the Kenai River and the presence of abundant Pink salmon. Late season participation is dramatically reduced and is predominately within the closer proximities to the Kenai River.

Adoption of this proposal would return the ESSN ending date to August 15<sup>th</sup> as it was in 1998.

We would like to restate that since 1998 with well over a decade of intense analysis and millions of dollars of assistance, the best science available tells us that ...These observations suggest that there is no immediate threat to sustainability, and also suggest that the current management plan is unduly restrictive in most years. Current restrictions to commercial, personal use, and sport fisheries were developed in the absence of a sustained-yield objective;....The Department in a 2002 BOF report (Yanusz et al. Unpublished) recommended that no additional restrictions were necessary to protect the Kenai River population. While acknowledging that a surplus harvest likely exists...(Abundance of Adult Coho Salmon in the Kenai River, Alaska, 1999-2003, fishery data series No. 07-81).

**Proposal 88 - KPFA submitted this proposal (Please refer to PC 63, pgs. 5-7)**

*Support* - The committee notes did not reflect the direct discussion on the merits of continuing this restriction on ESSN fishing families.

5 AAC 21.310 (b) (2) (C ) (iii) is an ambiguous rule that makes no real correlation with setnet harvest practices. Historical entry patterns would indicate that the end of the main body of fish would be available to the commercial setnet sites closest to the rivers of origin. This is a lucrative fishery for these locations.

The logic on opening the season early to allow the furthest sites away from the terminus to a reasonable opportunity to harvest sockeye on the initial portion of the run, in converse, should also apply to the "end" portion of the run that should be available to the sites that can take advantage of abundance.

This is extremely necessary on years of high returns. The 1% rule does not take this into consideration and can impede with the opportunity to harvest a harvestable surplus. It also can interfere with management objectives to have sockeye escapements that are distributed within the range of the goals.

This proposal would delete this arbitrary and confusing 1% rule from regulation and reduce the restrictions managers would have to consider. In essence, directing managers to use time and area when opportunity exists.

**Proposal 93 KPFA submitted this proposal (Please refer to PC 63, pg. 9)**

*Support* - Committee notes did not address this proposal or it's intent.

The counter on the Kasilof River is installed and operating by the 15<sup>th</sup> of June yearly. This reduction of 25k

would assure that in most years of moderate to high Kasilof returns, the fishery would open on June 20<sup>th</sup> which is the earliest the Kasilof section may open. This timing brings the opening date more in line with the drift date opening in 5 AAC 21.310 (b) (3).

We believe this adoption of this rule would add to the managers "tool box" a way to lessen the occurrence of an emergency opening of the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area (KRSHA).

This proposal would open the Kasilof section on the earliest prescribed opening date in June.

#### **Proposal 95**

Under *Board Committee Recommendations* we see no indication of which way the committee either recommended changes or took no action. Please specify the recommendations so that KPFA can comment.

#### **Proposal 98 KPFA submitted this proposal (Please refer to PC 63, pg. 7)**

*Support* - KPFA believes this is a housekeeping change. 5 AAC 21.310 (b) (3) already states this area to be two miles.

The board of directors of KPFA voted unanimously to have this regulation adopted. The amended language is not presented in this committee report so we are at a loss to comment on it.

We are strong in our support of the language already in regulation and do not agree with any modification of this language.

The notes misquoted the KPFA representative. His comments reflected that he was fine with the 1.5 miles and the .5 mile buffer on the portions of the beach that are affected by the early current ESSN closure date. The Salamantof and East Forelands sections have a 1.0 mile restriction in place.

Drift fishermen target this area for northern bound stocks.

The 2.0 mile restriction was an agreement with the board and the department at the time of implementation of differential closing dates for the ESSN. Changing this provision violates this agreement.

KPFA would like the board to note that this restriction should go into effect whenever the setnets are closed.

This proposal would streamline the two mile restriction from prior to the season opening to post season closures.

#### **Proposal 107**

*Do Not Support* - This proposal has serious allocation consequences and legal questions arising from recent Supreme Court decisions on differential treatment of fishers within a fishery.

KPFA argues that if the board were to adopt similar language for setnet fisherman in Cook Inlet as they did in Kodiak that this proposal would not be as allocative in its current form.

Board members question the adoption of this proposal without applying the restructuring criteria.

We ardently believe that if precedence of the Bristol Bay drift stacking plan is sufficient to apply to Cook Inlet drift fisheries than in turn the recent acceptance of a setnet restructuring and BOF regulatory approval of Kodiak setnet fishing area permit changes should apply to Cook Inlet Setnet fishermen.

We submit the preliminary language from the department to utilize as a guide for CI. We ask the board to include this language as an amendment to this proposal in the spirit of equality.

Suggested language: A CFEC CI setnet permit holder owning two permits may operate up to 210 fathoms of gear with no more than 6 gillnets. All other suggested identification markings would apply. Any kindred conditions may also apply as well as other stipulations as needed and agreed.

**KPFA Board members and staff are here to answer your questions, please do not hesitate to ask for our assistance.**

Thank You,



Brent Johnson

3AAK 18.XXX

A CFEC permit holder owning two CFEC permits may operate no more than 300 fathoms set gillnet in the aggregate, with no more than four set gillnets, none of which may be longer than 150 fathoms in length. Both of the permit holder's 5 digit CFEC permit serial number followed by the letter D to identify the gillnet as a dual permit set gillnet must be located on the identification buoy and the sign located on the beach. At least one cork every 10 fathoms along the cork line must be plainly and legibly marked with both CFEC permit numbers of the CFEC permit holder. All identifiers must be displayed in a manner such as to be plainly visible and unobscured and have permanent symbols that contrast with the background. The provisions of this subsection will no longer apply after December 31, 2010.

Does not exist yet!

Under going LAW Review!

KT

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RC 163  
Committee A

Members of the BOF,

I am writing in opposition to proposal 107. This proposal allows the drift fleet to joint venture 2 permit holders to fish 200 fathoms on one vessel. This is a radical change to the Cook Inlet fishery. This has great potential to increase the drift gear in Cook Inlet. Dormant permit holders (approximately 150 in 2007 ) may now become crew members. Permit holders who do not have boats will step on board with other permit holders. I don't believe permit holders with vessels are going to quit fishing; instead they are going to incorporate 50 fathoms of additional gear on their vessel that hasn't been participating in the fishery. The net effect is that professional drift fishermen will now have the potential to be 25% more effective.

I thought in the discussion that there was a concern over stocks to the Northern district. Northern district fishermen wanted a reduction in time or area or participation in the drift fleet. With this proposal it increases participation and effort.

Thank you,

Gary Hollier



RC 164

February 9, 2008

Board Members,

I would like to address elements of proposal 83. In runs under 3 million to the Kenai River, 6 of the last 10 years there have been a average of 9 periods in the Kenai River section and 21 in the Kasilof River section. The early portion of this proposal, July 1-8, would add 2 regular periods (July 5 would provide 1 additional regular opening).

Extending the season to August 15 would allow one or two additional regular periods, depending on the calendar each year.

Greg Johnson

Committee A

RC 165

Members of the BOF

I am addressing proposal 83. It has two elements. I hope that they are both considered. The first one is the Kenai East-land section is asking to open on July 1. If this happened 200 Chinook would be harvested in this fishery for the two additional days fished in this section.

There was an amendment brought up in committee, that wasn't addressed in the committee report. The amendment was to open this section on July 5. This would allow this section to only open one day earlier. The harvest would be about 100 Chinooks. There is a Kenai-River Late-Run King salmon management plan. This plan ensures that the minimum BEG for kings to the Kenai River will be met. The potential 100 king harvest is not an issue for the health of the king stock. This section would catch Kasilof River sockeye that are abundant on the beaches at this time. It would also be a very, very valuable one day training day to help educate new crew members, with hands on training in the complexities of this potentially dangerous fishery.

The second issue is to extend the East-side set-net fishery (ESSN) till August 15. This was the fisheries closing date since the advent of the Upper Cook Inlet Management plan in 1978. This additional time is extremely important, for a number of reasons.

1. It would help harvest sockeye from escapements going over the top end of the in-river goal. An average 300,000 sockeye have gone passed the counter after the season closing date of August 10 the passed 4 years.
2. This over escapement has led to lost harvest in the parent year. Smolt and fry data indicates that there will be loss yield in the future from exceeding the in-river goal.
3. On even years the ESSN fishery would have the potential to harvest hundred's of thousands of pink salmon. The ESSN fishery is the historical harvester of pink salmon in Cook Inlet.
4. There are no conservation concerns for coho salmon. The ESSN fishery exploits 2% of the Kenai River coho run. For every additional day of fishing the ESSN fishery would harvest 1000 coho's. The reason for deriving this number is that at least 50% of the ESSN effort would not participate.
5. The number of Susitna bound coho harvested would be nill.

Please consider these two extremely important changes to the season in the ESSN fishery.

Thank you, Gary Hollier

Anchorage AC

RC 166

RC 101, pg 49 of 59, Proposal 119, chair Bonnie Williams.

-Anchorage AC supports

RC167

February 8, 2008

State Of Alaska  
Department of Fish and Game  
Board Support Section  
Chairman Mel Morris  
Attn: Boar Comments  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Chairman Morris,

South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Alliance (SOKI), is an alliance of Cook Inlet south K-Beach (stat area 244-31) set-net fishing people. Formed in 2006 after the closure to our are area in harvesting Kasilof bound sockeye.

**Comments Committee A**

**Proposal 102, 103**

SOKI recommendation is not to support these proposals without a thorough analysis of the effects on sea birds. We believe that the board must investigate other state and country issues with the differential effects of monofilament vs. multifilament netting.

The question of high drop out rates has been noted with this type of webbing. (BOF Resolution 83-100-FB)

Allocation issues should be thoroughly investigated before the full scale use of this type of gear. Report on "Gillnet evaluation study in southeast Alaska 1987" should be reviewed. This study was funded by the U.S./Canada Treaty Negotiations Federal Funds.

Committee notes did note include the section read to the committee that quoted from this reference, "The implication for management of these results are important. In all cases where significant differences were found, single strand was more efficient than other gear types. This gear is not legal in Southeast Alaska, and if it were ever to become legal for use in the region's gillnet fisheries extensive adjustments would be needed to standardize the catch and effort data bases."

**Proposal 104**

SOKI requests that the board apply the precautionary principles and SUPPORT this proposal until the use of this type of gear is scientifically defensible within CI waters.

Submitted By:  
*Paul A. Shadura II*  
Paul A. Shadura II

February 9, 2008

RC168

Alaska Board of Fisheries, Uper Cook Inlet Finfish  
Committee G: Northern Cook Inlet Sport Fisheries  
Board Members: Webster (chair), Jensen, Williams.

Ladies & Gentleman:

RE: Proposal 358: Upper Cook Inlet (Beluga) Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan,  
Alaska Board of Fisheries 2007/2008. Page 300/301.

RC-2 "Staff comments .....regulatory proposals." Pages 344 and 349.

2007 South Central Alaska sports Fishing Regulations Summary.

I am the author of Proposal 358. This is a third (3rd) amendment to the proposal and I would appreciate your consideration to expand the scope to further protect coho salmon..This amendment does stretch the original proposal, but based on the evaluating data, it is worth additional consideration. A problem with a coho mortality rate of 69% was known in 1993 and I do not believe we can afford to wait until the next change cycle (year 2011) to address this problem.

**Background:**

Access to Chinook (King) Salmon has also been all but eliminated due to ... closure to taking of King Salmon on the Lewis and Theodore Rivers." Reference Management Plan, Page 349.

"DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: The department **OPPOSES** the biological aspects of this proposal because many small streams in the Beluga area have a fairly small salmon populations and likely could not support a personal use fishery ....aspects". Reference RC-2, Page 344.

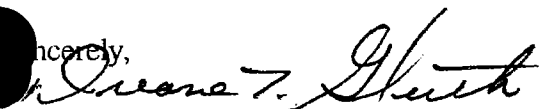
"BACKGROUND: In 1993 the department conducted a coho salmon hook and release mortality study in the lower reaches of the Littler Susitna River. This study was prompted by anglers concerns over dead or dying coho salmon observed in the lower river. Results from this study showed a much higher mortality rate (69%) than initially thought for coho salmon that were released by sport fishers in the lower river." Reference RC-2, Page 349.

The Theodore and Lewis rivers are "catch and release only, with one single hook" for Coho salmon. Reference 2007 Regulations Page 21.

Single hook definition; "Means a fish hook with one point (with or without a barb)". Reference 2007 Regulations Page 5.

**Recommendation:** Reduce Coho mortality. On the Theodore and Lewis Rivers (consider others) by changing the regulations to define the hook as a **Single NO barb hook**. I would leave hook size and other aspects to the Department. I believe that this one change would greatly reduce the Coho mortality. We do not always agree with lower 48 ideas, but the State of Washington prohibits a barbed hook and they reduced fish mortality. We cannot afford to wait 3 years

Sincerely,



Duane T. Gluth  
7021 Foothill Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99504-2627

February 9, 2008

Dear Chairman Morris and Alaska Board of Fisheries Members,

I am a retired special education teacher who enjoys taking some of my former students fishing during the peak of the silver salmon season. It is important to me that these young adults experience the joy of catching some of Alaska's abundant salmon resource on our trips. We have been going fishing on the 6th of August, which is the first day bait fishing is allowed on the Little Susitna River, and we sometimes go a second time, a few days later. On years when good numbers of salmon are available, everyone can usually catch a limit of silver salmon. Other years, when fewer salmon have been allowed to enter the river, everyone may have a difficult time catching salmon, and my former students may not be able to catch even a single salmon. My request is that I would like you to formulate commercial fishing regulations which allow larger numbers of silver salmon to be available in the Little Susitna River during the first and second week of August -- a time when silvers are historically available in peak abundance.

This past year, insufficient red salmon were allowed to swim up the Yentna River to even achieve the spawning goal. Without enough salmon allowed to spawn, how can Alaskans possibly maintain our valuable salmon resource? If you were to craft regulations that allowed more red salmon to make it up the Yentna River to spawn, I believe a secondary advantage could be a higher abundance of silver salmon available when people go fishing on the Little Susitna River. Please consider both the positive aspect of maintaining our valuable salmon resource by allowing enough red salmon to spawn in the Yentna River, and the additional advantage that could result in perhaps making more salmon available for people to catch on the Little Susitna River and other Matanuska - Susitna Valley streams when making your decisions.

While many Valley residents may not know specific proposals which deal with these two issues, I support and believe there is widespread public support in the Valley for the concepts contained within the following proposals: 119, 138, 140, and 163. Adopting these concepts or proposals will have consequences both good, and not so good, for the diverse users of Alaska's salmon resource in Upper Cook Inlet, but in the end, these concepts should more fairly distribute both conservation burden and harvest opportunity between the Alaskan users of the resource. I trust you to make decisions that will be beneficial for the greater good of all Alaskans.

Thank You,

*Frede L. Stier*

Frede L. Stier

Board of Fisheries Members,

My name is Greg Acord, owner and guide of Acord Guide Service which offers guided salmon fishing trips in the Matanuska - Susitna Valley. I guide primarily on the Little Susitna River, but have also guided for king salmon on the Deshka River, and would like to support the passage of two proposals that were discussed in subcommittee G.

I support Proposal 338 which would allow 24 hour per day fishing for king salmon on the Deshka River. For the past several years this regulation has been in place by emergency order running throughout almost the entire king salmon fishing season. King salmon escapements have remained more than ~~six~~ thousand fish over the minimum escapement goal with this regulation in all years that it was in effect. A 24 hour fishery spreads out fishing pressure throughout each day creating a more enjoyable experience, and also allows people who camp along the Deshka River to fish whenever king salmon start jumping in front of their camp. Please pass this proposal. It seems highly unlikely that this liberalized regulation could cause too many king to be caught, however, ADF&G has a weir on this river and if the Department observed low escapement numbers of king salmon it could quickly make an in season adjustment to correct the situation through emergency order.

I support Proposal 339 which would extend the Deshka River king salmon season through July 31 below the escapement counting weir on years when 20,500 king salmon had already passed the weir. This would simply allow an extra opportunity to harvest king salmon on years when large king salmon escapements had already occurred and those escapements would remain safe above the weir.

While these proposals may only affect a relatively small number of people compared to the overall population of the Upper Cook Inlet area, these slightly expanded opportunities are significant to the people who fish the Deshka River and other Matanuska - Susitna Valley streams.

Sincerely,

*Greg Acord*

*2-8-08*

Greg Acord

Acord Guide Service

PO Box 870790

Wasilla, AK 99687

Board of Fisheries Members,

My name is Greg Acord, and I am a fishing guide in the Matanuska - Susitna Valley. I would like to comment on proposals and ideas discussed in subcommittee B.

As you have already heard several times, Yentna River sockeye salmon have failed to reach their minimum escapement goal in 4 of the past 6 years, and in 2005 the first year after the Board of Fisheries authorized a more liberal fishing pattern for the Central District commercial drift fleet the all time record low escapement of only 37,000 fish was recorded by the Yentna River sonar counter.

I would suggest the Board of Fisheries return to a drift fleet fishing pattern that allowed larger spawning escapements of sockeye salmon to reach the Yentna River. The pattern I refer to would require the drift fleet fish within the Kasilof and Kenai sections of the Upper Subdistrict for 3 regular periods during the month of July. This fishing pattern has been proven over several years time to allow larger numbers of sockeye salmon to pass through the Central District and then swim pass the Yentna River sonar counter. At the same time this fishing pattern has allowed the drift fleet to participate in their fishery, and catch approximately half of the entire commercial salmon harvest in Upper Cook Inlet. Therefore, this seems like a reasonable approach to address the problem of low sockeye salmon escapements to the Yentna River.

Sincerely,

*Greg Acord*

2-8-08

Greg Acord

Acord Guide Service

PO Box 870790

Wasilla, AK 99687



**Kenai River Sportfishing Comments on  
Preliminary Draft of Susitna Sockeye Salmon Action Plan**

The Alaska Board of Fisheries is considering Stock of Concern status for Susitna Sockeye Salmon. A stock of concern designation triggers the development of an action plan for the stock of concern. That plan has two components:

- 1) Management actions that are intended to meet conservation issues, and
- 2) Research that result in better management precision.

**Comments on Proposed Management Actions**

**1) Yentna Sonar is the only viable tool with which to assess management actions.**

Yentna sonar counts form the basis for the only SEG that applies to the Susitna drainage. Although different methods have historically been employed to develop the escapement goal, the current SEG is based on the sonar counts.

While it is true that there are differences between weir counts, mark recapture estimates and the sonar count, this does not diminish the sonar as a viable index for assessing escapements.

Department staff has incorrectly led the Board and the public to believe that the utility of the sonar estimates for management purposes is limited. Bendix sonar has been used in many other systems (Togiak, Nushagak, and Kenai) within Alaska and the application of the results to management has been successfully employed.

**The Yentna sonar system provides an appropriate measure by which to gauge management effectiveness and it must be used until some better system is developed.**

**2) Proposed conservation measures fail to provide meaningful conservation action.**

The Department's proposed actions will result in increased, not decreased harvest of Northern District stocks. Department recommendations actually are proposing a net increase in fishing power for the Northern District setnet fishery, with no changes to the Central District drift or set gill net management plan. This lack of meaningful conservation measures will result in a continuance of underescapement within the Northern District.

Genetic sampling data from the commercial catches indicates that up to 12 % of the drift and 7% of the set net catch is of Susitna origin. In 2007, the combined Central district drift and set gill net catch was 225,000 sockeye of Northern District origin with over 25% of that catch coming from the setnet fishery. These results, although preliminary, must be considered when developing a conservation solution for Northern District sockeye.

**To conserve Northern District sockeye the Central district drift and set gill net fisheries must be restricted.**

Kenai River Sportfishing Association has provided a suite of management actions that will afford conservation of Northern bound sockeye salmon stocks and reasonable harvest opportunities in the commercial set and drift gill net fisheries. These recommendations and appropriate references follow:

## **Northern District Fisheries (Reference RC 157)**

1. Stock of Concern for Yentna Sockeye.
2. Continue to use Yentna sonar until the Board approves alternative management tools.
3. Share the burden of conservation [5 AAC 39.222 (c) (4) (D)].
  - a. Northern District
    - i. Give the Department authority to limit gear (number of nets.)
    - ii. Give the Department authority to adjust time (reduce length of commercial periods).
  - b. Central District Drift
    - i. Use the corridor, no more than one area-wide regular period per week in the Central District prior to July 20.
      1. 5 AAC 21.353 Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan (a) (1) (A) (ii) Delete reference to Drift Area 2.
      2. Amend (a) (2) (B) (iii) of 5 AAC 21.353 Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan to require one of the two regular periods be in the Kenai and Kasilof section of the Upper Sub-District
      3. Eliminate Area 1 from July 9 –July 15.
  - c. Central District Set Net
    - i. Maintain the mandatory 36-hour window referenced for Kenai and Kasilof.
4. Amend 5AAC 21.358 (b) to read ....”the upper end of the Kenai River inriver escapement goal”
5. Maintain the Yentna SEG at 90,000 – 130,000 at all run sizes (delete the reference to the OEG at large Kenai River run sizes).

## **Kenai Sockeye (Reference RC 156)**

1. Achieving the low ends of the Yentna, Kenai, and Kasilof sockeye escapement goals takes priority over not exceeding the top ends of any goal.
2. Establish the top end of the inriver goal at 1.1 million for Kenai River late run sockeye for all abundance levels identified in the plan.
3. Prioritize the fixed Friday window over not exceeding the top ends of the inriver goal. If the inriver goal is projected to be exceeded then the 24 hour floating window may be removed.
4. Provide Department authority to increase PU (Proposal 215) and sport fishery (Proposal 208) limits in years of large sockeye runs with an abundance trigger.

## **Kasilof sockeye (Reference RC 155)**

1. Achieving the low ends of the Yentna, Kenai and Kasilof sockeye escapement goals takes priority over not exceeding the top ends of any goal.
2. A fixed 36-hour window for the weekend fisheries takes priority over not exceeding the upper end of the OEG. This provides important personal use and sport fishery opportunity to share in large Kasilof runs. The window is particularly important for conservation of Kasilof Kings for which escapement is not monitored inseason.
3. Additional management flexibility is needed to harvest Kasilof sockeye in large run years without having to use the special terminal harvest area.
  - ✓ Provide 3 hrs of additional fishing time per week from the beginning of the fishing season.
  - ✓ Replace the 48-hour window with one fixed 36-hour (Thursday/Friday) window and one floating 24-hour window.
  - ✓ Give up the floating 24-hour window when the inriver goal for the Kasilof is projected to be exceeded.
  - ✓ Provide set net fishing opportunity on Kasilof sockeye within ½ mile of the Kasilof beaches when the Kasilof run is projected to exceed OEG but the Kenai is projected to be less than 2.0 million.
  - ✓ Reconfigure the Kasilof River Special Harvest Area.
4. Provide Department authority to increase PU (Proposal 215) and sport fishery (Proposal 208) limits in years of large sockeye runs.

We have evaluated the efficacy of the proposed plans (above) and that of the Department. In the case of the Department plan, the Yentna escapement goal continues to be missed under average run size scenarios. Under the suite of plans we off, the low end of the escapement goal in Yentna is exceeded, while we still meet management targets in Kenai and Kasilof rivers

## Comments on Proposed Research Plan

If substantive beneficial changes in Northern district sockeye management are to occur, research must provide better understanding of three primary areas:

- Allocation of commercial harvests to stock of origin, and
- Estimation of inriver abundance of sockeye salmon in the Yentna and Susitna Rivers
- Assessment of environmental (habitat) factors influencing salmon production in the Susitna drainage.

The Department's proposed research plan addresses only two of the three primary areas mentioned above.

A deficiency in the planning effort is that genetic sampling for stock composition is underrepresented. A great deal of uncertainty exists related to the stocks of origin and catch allocation. It is disappointing that the Department has not recommended that complete and timely genetic sampling take place. This sampling needs to be performed in a manner that allows commercial managers information necessary to configure fishing power that allows harvest of surplus sockeye and affords adequate conservation measures for Northern District stocks.

Current Department recommendations do include necessary improvements in estimating inriver abundance through the use of weirs. However, they have failed to include vital companion projects that allow understanding of what the weir counts mean from a drainage-wide perspective. Radio telemetry supported mark recapture estimates are necessary to provide insight into the proportional contribution the systems with weirs account for, from a drainage wide total.

The project list related to habitat is limited to only increasing fish passage in a couple of systems in the Lower Sustina River. We recommend a more comprehensive approach that will allow a greater range of habitat assessments.

## Model Analysis of Northern District Fishery Actions & RC 157 Conservation Plan

- ✓ Drift net fishery restrictions identified in RC 157 are projected to increase Yentna sockeye sonar counts by 20% and ensure that the Yentna escapement goal is met in years when it otherwise would not have been.
- ✓ Reductions in district-wide openers coupled with increased use of the Kenai/Kasilof corridor is projected to reduce central district drift net harvest by 40%.
- ✓ Reduced drift net harvest results in substantial increases in sockeye harvest by the Central District and Northern district set net fisheries.

**Table 1. Model projections of sockeye escapements and harvests under the current plan and with drift net fishery restrictions to pass northern district sockeye.**

	Model run	Sonar			Commercial harvest		
		Yentna	Kenai	Kasilof	Central Drift net	Central Set Net	N. Distr. Set Net
Current Management Plan	1	86,800	681,000	267,000	1,400,000	1,500,000	34,000
RC 157 Conservation Plan	2	106,100	810,000	309,000	800,000	1,800,000	41,000

*Avg. Susitna run (500,000), normal run timing, 3 million Kenai sockeye.*

*Model runs assume no other changes to address increased escapements of Kenai and Kasilof sockeye.*

# Model Run 1 - Current management plan

FSCAPE - Fishery Simulations in Cook Inlet Accompanying Progressive Exploitation											
Fishery			S	M	T	W	T	F	S	All	
June	WK 3	DN Dist						12		12	
		Corr								0	
		SN Kas									0
		Ken									0
June	WK 4	Oth term								0	
		DN Dist		12				12		24	
		Corr									0
		SN Kas				15	15	15	15	60	
July	WK 1	Ken								0	
		Oth term								0	
		DN Dist		12				12		24	
		Corr									0
July	WK 2	SN Kas		12	15	15	15	15	72		
		Ken								0	
		Oth term								0	
		DN Dist		12				12		24	
July	WK 3	Corr							0		
		SN Kas		18	18			12	48		
		Ken						12	12		
		Oth term							0		
July	WK 4	DN Dist		12				12	24		
		Corr								0	
		SN Kas		15	15	15	15	15	75		
		Ken		15	15	15	15	15	75		
August	WK 1	Oth term							0		
		DN Dist		12				12	24		
		Corr								0	
		SN Kas		15	15	15	15	15	75		
August	WK 2	Ken		15	15	15	15	15	75		
		Oth term							0		
		DN Dist		12				12	24		
		Corr								0	
August	WK 3	SN Kas		16	16	16	15	12	75		
		Ken		16	16	16	15	12	75		
		Oth term							0		
		DN Dist		12				12	24		
August	WK 4	Corr							0		
		SN Kas		16	16	16	15	12	75		
		Ken		16	16	16	15	12	75		
		Oth term							0		

Run

Avg runs, 3 million Kenai, current plan, normal run timing

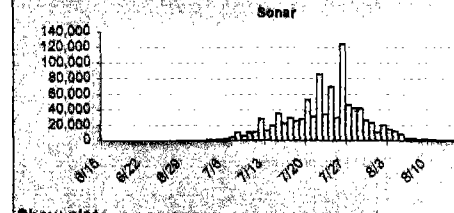
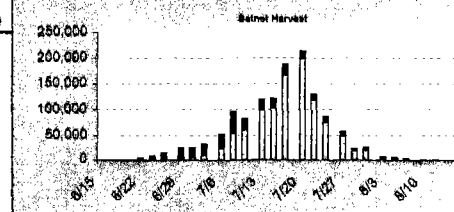
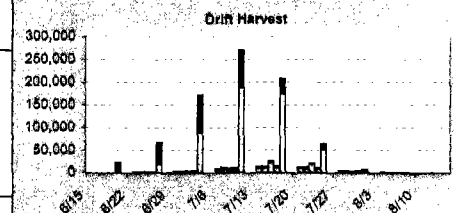
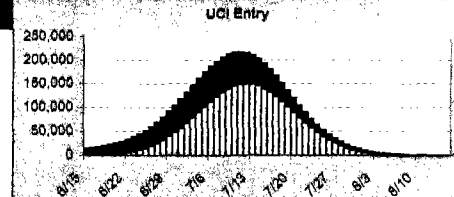
Fish		Run size	Run timing	Daily variability
Sockeye	Kenai	ε = 5,000	July 12	% 0
	Kasilof	3,000	3	0
	Susitna	1,000	6	0
	Other	500	8	0
Kings	Kenai	87	13	0
	Kasilof	57	13	0
		10		0

Fish Run Scenario		Fishery Scenario	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> Avg.	<input type="radio"/> Clear	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Current plan (3 mil)	
<input type="radio"/> 2006	<input type="radio"/> 2007	<input type="radio"/> 2004	
	<input type="radio"/> 2006	<input type="radio"/> 2003	
	<input type="radio"/> 2005	<input type="radio"/> 2002	

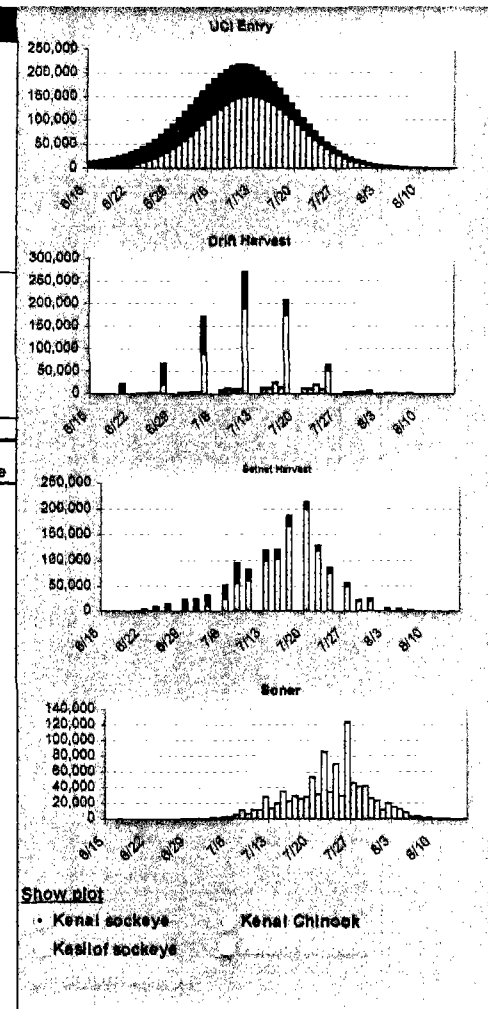
Results									
	Sockeye				Total	Share	Kings		
	Kenai	Kasilof	Susitna	Other			Kenai	Kasilof	Total
Run	3,000,000	1,000,000	500,000	500,000	5,000,000		57,000	10,000	67,000
Harvest									
Drift net	903,494	270,342	118,717	118,717	1,411,269	41%	1,189		1,189
Set net	1,190,931	293,883	41,845	7,264	1,533,903	45%	15,587		15,587
Subtotal	2,094,424	564,205	160,562	125,981	2,945,173	87%	16,777		16,777
PU	185,791	47,788	0	0	233,579	7%	915		915
Sport	207,983	16,612	0	0	224,594	7%	15,951		15,951
Subtotal	393,773	64,399	0	0	458,173	13%	16,866		16,866
Total	2,488,198	628,604	160,562	125,981	3,403,345		33,642		33,642
N Distr comm				33,944					
Escape									
Sonar	881,355	267,032	86,821				39,540		39,540
Escape	511,119	267,032	287,617	0	1,065,767		25,357		25,357
Stock comp									
Drift net	64%	19%	8%	8%	100%		100%		100%
Set net	78%	19%	3%	0%	100%		100%		100%
Total	71%	19%	5%	4%	100%		100%		100%
Expl rate									
Drift net	30%	27%	24%	24%	28%		2%		2%
Set net	40%	29%	8%	1%	31%		27%		23%
PU	8%	5%	0%	0%	5%		2%		1%
Sport	7%	2%	0%	0%	4%		28%		24%
Total	83%	63%	32%	25%	68%		59%		50%



Show plot  
 • Kenai sockeye  
 • Kenai Chinook  
 • Kasilof sockeye

# Model Run 2 - RC 157 Drift Fishery Restriction to Pass N. Dist. sockeye

FSCAPE - Fishery Simulations in Cook Inlet Accompanying Progressive Exploitation																						
Fishery			S	M	T	W	T	F	S	All	Fish											
June	Wk 3	DN Dist						12		12	Run size	ε = 5,000	Run timing	Daily variability	Sockeye							
		Corr						12		12					Kenai							
		SN Kas								0					Kasilof							
		Ken								0					Susitna							
	Oth term								0	Other					67	July	%					
	Wk 4	DN Dist							12						12	Kenai	57	12	0			
		Corr		12	12	12			12						48	Kasilof	10	3	0			
		SN Kas				15	15	15	15						60		8	0				
		Ken													0		8	0				
	Oth term									0						13	0					
	July	Wk 1	DN Dist						12						12	Fish Run Scenario			Fishery Scenario			
			Corr		12	12	12			12						48	Avg.			Clear		
SN Kas			12	15	15	15	15				72	2007			2004							
Ken											0	2006			2003							
Oth term										0	2005			2002								
Wk 2		DN Dist							12		12	Results										
		Corr		12	12	12	12	12			60	Sockeye			Kings							
		SN Kas	18	18					12		48	Kenai	Kasilof	Susitna	Other	Total	Share	Kenai	Kasilof	Total	Share	
		Ken							12		12	Run	3,000,000	1,000,000	500,000	500,000	5,000,000		67,000	10,000	67,000	
Oth term										0	Harvest											
Wk 3		DN Dist							12		12	Drift net	525,552	179,639	38,840	57,061	801,093	28%	899		899	3%
		Corr		12	12	12			12		48	Set net	1,385,388	328,183	46,200	7,264	1,767,035	57%	15,656		15,656	47%
	SN Kas		16					16		32	Subtotal	1,910,940	507,822	85,040	64,325	2,568,127	82%	16,555		16,555	49%	
	Ken		16					16		32	PU	227,489	59,181	0	0	286,670	9%	922		922	3%	
Oth term									0	Sport	252,622	19,940	0	0	272,561	9%	16,057		16,057	48%		
Wk 4	DN Dist		12					12		24	Subtotal	480,110	79,121	0	0	559,231	18%	16,979		16,979	51%	
	Corr									0	Total	2,391,050	586,943	85,040	64,325	3,127,358		33,534		33,534		
	SN Kas		15	15		15	15	15	15	75	N Distr comm											
	Ken		15	15		15	15	15	15	75	Escape											
Oth term									0	Sonar	810,885	308,694	106,114	0	1,268,480		39,759		39,759			
August	Wk 1	DN Dist		12				12		24	Escape	608,266	308,694	351,520	0	1,268,480		25,482		25,482		
		Corr								0	Stock comp											
		SN Kas		15	15		15	15	15	15	75	Drift net	66%	22%	5%	7%	100%		100%		100%	
		Ken		15	15		15	15	15	15	75	Set net	78%	19%	3%	0%	100%		100%		100%	
	Oth term									0	Total	74%	20%	3%	3%	100%		100%		100%		
	Wk 2	DN Dist		12					12		24	Expl rate										
		Corr									0	Drift net	18%	18%	8%	11%	18%		2%		1%	
		SN Kas		16	16	16	15	12			75	Set net	46%	33%	9%	1%	35%		27%		23%	
Ken			16	16	16	15	12			75	PU	8%	6%	0%	0%	8%		2%		1%		
Oth term									0	Sport	8%	2%	0%	0%	5%		28%		24%			
Run											Total	80%	59%	17%	13%	63%		59%		50%		



Avg runs, 3 million Kenai, normal run timing, Drift restrictions to pass northern sockeye (RC 157)

# STATE OF ALASKA

Central Peninsula Fish & Game  
Advisory Committee

Sarah Palin, Governor

David Martin, Chair  
PO Box 468  
Clam Gulch, AK 99568

Feb. 9, 2008

RC 173

Comments on Committee A are not complete. The report records only one proposal in which the SSFP was addressed. Representing the Central Peninsula AC as chairman and panel delegate on committee A I specifically made it a point, as directed by the board, to incorporate the SSFP criteria in our comments on all proposals. Our position referencing the SSFP criteria for the committee A proposals that our AC supported is that the proposal would comply with the SSFP criteria. Those proposals our AC opposed would not comply with the SSFP criteria.

David Martin

Chairman, Central Peninsula AC



RL174

Sockeye Salmon Action Plan Comments  
Submitted by: United Cook Inlet Drift Association  
February 9, 2008

- 1) Suggest wording change on page 2:  
Add the word "yield" in title to read "Action plan for addressing Stock of Yield Concern."
- 2) AAC 21.358 Northern District Salmon Management Plan (NDSMP).  
Potential modification to 5AAC 21.358 (NDSMP) page 4,

Paragraph (c): lines 2-3 "*Sockeye salmon stocks will be managed conservatively...*". Please remove the wording "conservatively managed" and replace with "managed historically"

Paragraph (c) (4) change wording to: "The central district gillnet fishery will be managed to meet sockeye salmon escapement goals." Rational: the action plan as prepared contains new allocative language that is restrictive. Historical management practices are appropriate until new information warrants a change in policy.

- 3) 5AAC 21.352 Central District Gillnet Management Plan page 5  
Reference: (a)(2)(A)(i) July 9-15  
(a)(2)(B)(i) July 16-31

The proposed wording is acceptable as long as every one recognizes that Commissioner's EO authority is not restricted by the action plan.

Comment: in 2009 and 2010 the Kenai stock may be very weak while other stocks are performing well. The design for Area 1 is Kenai River related and some areas may need to be adjusted to protect weak Kenai stocks.

- 4) Research Plan general comment.

a. We would like flexibility regarding experimental practices or have a note that some experimental remediation techniques are provided for and anticipated in the action plan.

b. We would prefer to have remediation as part of the action plan in conjunction with research as soon as sufficient research information is clear to warrant proceeding with remediation.

c. How does this action plan relate to the Regional Planning Team (RPT) process?

Feb. 9, 2009

Alaska Board of Fisheries Members,

While you know that Matanuska Valley AC supports Proposal 119, I would like to discuss the recently released draft ADF&G action plan the Board may be considering with adoption of the Yentna / Susitna sockeye salmon as a Stock of Concern on a yield basis as measured by the Northern District Set Net Fishery.

I believe there may be consensus among all user groups that the Northern District Set Netters have been bearing the largest conservation burden for Yentna / Susitna sockeye salmon in that the Northern District fishery has at times been entirely closed.

Meanwhile, Central District commercial fisheries may have been somewhat restricted (by area), but usually received additional hours of fishing time. In the case of the Central District Drift Net Fleet, a "RESTRICTED" fishery Inlet wide, South of Kalgin Island during the first half of July has proven to be a restriction in name only. A "RESTRICTION" allowing the Drift Fleet to roam the huge Area 1 (including the point farthest from the terminal areas where stocks may have started to separate) and then results in a Drift Fleet record catch per unit effort as occurred in 2007 should be seen for what it really is: a dramatic liberalization to the fishery. This LIBERALIZATION to the fishery adopted at the 2005 Board of Fisheries meeting as a "conservation measure," resulted in the all time lowest Yentna Sonar sockeye escapement count of roughly 37,000 fish in 2005.

Matanuska Valley AC strongly believes, "ADF&G should manage the Central District drift gillnet fishery to conserve Susitna drainage sockeye salmon," to paraphrase ADF&G from page 4 point 4 of the Department's draft action plan (RC 154). The AC, however, believes continuing to use the same Drift Fleet management practices that have resulted in rapidly declining yields from the Northern District Set Net Fishery, and the lowest recorded Yentna River sockeye sonar count on record, should in no way be considered conservative management. Following such a path (even if the Northern Set Netter were allowed to fish with one net) seems likely to result in continued low yield from the Northern set net fishery, with an even higher probability that Yentna Sonar counts could continue to decline. Such a decline over a few years time could rocket a Yentna Sockeye Stock of Yield Concern up to a Stock of Management Concern.

If the Board adopts a Stock of Yield Concern status for Susitna River sockeye salmon, Matanuska Valley AC suggests adopting an action plan that would fit a dictionary definition of "conservative management." As the AC representative I offer 2 suggestions:

1. Consider the RC172 plan option developed by Kenai River Sportfishing Association.
2. Request the Department develop one, two, or three additional draft action plans options that a rational person would honestly expect to conserve Sustina sockeye salmon, and that would follow the Department's own Precautionary Principle.

Sincerely,

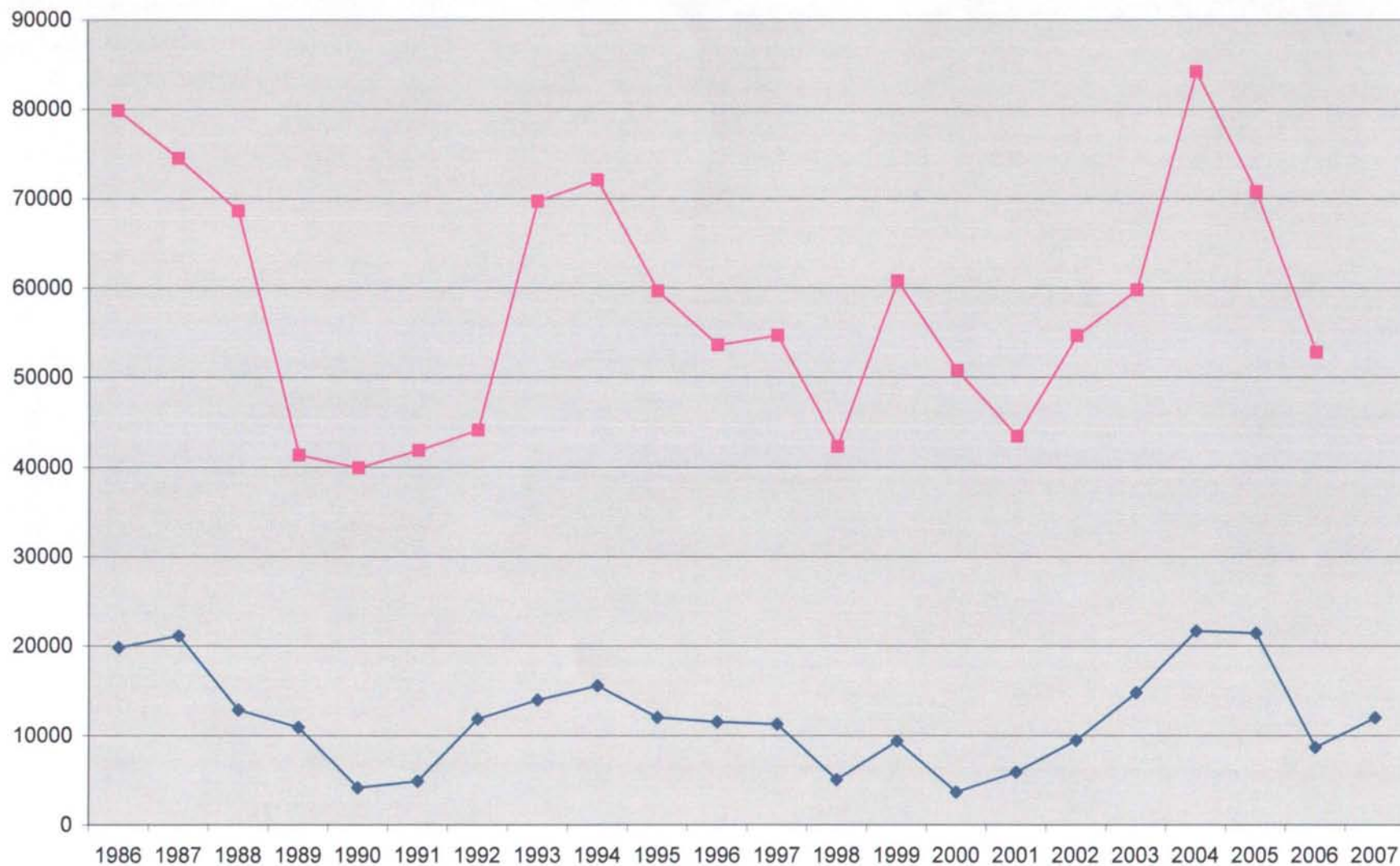
Andy Couch  
Matanuska Valley AC

RC176

Late Run Kenai River Chinook Salmon 1986-2007

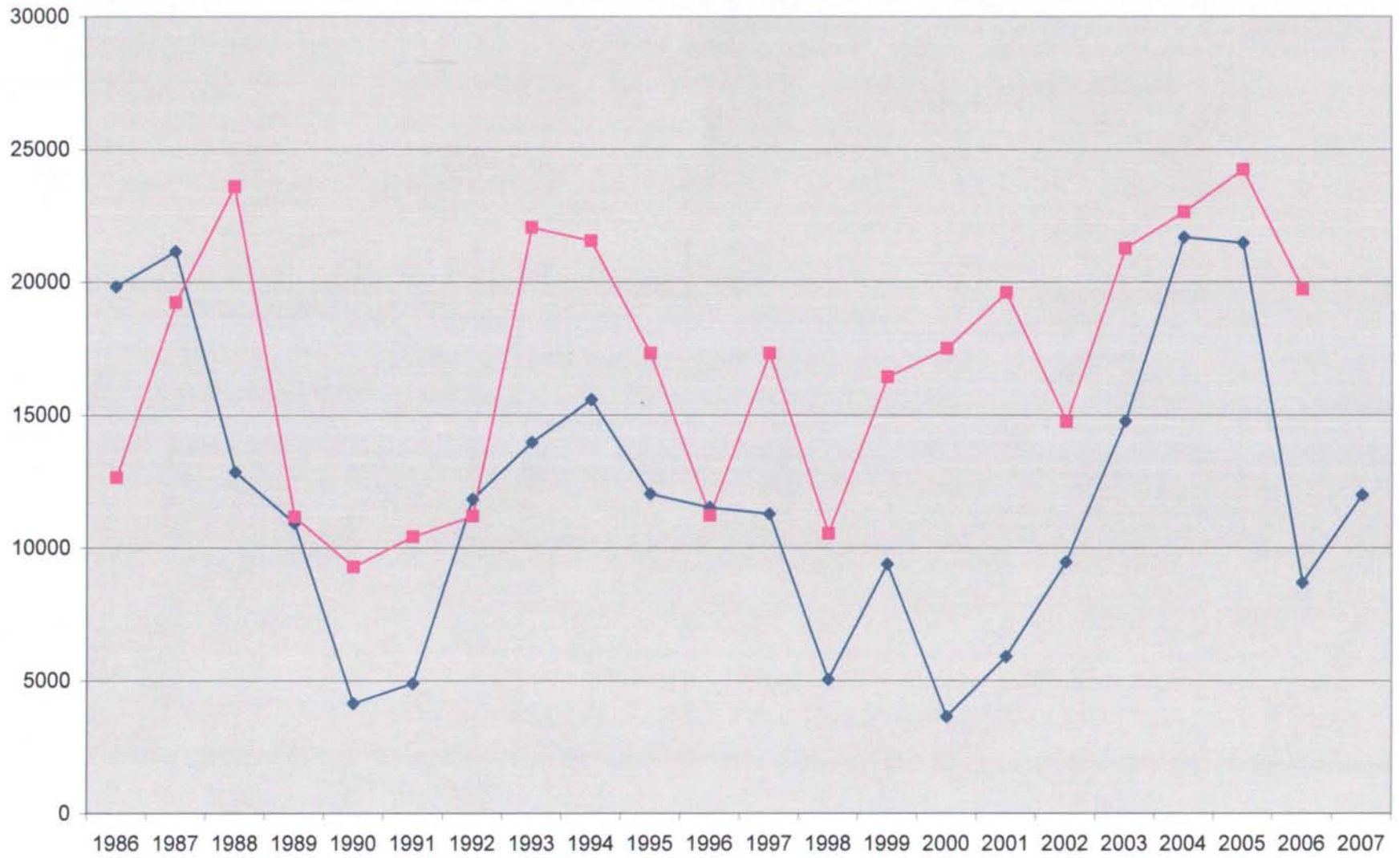
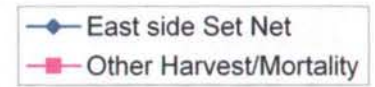
East Side Set Net vs Total Return

East side Set Net  
Total Return



# Late Run Kenai River Chinook Salmon 1986-2007

## East side set net harvest vs all other harvest/mortality



**Proposal 83 Description of Potential Options**

Regulations Affected

General Regulation	Specific Regulation	Who it affects
5AAC 21.310 Seasons	5 AAC 21.310(b)(2)(C)(i)(ii)(iii) 5 AAC 21.310(b)(3)	set gillnet drift gillnets
5AAC 21.360 Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye	none	set & drift gillnets
5AAC 21.365 Kasiof River Sockeye Plan	none	set & drift gillnets
5AAC 21.353 Central District Drift Plan	5AAC 21.353(a)(2)(C)	drift gillnets
5AAC 21.356 Drift Gillnet Pink Plan	5AAC 21.356(c)(1)	drift gillnets

**What the Proposal Would Do**

1. Includes both set and drift gillnet fisheries. These fisheries would be directed at pink and sockeye salmon. Estimates from SF Division for Kenai River coho salmon harvested during this time frame is 1% exploitation per day, or approximately 1,800 Kenai coho per period fished from both set and drift fisheries combined (see RC 83, pp 6-7). The average total Kenai River coho salmon run from 2000-2004 was 159,000 fish. This proposal addresses some of the issues with large sockeye salmon escapements that have been occurring in Aug. in the Kenai.
2. From August 11-15, both fisheries would fish regularly scheduled 12-hour periods only (Mon & Thurs)
  - a. From 2008-2011 this would add
    - \* 2008: 2 periods
    - \* 2009: 1 period
    - \* 2010: 1 period
3. **Options to consider:**
  - a. Use the 1% harvest rule from the first period to close second period 5AAC 21.320(b)(c)(iii)  
Currently the set gillnet fishery closes any time after Aug 1 when the harvest from two consecutive fishing periods is less than 1% of the season total sockeye salmon harvest (East Side Setnet fishery only).
  - b. Currently drift gillnetting closes for district wide periods on Aug 10. Fishing after Aug 10 is confined to the west side with no closing date. On even years only, the first Mon, Wed, and Fri after Aug 10 allows drift gillnetting in the pink salmon area. Could include modifying or eliminating the Pink Salmon Management Plan (5AAC 21.356) in committee C

Re: Committee E Report  
Proposal 255: Early Run King Regulations

Correction: Report needs to reference RC 139

RC 139 is a proposed amendment submitted by a coalition sport fishers

- ✓ Kenai Area Fisheries Coalition
- ✓ Kenai River Sportfishing Association
- ✓ Kenai River Professional Guide Association
- ✓ Cooper Landing Advisory Committee

**Proposed changes**

1. Increase slot limit from 44"-55" to 46"-55".
2. Allowing retention of one additional fish 28" or smaller per day.
  - ✓ Anglers may retain one fish larger than 28" and one fish 28" or less per day.
  - ✓ Anglers may continue to fish after retaining one fish 28" or less.
  - ✓ Anglers must cease fishing for the day after retaining a fish larger than 28".
  - ✓ There would be no annual limit on early run kings 28" or smaller.
  - ✓ Current annual limits and tag recording requirements for kings larger than 28" would stay the same.
3. Extend tributary sanctuary closures from January 1 through July 31
4. Extend the Killey sanctuary to upstream areas adjacent to the lower end of Torpedo Island [amended Proposal 269].
5. Increase harvest in the early run by opening the season with bait allowed.

---

RC 139 is biologically sound. The early run consistently exceeds the goals even with the proposed increase in harvest.

ADFG has the authority and in-season monitoring to protect escapement when RC 139 is adopted.

RC 158 subsequently submitted by ADFG fails to include the full suite of changes in RC 139.

Board of Fisheries Members,

As recorded in Committee G report, Matanuska Valley AC supports Proposals 338 and 339 which would adjust management of the Deshka River king salmon sport fishery.

Concerning 338 which would allow fishing 24 hours per day rather than the current 6 a.m. - 11 p.m. regulation: The regulation has been liberalized to a 24 hour fishery each of the past 3 years, and when a regulation has a pattern of being changed by emergency order for 3 or more years it is time to consider adopting the more liberal change, rather than printing the old standard in the sport regulation book, then confusing the public with an emergency order that lasts practically the entire duration of the sport king salmon fishery on a yearly basis.

While not open as many days per season, there are currently several much less productive Susinta drainage king salmon fisheries that are open on a 24 hour per day basis. The Board should also consider the magnitude of the Deshka River fishery. For 6 of the past 7 years king salmon escapement has been above the top end of the Deshka River King Salmon Escapement Goal Range, and in 2007 the king salmon count past Deshka River weir was more than six thousand king salmon above the minimum Deshka River escapement goal level. ADF&G's projection for the 2007 season is for a total Deshka River king salmon return topping 20,000 king salmon, which could still allow for a harvest of up to 7,000 king salmon, and remain within the BEG goal range. According to the ADF&G biologist, annual king salmon sport harvests from Deshka River usually fall in the range of 4,000 - 6,000 king salmon. Thus, ADF&G's own numbers show the resource is available, the change has been used for the past 3 years, and the AC is simply asking that it be adopted into regulation. Finally, Deshka River is the only stream in Northern Cook Inlet where ADF&G maintains a weir counting in season king salmon escapements, so if a less than desirable king salmon escapement was to materialize, ADF&G could quickly make an in season adjustment by Emergency Order.

Proposal 339 would allow a king salmon season extension when more than 20,500 king salmon had passed the Deshka River weir on or before July 10: This season extension would only occur on years when ADF&G documented a harvestable surplus of king salmon. The ADF&G management biologist has said the Department has the ability to trigger this kind of in season change by emergency order, but while this may be true, the reason the AC brought this proposal to the Board is that even though ADF&G weir counts have been completely over the top end of the Deshka River king salmon escapement goal range for 6 of the past 7 years, the Department only issued one emergency order to extend the Deshka River king salmon sport fishery. Board adoption of this proposal would allow users to maximize the benefit from this valuable resource as required in the State Constitution. ADF&G has expressed concern over what would happen if the Deshka River Weir project were discontinued: the answer is simple. Without a Deshka River Weir count, the season extension would not occur, so this is a non issue. Proposal supported by Matanuska Valley AC and Anchorage AC.

Sincerely,

Andy Couch

Matanuska Valley AC

Spawning		
Species	Location	Time
Coho	Headwaters	Late Summer/Fall
Sockeye	Near Lakes	Mid Summer
Chinook	River	Mid Summer
Pink	Lower streams	Late Summer
Chum	upwelling	Mid-Late Summer
Rainbow	Small Streams	Spring
Dolly Varden	Streams/Rivers	Fall



Carcasses become Food and Fertilizer



Eggs in Grave



Spawning Adults



Growing in Ocean

Ocean Feeding and Migration (years in ocean)		
Species	Typical	Range
Coho	1	none
Sockeye	2	1 to 3
Chinook	3	1 to 5
Pink	1	none
Chum	3	1 to 4
Steelhead	2	1 to 3
Dolly Varden	3 or 4	3 to 5



Migrate as Smolt



Overwinter

**SALMONID LIFE CYCLES**



Amended Language for Proposal 301, Committee F, chair John Jenson.

-From January 1 through December 31, in the section of the Upper Kenai River between the ADFG marker approximately ¼ mile above the Sterling HWY bridge at the outlet to Kenai Lake downstream to the ADFG marker at approximately river mile 87 at the beginning of the “drift only” area.

-No person may deploy sport fishing gear from a vessel after a motor has been used to propel that vessel on the same day. A motor may only be used in this section of the river after fishing has ceased for the day.

Substitute language for proposal 98

5 AAC 21.353(b) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

(b) For the purposes of this section,

**(5) From June 19 until closed by emergency order**

**(A) fishing with drift gillnets may not occur within one and one-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, whenever the set gillnets in that area are closed;**

**(B) fishing with drift gillnets may not occur within 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, whenever the set gillnets in that area are closed;**

February 10, 2008

Submitted by: United Cook Inlet Drift Association

**Subject:** Protest of Department Enforcement Comments on **Proposal # 74** "Prohibition on the use of Aircraft"

During deliberations on Proposal # 74 to prohibit the use of spotter aircraft, ADF&G Department Enforcement staff characterized the use of spotter aircraft as a means to frustrate enforcement efforts and aid in illegal fishing activity. This characterization appears to be based on conjecture and is factually incorrect. We request that the Department either substantiate these claims or correct the public record.

Whether intended or not by the Department, the Board was led to believe that enforcement was significantly impacted by the use of spotter aircraft. Board Chairman Mel Morris stated that he voted in favor of reauthorizing the use of spotter aircraft during the 2005 meeting and now "feels betrayed" by the fishermen after hearing of such abuse. This perception if left uncorrected could significantly impact present and future Board deliberations; and negatively impact public perception.

During the Committee "A" meeting, the Enforcement staff comments were challenged as not being factually correct. Public members of Committee "A" pointed out that since reauthorization of spotter aircraft in 2005, only three Radio Groups of fishermen elected to hire spotter aircraft. These three groups account for less than 15 percent of the fishing fleet. Typical radio group behavior is to only communicate within the radio group. It is highly improbable that pilots were "spotting enforcement patrols and informing the fleet." Claimed abuse of spotter aircraft during restrictive corridor fishing periods is also implausible. Due to the limited area of the east side corridor, spotter aircraft are ineffective and did not fly these openings. Typically the only aircraft in the sky during these periods is the Department's enforcement aircraft. It is also worthwhile to note that the two Board members that voted in opposition to prohibiting the use of spotter aircraft were Committee "A" Board members that were present during Committee "A" and had the benefit of those committee discussions on Proposal # 74.

We are not requesting that Proposal # 74 be reconsidered by the Board. The commercial drift boat fleet is split on this issue of whether spotter aircraft should be allowed. The issue as viewed by the fleet is the relative economic effectiveness of spotter aircraft as it relates to "fast" boats versus "slower" boats with the economic advantage going to the "fast" boats in the fleet. Board Member Vince Webster's deliberation comments in regard to the safety concerns are valid. Board Member Howard Delo's deliberation comments in regard to over capitalization and economic viability are also valid. The low utilization of spotter aircraft within the fleet during the previous three years would suggest that their economic viability is limited.

We respectfully request that the Department correct the public record or substantiate the claims of the alleged illegal activity.

RC 184

February 10, 2008

State Of Alaska  
Department of Fish and Game  
Board Support Section  
Chairman Mel Morris

P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Chairman Morris,

South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Alliance (SOKI), is an alliance of Cook Inlet south K-Beach (stat area 244-31) set-net fishing people. Formed in 2006 after the closure to our area in harvesting Kasilof bound sockeye.

**Comments Committee A**

**Proposal 102, 103**

Please do not support these proposals.

**Proposal 104**

Please support this proposal.

Please review RC 84, RC 167/ additional material submitted 2/10/08

Topics of information submitted:

- 1) Gillnet Gear Evaluation Study in Southeastern Alaska 1987, ADF&G October 1988
- 2) Illegal High Seas Driftnet Fishing Still a Problem in North Pacific, Fish Rap December 2007
- 3) The Impact of Longline and Gillnet Fishing on Seabirds, BC Seafood Alliance, [www.bcseafoodalliance.com](http://www.bcseafoodalliance.com)
- 4) Regarding High Seas Gillnet Fishing, Alaska Board of Fisheries, Resolution 83-109-FB
- 5) St. Lawrence River Fish, A. Mathers, and B.J. Morrison
- 6) Seabird by catch reduction: new tools for Puget Sound drift gillnet salmon fisheries, 1996 Sockeye and 1995 Chum Salmon Test Fisheries Final Report: Executive Summary
- 7) Fisheries Research Unit Plan 2000 & 2001, Government of Malawi, Department of Fisheries

Documentation in support of this proposal will be submitted in RC's by the following people, including myself, Paul A. Shadura II, Paul A. Shadura III, and Christine Brandt.

Paul A. Shadura II

RCS

GILLNET GEAR EVALUATION STUDY  
IN SOUTHEASTERN ALASKA 1987

By  
Marianna Alexandersdottir,  
Joseph Muir  
And  
Brian Lynch

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Division of Commercial Fisheries  
Juneau, Alaska

October 1988

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## ABSTRACT

Four test fisheries were conducted in Southeastern Alaska in 1987. The objective was to compare the efficiencies of four different mesh types including multifilament, monotwist with center core, six-strand monofilament and single-strand monofilament. The experiments were conducted in two districts, glacial and clear water and in two time-periods, *summer* for sockeye and pink salmon and fall for coho and chum salmon. The results showed a general increase in efficiency with six- and single-strand efficiency. Analysis of variance tests shows that single-strand was significantly more efficient in catching pink salmon in both districts, and that six- and single-strand were significantly more efficient for coho and chum salmon in the clear water district. No significant differences were found for sockeye salmon.

**KEYWORDS:** Salmon, Southeastern Alaska, gillnet mesh efficiency.



thread. Essentially "mono-twist with center core" gillnet mesh was the same as six-strand monofilament gillnet mesh.

Recognizing the physical similarities between "mono-twist with center core" gillnet mesh and the less expensive six-strand monofilament gillnet, the Alaska Board of Fisheries legalized six-strand monofilament gillnet gear in several areas of the state, including Southeast Alaska beginning in 1988.

Southeast Alaska has 4 distinct drift gillnet salmon fisheries, located in regulation districts 101, 106 and 108, 111, and 115 (Figure 1). Gillnet catch-per-unit-of-effort (CPUE) is used by the Department of Fish and Game as a major indicator of the strength of the salmon returns and is used to manage these fisheries. Inseason CPUE is compared to historical averages to decide weekly gillnet fishing time and areas opened to gillnet fishing. In addition, gillnet coho salmon CPUE is monitored by the Department as an indication of coho salmon abundance in the inside waters of Southeast Alaska, and is used as a data base to manage the outside troll coho salmon fishery.

As a result of the recent gear changes in the Southeast Alaska gillnet fisheries, it is unknown to what extent salmon CPUE patterns during the past few years are reflective of changes in gillnet gear efficiency and therefore not reflective of run strength. In order to standardize inseason and historical CPUE to more accurately manage the Southeast Alaska's gillnet fisheries and outside coho salmon troll fishery, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game conducted a gillnet gear evaluation study during 1987.




## Catch Rates

Examination of the observed distribution of catch per hour fished indicated that it tended to be skewed to the right. A log-transformation was used to normalize the data prior to the analysis and the mean CPUE and 95% confidence intervals were calculated using log-transformed data and the mean and confidence interval transformed back to the original variable (Table 10 and 11, Figure 5). Although there seemed to be a general trend in CPUE with multifilament being the least efficient and single strand the most efficient (Figure 5), the results of the statistical analyses comparing the CPUE between mesh types differed depending on the species and areas fished (Table 12).

### Sockeye Salmon

Total mean CPUE for sockeye salmon ranged from 1.7 to 2.6 fish per hour caught in Taku Inlet (Figure 5), with peaks of 5.2 to 11.3 fish per hour in the second week (Table 10). In Sumner Strait the mean CPUE ranged from 1.3 to 1.6 and the peak catches occurred in the first week ranging from 4.1 to 10.6 fish per hour fished. The results from the ANOVA showed no significant differences in CPUE between mesh types for sockeye salmon (Table 12).



## Pink Salmon

The CPUE for pink salmon (Figure 5) was found to differ significantly between mesh types in Taku Inlet (Table 12). The CPUE ranged from 5.8 to 11.1 fish per hour in Taku Inlet and 1.3 to 4.0 fish in Sumner Strait (Table 10). The single strand gear was the most efficient type of mesh for catching pink salmon in both areas, and was significantly different from multifilament and center-core gear in Taku Inlet (Table 13).

The relative efficiencies of these mesh types for pink salmon ranged from 1.3 to 2.2 in Taku Inlet and 1.0 to 3.0 in Sumner Strait (Table 14). The single strand gear was twice as efficient as multifilament gear in Taku Inlet (Table 14) and three times as efficient as multifilament in Sumner Straits (Figure 6).

## Coho Salmon

The CPUE values were relatively low in all weeks for coho salmon (Table 11), with the means ranging from 0.8 to 1.1 in Taku Inlet and 0.5 to 1.2 in Sumner Strait (Figure 5). The results of the ANOVA tests for coho salmon differed between Taku Inlet and Sumner Strait (Table 12). In Taku Inlet, a glacial environment, no significant differences were found in CPUE between the mesh types (Table 12). In the clear water area, Sumner Strait, a significant difference in CPUE was found for coho salmon (Table 12), where single strand gear was significantly more efficient than multifilament, but no other comparison was significant (Table 13).

The relative efficiencies of mesh types ranged from 1.3 to 1.8 in Taku Inlet and from 1.2 to 2.6 in Sumner Strait (Table 14). In Sumner Strait the single strand was almost three times more efficient than the multifilament (Figure 6).

#### Chum Salmon

The mean CPUE ranged from 1.5 to 2.1 for chum salmon in Taku Inlet and from 0.3 to 0.8 in Sumner Strait (Figure 5). In Taku Inlet a high catch occurred in the fourth week of 3.4 to 5.6 fish per hour fished, but no similar peak occurred in Sumner Strait where catches remained low for the duration of the test fishery (Table 11). In Taku Inlet there was a significant difference in CPUE between mesh types for female chum salmon (Table 2), but none of the pairwise comparisons were significant (Table 13). In Sumner Strait the ANOVA tests were significant and the pairwise comparisons showed that single strand was significantly more efficient than multifilament.

The relative efficiencies for chum salmon in Sumner Strait indicate that single strand gear is over three times as efficient as multifilament (Figure 6), however the CPUE values were very low for chum salmon in all weeks in Sumner Strait.

efficiency between gear types and of estimating the relative efficiency of different mesh types. It is even more difficult to apply the results to the fisheries as the variation among the fishermen will be greater than the variation measured between sets or boats in a controlled test fishery.

Catch rates for sockeye salmon were not significantly different between the gear types compared in this study, neither in the clear water areas nor in the glacial fishing areas (Table 13). The single strand monofilament gear caught more pink salmon, independent of water clarity in this study. The mesh size used was not an optimum size for harvesting pink salmon, most of the fish were wedged in the nets (Table 8). The results would possibly be different at smaller mesh sizes, in a directed pink salmon fishery. Coho and chum salmon were caught more efficiently in single-strand gear in clear water conditions, but not in glacial water conditions (Figure 6). No difference was found between the recently legalized six-strand monofilament nylon gear and the mono-twist with center-core used commercially for the past several years (Figure 6). The six-strand gear did appear to be twice as efficient as the multifilament in clear water as represented by the Sumner Strait results (Figure 6), but these results were inconclusive in this study, probably due to low catch rates and small sample sizes.

The implication for management of these results are important. In all cases where significant differences were found, single strand was more efficient than the other gear types. This gear is not legal in Southeast Alaska, and if it were ever to become legal for use in the region's gillnet fisheries extensive adjustments would be needed to standardize the catch and effort data bases.

Table 14. Relative Efficiency of Mesh Types as Estimated by Ratios of CPUE for Test Fisheries 1987. a)

	<u>Center Core/ Multifilament</u>			<u>Six-Strand/ Multifilament</u>			<u>Single-Strand Multifilament</u>			<u>Six-Strand Center Core</u>		
	Mn	St. Err	CV	Mn	St. Err	CV	Mn	St. Err	CV	Mn	St. Err	CV
<b>Summer</b>												
<u>Taku Inlet</u>												
Sockeye	1.01	.09	25.3	1.42	.25	50.7	1.18	.13	31.1	1.39	.15	29.7
Pinks	1.26	.24	54.4	1.58	.20	35.7	2.19	.47	60.0	1.36	.12	25.0
<u>Sumner Strait</u>												
Sockeye	1.63	.33	57.9	1.78	.46	72.3	1.65	.33	56.6	1.08	.12	30.7
Pinks	1.83	.28	43.5	1.61	.21	36.8	2.96	.50	48.1	1.02	.21	56.8
<b>Fall</b>												
<u>Taku Inlet</u>												
Coho	1.33	.30	63.0	1.52	.37	68.6	1.78	.52	82.1	1.34	.36	75.2
Chum	0.98	.14	38.9	1.33	.24	50.4	1.50	.36	67.9	1.34	.07	15.4
<u>Sumner Strait</u>												
Coho	1.73	.35	49.8	1.92	.23	29.3	2.61	.56	52.7	1.21	.15	29.9
Chum	3.07	1.30	103.6	2.43	.60	60.0	3.76	.84	54.9	.99	.14	34.0

a Mn = Mean Ratio =  $\frac{\text{CPUE Mesh Type 1}}{\text{CPUE Mesh Type 2}}$

St. Err = Standard error of mean ratio.

CV = Coefficient of variation = (standard deviation/mean)\*100.

RC 185

February 10, 2008

State Of Alaska  
Department of Fish and Game  
Board Support Section  
Chairman Mel Morris

P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Chairman Morris,

South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Alliance (SOKI), is an alliance of Cook Inlet south K-Beach (stat area 244-31) set-net fishing people. Formed in 2006 after the closure to our area in harvesting Kasilof bound sockeye.

**Comments Committee A**

**Proposal 102, 103**

Please do not support these proposals.

**Proposal 104**

Please support this proposal.

Please review RC 84, RC 167/ additional material submitted 2/10/08

Topics of information submitted:

- 1) Gillnet Gear Evaluation Study in Southeastern Alaska 1987, ADF&G October 1988
- 2) Illegal High Seas Driftnet Fishing Still a Problem in North Pacific, Fish Rap December 2007
- 3) The Impact of Longline and Gillnet Fishing on Seabirds, BC Seafood Alliance, [www.bcseafoodalliance.com](http://www.bcseafoodalliance.com)
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- 5) St. Lawrence River Fish, A. Mathers, and B.J. Morrison
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Documentation in support of this proposal will be submitted in RC's by the following people, including myself, Paul A. Shadura II, Paul A. Shadura III, and Christine Brandt.

Paul A. Shadura III

# Seabird bycatch reduction: New tools for Puget Sound drift gillnet salmon fisheries

E. F. Melvin, L. L. Conquest, and J. K. Parrish

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study compared entanglement rates of seabirds and marine mammals and catch rates of salmon among up to three experimental gear treatments and a control (nylon monofilament netting) and among three time-of-day categories in two Washington non-treaty salmon fisheries: the 1996 sockeye fishery in Management Area 7, the San Juan Islands vicinity of north Puget Sound; and the 1995 fall chum fishery in Management Area 10, south Puget Sound. Because the scope of activities and seabird interactions were greater in the sockeye fishery than in the chum fishery, research in the sockeye fishery is emphasized.

This research continued a university-industry research program begun in the 1994 non-treaty sockeye fishery and continued in a 1995 sockeye test fishery. Our goal was to develop methods that eliminate or significantly reduce the incidental capture of seabirds in salmon gillnet fisheries without significantly reducing the fishing efficiency of the nets. This work was funded by a grant from the National Marine Fisheries Service Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program and by Washington Sea Grant.

Experimental nets incorporated either visual or acoustic alerts into traditional nylon monofilament gear. Visual barrier nets were monofilament nets with highly visible netting replacing the upper quarter (50 Mesh) or upper eighth (20 Mesh) of the net. Acoustic alert nets were monofilament nets with low frequency sound-emitting devices (pingers) attached to the corkline. Pingers were tested in the 1996 sockeye test fishery only. Fishing time was divided into three categories: morning change of light (AM COL), daytime, and evening change of light (PM COL). Puget Sound Gillnetters' Association fishing vessels were contracted by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to fish experimental nets in a Washington State Test Fishery under our research protocol.

During the 1996 sockeye test fishery, we caught 13,151 sockeye salmon in 642 sets during seventeen fishing trips from 28 July to 29 August. This level of effort exceeded our minimum effort target of 600 sets by 7%. During the 1995 chum test fishery, we caught 6,822 chum salmon in 107 sets in eight fishing trips from 25 October to 11 November. This level of effort met our minimum effort target of 100 sets. Both test fisheries were highly selective for the target species relative to other salmon species: sockeye salmon accounted for 98.4% of the salmon caught in the 1996 sockeye test fishery and chum salmon accounted for 99.7% of the salmon catch in the 1995 chum fishery.

In the 1996 sockeye test fishery, common murrelets were the most abundant seabird in the study area (30.7 sightings/set) a rate 59 times greater than what we observed in our earlier research in the 1995 test sockeye fishery. Rhinoceros auklets made up almost all other alcid sightings and were almost three times more abundant in 1996 (4.5 sightings/set) than in 1995. A total of 349 alcids were entangled: 260 common murrelets (75% of the total), 87 rhinoceros auklets, one pigeon guillemot, and one marbled murrelet. Murrelet entanglement rates were 15 times higher than in the 1995 sockeye test fishery (0.60 murrelets/set vs. 0.04 murrelets/set); rhinoceros auklet entanglement rates were 2.8 times higher than 1995 (0.20 auklets/set vs. 0.07 auklets/set in 1995). Seabird and sockeye abundance changed dramatically within the 1996 sockeye season but in opposing patterns. During the final weeks of the fishery, sockeye catch rates dropped off to trace levels (about two fish/set) and murrelet abundance peaked at near 100

sightings per set.

In the 1995 chum test fishery, there were fewer alcids present than in either the 1996 or 1995 sockeye fisheries in Area 7 and abundance patterns were most similar to the sockeye fishery in 1995. Rhinoceros auklets were the most abundant seabird (0.51 auklet sightings/set) but they were three times less abundant than in the 1995 sockeye and nine times less abundant than in 1996 sockeye test fisheries. Common murre were few (0.1 murre sightings/set) five times fewer than the 1995 sockeye test fishery and dramatically fewer (over 300 times) than the 1996 sockeye test fishery. Eleven rhinoceros auklets and twelve common murre were entangled. Murre and auklet entanglement rates exceeded those of the 1995 sockeye test fishery by four times and 1.6 times, respectively.

In the 1996 sockeye test fishery, entanglement rates of common murre and rhinoceros auklets and catch rates of sockeye salmon varied significantly among the experimental gears, time-of-day categories, and locations tested; however, the patterns of variation among all these factors were species specific. Pinger, 20 Mesh and 50 Mesh gears entangled alcids at rates 58%, 55%, and 50% (respectively) of the monofilament control; sockeye catch rates were 85%, 88% and 39%, respectively. In the 1995 chum test fishery, chum salmon catch rates varied significantly among the three gear types tested; however, alcid entanglement rates did not.

In the 1996 sockeye test fishery, daytime and evening change-of-light sets (COL) entangled alcids at rates of 36% and 68% respectively of those made during the morning COL, whereas sockeye catch rates were 79% and 74% respectively. In the 1995 chum test fishery, neither alcid entanglement rates nor chum catch rates varied significantly by the three time-of-day categories tested; however, the pattern and magnitude of variation was similar to that observed in the 1996 sockeye fishery.

Results of this study identify three basic tools that can be used to reduce seabird bycatch in Puget Sound salmon drift gillnet fisheries: abundance-based or ecosystem management, alternative gear, and time-of-day. The dramatic inter-annual and in-season variation of seabird abundance in Puget Sound is the most important factor determining the rate of seabird entanglements in Area 7. Inter-year and intra-season sources of variation in seabird abundance provide great opportunity for improved management of the fishery based on an ecosystem management concept.

We confirmed that visual barriers are an effective seabird bycatch reduction tool. The 20 Mesh gear met our original goal of significantly reducing seabird bycatch without significantly reducing fishing efficiency. It was tested and proved in multiple fisheries, and was conceived by and endorsed by the Puget Sound Gillnetters' Association as an acceptable tool to reduce seabird bycatch in this fishery. 50 Mesh nets, those with the deeper of the two visual barriers tested, were eliminated as possible seabird reduction tools because they did not meet goals of the research program, were impractical to fish, and entangled porpoise. Although pingers have the greatest potential as tools to reduce seabird bycatch in a wide range of gillnet fisheries, we do not recommend these devices as alternatives for Puget Sound at this time because we believe that they can be improved, results need to be duplicated, and the prototype device is not commercially available. The time of day that gillnets are fished significantly affects seabird bycatch rates. Elimination of morning change-of-light fishing is likely to reduce most rhinoceros auklet entanglements and contribute significantly to reducing common murre entanglements.

Although seabird bycatch and sockeye catch varied significantly by location, areas of high salmon catch and high seabird bycatch tended to overlap, eliminating the possibility of significantly reducing seabird bycatch without significantly reducing salmon catch through zonal or area closures within Management Area 7. Data suggest that the number of birds in the vicinity of the net is probably the most important factor influencing the entanglement rates of seabirds, but that sea state and weather also might be important.



Employing all available tools, fishing 20 Mesh nets at times of high fish abundance during openings that include either daytime and dusk or daylight-only fishing, have the potential to reduce seabird bycatch by up to 70% to 75% in years similar to 1996.

### Recommendations

Based on this research, we recommend several management actions that will reduce the bycatch of alcid seabirds in Puget Sound drift gillnet fisheries and enhance seabird conservation in the shared waters of Washington and Canada. Recommendations focus on institutional change for fishery and wildlife management agencies as well as fishery practices. We recommend the following:

- Make seabird conservation an objective of all fishery management agencies with jurisdiction over Puget Sound and its adjacent waters.
- Implement seabird bycatch reduction measures that are comprehensive, extending to all fishers regardless of country or treaty status.
- Link seabird data from existing on-colony, outer coast and Puget Sound survey programs with seabird abundance data collected on the fishing grounds.
- Prioritize the development of a comprehensive seabird abundance data set and incorporate it into the fishery management process via wildlife management agencies responsible for seabird conservation.
- Manage the fishery interactively using real time seabird and fish abundance data.
- Eliminate morning change-of-light sets in the gillnet fishery and restrict fishing to daylight hours in years of high murre abundance.
- Require 20 Mesh nets (upper 20 meshes replaced with white, highly visible seine twine) to replace traditional monofilament drift gillnets in the Area 7/7A Fraser River sockeye fishery, and allow time for full compliance. The effectiveness of the 20 Mesh gear in the fall chum fishery has not been proved, and therefore, is not recommended.

A Publication of the University of Washington pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Award NA56FD0618 and Washington Sea Grant, and in cooperation with the Puget Sound Gillnetters' Association and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

**June 15, 1997**

Washington Sea Grant  
University of Washington  
3716 Brooklyn Avenue N.E.  
Seattle, WA 98105-6716

This research was funded by the Saltonstall-Kennedy Grant Program of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) award NA56FD0618, and by Washington Sea Grant (WSG), award NA76RG0119 from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce.

The views expressed herein are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or any of its subagencies.

**WSG AS 97-01**

Suggested Citation: Melvin, Edward F., Loveday L. Conquest, and Julia K. Parrish, 1997. Seabird bycatch reduction: new tools for Puget Sound drift gillnet salmon fisheries: 1996 sockeye and 1995 chum non-treaty salmon test fisheries final report. Washington Sea



Government of Malawi  
Department of Fisheries

# **Fisheries Research Unit Research Plan 2000 & 2001**

M.C. Banda, J. Chisambo, R.D. Sipawe, K.R. Mwakiyongo and O.L.F.  
Weyl.

Fisheries Research Unit  
P.O. Box 27  
Monkey Bay

Fisheries Bulletin No. 44  
Department of Fisheries  
P.O. Box 593  
Lilongwe

2001

**Table 2.** Selected minor strata and stratum descriptions in target districts. (Data source: Weyl *et al.* 2000b)

District	Minor stratum	Stratum description
Nkhotakota	5.4	Nkhotakota Central North
Nkhata Bay	6.1	Tukombo
"	6.6	Usisya
Karonga	7.3	Chilumba
"	7.7	Kaporo

**Table 3.** Relative occurrence, by percentage, of fishing gear types among minor strata in target districts. (Data source: Weyl *et al.* 2000b)

District	Minor stratum	Gear type					
		Beach seines	Chilimira	Fish traps	Gillnets	Handlines	Longlines
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Nkhotakota	5.4	26	25	46	47	68	23
Nkhata Bay	6.1	28	12	0	22	7	9
"	6.6	8	12	100	16	2	6
Karonga	7.3	25	17	0	9	73	92
"	7.7	9	11	32	10	6	1

## 2.6. A preliminary study of the effectiveness of monofilament gillnets in Lake Malawi.

### Introduction

Gill net fishing in Lake Malawi dates back to the early 1940's. The number of gill nets and gill net fishers was very small then. However, the number of gill nets has increased tremendously over the years. In 1997, there were over 37 987 sets of gill nets in operation in the lake (Frame Survey, 1997). Even though the number of gill nets has grown to this magnitude over the years, not a single one of these is a monofilament gill net. It is also apparent that the catches in the commonly used multifilament gill nets are decreasing so much so that gill net fishing may become uneconomical (FRU gill net selectivity survey, unpublished).

A lot of work has been done elsewhere to compare the effectiveness and the catchabilities of monofilament vs. multifilament gill nets. From all the work done so far, monofilament gill nets are shown to be more effective than multifilament gill nets. Collins (1979) found that the catching power for white fish was increased two-fold with the introduction of monofilament gill nets during the early 1970s. Monofilament gill nets were also shown by experimental net comparisons to be more efficient for pacific salmon *Oncorhynchus* spp. (Larkin 1963, 1964; Washington 1973).

Since monofilament gill nets are shown to give higher catch per unit effort, these nets can

be used to replace the common and traditional multifilament gill nets in Lake Malawi. However, it is important that before monofilament gill nets are introduced to the local fishers that preliminary experimental work be done to establish the effects of such an introduction on the fish stocks. This is to be achieved through comparisons of catch compositions between the mono- and the multifilament gill nets. It is also imperative to establish the catchability coefficients of the monofilament versus the multifilament gill nets and to determine the effect of such an introduction on the fish stocks of Lake Malawi. The results from this project will aid in the formulation of advice on the use of multifilament nets on Lake Malawi.

### **Objectives.**

The aim of this project is to compare the species and size selectivity of monofilament and multifilament gill nets in order to assess the effect of large-scale monofilament net use on Malawi's stocks. The main objectives are:

1. To assess catch per unit effort in multifilament to monofilament gill nets. i.e. differences in catchability coefficient.
2. To assess the feasibility of the use monofilament gillnets in the light of sustainable utilisation of the fish resource.

### **Methods**

For the experiment, five monofilament nets and five multifilament nets will be required. Each net will be 100 metres long 40 meshes deep and 3.5 inches mesh size. There will be five experimental units. Each experimental unit will consist of two 25-metre panels of monofilament net and two 25-metre panels of multifilament net. In each experimental unit these four 25 metre panels will be joined in a way that a monofilament portion will alternate with a multifilament portion. Cork floats will be placed one metre apart along the headrope and locally made clay weights will also be placed at intervals of one metre along the footrope. Buoys will be placed at each end of the net on the headrope and an anchor will be placed on both ends of the footrope for proper hanging of the nets.

The experiment will be conducted for three months, 10 days per month. All the five experimental units will be set within the vicinity of Monkey Bay for security purposes, but they will be located far from each other so that each net acts independent of the others. All the units will be set after dusk say at 6.00 p.m. and will be hauled at around 6.00 a.m. the following morning. 150 replicates will be made by the end of the 30 days.

Catches from each fleet and from the monofilament panels and the multifilament panels within each fleet will be sorted into species, counted and weighed. Catches of monofilament versus multifilament portions of the gill nets by numbers and weight will be compared using a significance level of 5% ( $p=0.05$ ), to test the hypotheses that:

1. Monofilament gill nets will catch more fish than multifilament gill nets.
  2. Size selectivity differs between nets.
  3. Species selectivity differs between nets.
-

RC 186

February 10, 2008

State Of Alaska  
Department of Fish and Game  
Board Support Section  
Chairman Mel Morris

P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Chairman Morris,

South K-Beach Independent Fishermen's Alliance (SOKI), is an alliance of Cook Inlet south K-Beach (stat area 244-31) set-net fishing people. Formed in 2006 after the closure to our area in harvesting Kasilof bound sockeye.

**Comments Committee A**

**Proposal 102, 103**

Please do not support these proposals.

**Proposal 104**

Please support this proposal.

Please review RC 84, RC 167/ additional material submitted 2/10/08

Topics of information submitted:

- 1) Gillnet Gear Evaluation Study in Southeastern Alaska 1987, ADF&G October 1988
- 2) Illegal High Seas Driftnet Fishing Still a Problem in North Pacific, Fish Rap December 2007
- 3) The Impact of Longline and Gillnet Fishing on Seabirds, BC Seafood Alliance, [www.bcseafoodalliance.com](http://www.bcseafoodalliance.com)
- 4) Regarding High Seas Gillnet Fishing, Alaska Board of Fisheries, Resolution 83-109-FB
- 5) St. Lawrence River Fish, A. Mathers, and B.J. Morrison
- 6) Seabird by catch reduction: new tools for Puget Sound drift gillnet salmon fisheries, 1996 Sockeye and 1995 Chum Salmon Test Fisheries Final Report: Executive Summary
- 7) Fisheries Research Unit Plan 2000 & 2001, Government of Malawi, Department of Fisheries

Documentation in support of this proposal will be submitted in RC's by the following people, including myself, Paul A. Shadura II, Paul A. Shadura III, and Christine Brandt.

Christine Brandt

# Illegal High Seas Driftnet Fishing Still a Problem in North Pacific

Unknown if NSRAA fish have been illegally harvested

NSRAA has a long record of fairly accurately projecting each of its projects' adult salmon returns. But 2007's dismal chum returns at Deep Inlet and disastrously low coho return to Hidden Falls were a shocker, for both Southeast fishermen and NSRAA staff.

When reports begin filtering in to the NSRAA offices that salmon all over Southeast had been caught with net marks, and when 50 percent of NSRAA's own chum samples in August were gillnet marked, suspicions that illegal high seas driftnets were to blame for at least a portion of the "missing" fish naturally flared.

"The marks look different from fish that escape from local nets in that they are healed over and were caused by a finer mono-filament. On the heads of a lot of fish it looks like someone drew lines with a fine-point marker," said NSRAA data analyst Chip Blair.

High seas driftnetting was indeed a major problem in the Pacific several decades ago, contributing to the devastation of North American wild salmon stocks, before it was finally banned in international waters in 1992.

"Until this last year it looked as if illegal salmon driftnet fishing was on a downward slide and I am pretty sure that such is still the case. However, the Russian border guard seized an Indonesian flagged illegal driftnet vessel in June with 90 metric tons of salmon on board," said Capt. Michael D. Inman of the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) in Juneau.

documented accounts of illegal high seas drift net (HSDN) fishing in the Western Pacific, according to Bill Heard, program manager at NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) Fisheries in Auke Bay, Alaska.

"Many HSDN vessels were sighted in 2007 west of 165E and south of 44N," Heard said.

"Indications over the last few years are that the driftnet fishers are targeting salmon in the North Pacific in May and June, and squid in August, September and October," Inman said.

The U.S. Coast Guard was heavily involved in a multinational enforcement effort in 2007, working with Canadian and Japanese air patrols and Chinese surface patrols, Inman said. Besides the Indonesian vessel mentioned above, the USCG helped apprehend eight Chinese boats.

What happens to seized vessels after they are caught is difficult to pinpoint. Depending on the terms of agreement between the various governments involved, illegally fishing vessels are usually turned over to their country of origin for prosecution, Inman explained.

"Typically, in China, the penalties imposed are seizure of the vessel, catch, and fishing gear; revocation of licenses and distant water fishing permits, and large monetary fines," Inman said.

The Coast Guard had no information on the penalties imposed on processors who purchase illegally harvested fish. Neither does

data on the dollar value of illegally harvested salmon, or any specific documentation on where the illegal catch is sold, Inman indicated.

"We have heard anecdotal information that catch in some cases is being brought to processing plants in Southeast Asia," he said.

But whether or not any illegally harvested salmon in 2007 were produced by NSRAA or other Alaska private non-profit hatcheries is unknown, and likely to remain a mystery for the foreseeable future. The Indonesian vessel illegally carrying 90 tons of frozen salmon was captured just outside Russian waters, and scientists from Kamchatka indicated the fish were of Russian origin, said Heard.

"Russian enforcement personnel videotaped the chase and apprehension of the vessel along with

making tapes of the frozen salmon inside," Heard said, who viewed these videos at the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission meeting in Vladivostok this year. "From what I could tell, a lot of the fish looked like maturing pink salmon."

Alaska salmon tend to migrate in predictable patterns, making a single large loop through the Gulf each year that they are at sea. That they make a few sidetrips away from their main loop into areas where legal gillnets are waiting for them is an alternative possibility to consider.

Heard noted that while he is not aware of Canadian gillnet fisheries in outer coastal areas that could be responsible for NSRAA's

*cont. on back page*



*Net-marked chum like these caught by trollers in Eastern Channel this August were reported in several SE Alaska fisheries this season.*

### ***High-Seas Gillnetting***

*Cont. from front page*

marked chum, there are coastal gill net fisheries in Alaska, specifically Area M in the Aleutians, and off the Copper River, that could be.

"A gillnet fishermen from Cook Inlet told me that it was not uncommon during open fishing periods for Inlet gillnetters to spot schools of salmon, including chum salmon, swimming in a southerly direction moving out of Cook Inlet," Heard said. "The implication was that it might be possible, in certain years and in under certain conditions, for schools of homeward bound migrating Southeast chums to 'probe' way into outer Cook Inlet only arm around and head back out.

ble to obtain the heads from chums caught during some of these fisheries to determine from their otolith markings (if any) if they were from Southeast Alaska.

So far, otolith testing has not been utilized by the U.S. government in HSDN enforcement operations to determine the origin of any of the illegal catches. Fishermen in Cook Inlet targeting southward-bound schools of chum are, of course, totally legal, even if the fish are shown to be of Southeast origin.

The Coast Guard will resume its HSDN enforcement mission in the spring of 2008, balancing those responsibilities with their other duties related to national security and drug enforcement.



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## SUSTAINABLE FISHING ISSUES

### The Impact of Longline and Gillnet Fishing on Seabirds

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*The number of seabirds hooked or entangled in BC's longline fisheries is relatively low. However, BC's numbers contribute to a cumulative effect that threatens the recovery of several seabird species, especially albatross.*

---

#### WHAT IS THE CONCERN?

Longline and gillnet fishing can pose inadvertent risks to some types of seabirds. In longline fisheries, baited hooks are attached to longlines and set over the side or stern of the fishing vessel. Seabirds attracted to the bait can be hooked, dragged below the surface and drowned. Over 10 million hooks are set annually in British Columbia longline fisheries. Prior to 2000, 100 to 200 seabirds were caught each year in these longline fisheries. In offshore areas the species of concern are shearwaters and albatross, which often out-compete other seabirds for the bait on longline hooks.

On a global scale this poses serious conservation concerns for several albatross species whose numbers have remained low since the 1900s, including Black-footed, Laysan and the endangered Short-tailed albatross.

Gillnets also have the potential to drown seabirds. Used mainly to harvest salmon and herring in inshore waters throughout coastal British Columbia, gillnets drift at the surface where diving seabirds, particularly murre and auklet species, can become entangled in the net. The number of seabirds caught in gillnets varies widely according to the location and timing of the fishery. Surveys conducted between 1996 and 2001 estimate that several thousand seabirds, including the Common Murre and Rhinoceros Auklet, may have become entangled in gillnets in the BC fishery.

#### WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The number of seabirds hooked or entangled in BC's on-bottom longline fisheries is relatively low. When added to the number of seabirds lost to the larger North Pacific near-surface longline fisheries, however, BC's numbers contribute to a cumulative effect that threatens the recovery of several seabird species, especially albatross. Gillnet fisheries also have the potential to entangle seabird species whose populations are currently at risk, such as the Marbled Murrelet.

#### WHAT ARE WE DOING ABOUT IT?

Fortunately there are several simple ways to significantly reduce seabird bycatch in both longline and gillnet fisheries.


##### *Longline Fisheries*

Tori lines were pioneered by Japanese tuna longline fishermen. Coloured streamers that flap in the wind to scare birds away from longlines are attached



COMMON MURRE





to tori lines mounted on poles at the stern of the vessel and connected to a floating buoy. Trials in the Alaskan sablefish and Pacific cod fisheries show that, when coupled with proper weighting to rapidly sink the longline, paired tori lines can reduce seabird bycatch by 90% – 100%.

PAIRED TORI, OR STREAMER LINES, ARE USED TO SCARE SEABIRDS FROM BAITED LONGLINES. PHOTO BY ROBERT AMES

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*Although the impact of BC fisheries on seabirds may be smaller than more widespread fisheries like the tuna longline fishery, the industry believes that it is important to reduce all seabird mortalities to the lowest extent possible.*

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BLACK-FOOTED ALBATROSS

In 2000, the BC halibut industry recommended that all harvesters use tori lines in longline fishing. In 2002, this became a mandatory condition of licence in the commercial halibut, sablefish and rockfish longline fisheries. Fisheries observers have monitored about 20% of longline fishing trips in BC, collecting data on seabird catches. In 2006, the monitoring program, using fisheries observers or electronic (video) monitoring, was extended to all longline vessels. This program will help to assess how well these measures are working.

#### *Gillnet Fisheries*

Research in Washington State has shown that seabird entanglement in gillnets is reduced significantly when monofilament gillnets are replaced by multistrand nets. Monofilament nets are not permitted in the salmon gillnet fishery in Canada in order to protect other, non-targeted species like coho. A secondary benefit of these measures has been a reduction in the number of birds lost to the entanglement. In addition, the Washington State research showed that more seabirds were entangled at night than during the day. In British Columbia gillnetting at night is restricted in many fisheries to reduce coho bycatch; gillnets are left in the water for shorter periods and are actively monitored to release non-target species. These selective fishing methods also reduce seabird entanglement.

#### **WHAT MORE CAN BE DONE?**

The BC fishing industry recognizes that both longline and gillnet fishing have the potential to adversely affect some species of seabirds, including several whose numbers are low. Although the impact of BC fisheries on seabirds may be smaller than in the larger, more widespread fisheries such as the tuna longline fishery, the industry believes that it is important to reduce all seabird mortalities to the lowest extent possible. As many of these seabirds migrate throughout the Pacific Ocean, it is important to pressure all fishing nations to adopt measures to reduce impacts to seabirds. Market based measures, such as labelling BC longline seafood products as "seabird friendly", are one way of letting consumers know that this is an issue of global concern.

Learning more about areas where seabirds feed and molt and using this information to plan fishing activity will help reduce seabird bycatch. Up-to-date information on the effectiveness of tori lines, multistrand gillnets, and daytime fisheries will help to develop additional ways of addressing this issue.

#### **FURTHER READING**

*Solutions to Seabird Bycatch in Alaska's Demersal Longline Fisheries.* E. Melvin, J.K. Parrish, K. S. Dietrich, O.S. Hamel. 2001. Washington Sea Grant Program Project A/FP-7.

*An Assessment of Seabird Bycatch in Longline and Net Fisheries in British Columbia.* 2005. J.L. Smith and K.H. Morgan. Canadian Wildlife Service Technical Report Series #401.

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES  
Resolution 83-100 -FB

Regarding High Seas Gillnet Fishing

WHEREAS the fishing industry is Alaska's largest private employer and generates revenues that are only surpassed by the oil industry; and

WHEREAS salmon have historically been the mainstay of the fishing industry; and

WHEREAS the International Convention for the High Seas Fisheries of the North Pacific Ocean and the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 promote the conservation of Pacific salmon and reserves to United States fishermen all the harvestable surplus of fisheries resources when the surplus catch can be taken by domestic fishermen, respectively; and

WHEREAS existing domestic subsistence, personal use, sport and commercial fisheries make full utilization of Pacific salmon in inshore fisheries; and

WHEREAS a number of foreign high seas gillnet fisheries exist including (1) the Japanese salmon mothership gillnet fishery with 172 fishing vessels and the Japanese salmon land based gillnet fishery with 209 fishing vessels which are known to intercept hundreds of thousands of Pacific salmon of United States origin each year and including (2) the newly developed Japanese gillnet fishery for squid with 534 fishing vessels (which in terms of fleet days exceeds that of the mothership and land based fisheries combined) which have the potential for significant incidental catches of Pacific salmon of United States origin; and

WHEREAS there is a substantial loss to mankind of high seas caught salmon through both gillnet dropouts (estimated to be 1/3 of the catch) and loss through harvest of salmon in an immature state prior to full growth; and

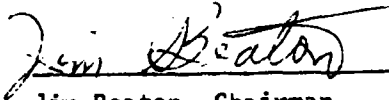
WHEREAS numerous violations have been documented, especially in terms of out of area fishing by the land based gillnet vessels, which increase interpretation of salmon of United States origin;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the State of Alaska and the Government of the United States take all possible actions to achieve time and area concessions from the Japanese Government and fishing industry to eliminate high seas interceptions and promote the sound conservation of Pacific salmon of United States origin.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that high seas enforcement efforts be substantially increased and that salmon observer coverage occur on all of these gillnet fisheries, both within and outside the United States Fisheries Conservation Zone.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be forwarded to.....

National Marine Fisheries Service, Juneau  
National Marine Fisheries Service, Seattle  
North Pacific Fishery Management Council  
Secretary of State  
Elmer Rasmussen, INPFC  
Alaska Congressional Delegation  
Alaska Department of Fish and  
Game Commissioner

 *Chairman*  
Jim Beaton, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Fisheries

Adopted: January 10, 1983  
Juneau, Alaska

# 5

## St. Lawrence River Fish

A. Mathers and B.J. Morrison

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### Introduction

The upper St. Lawrence River fish community is dominated by a rich assemblage of warm-water species; over 85 fish species have been reported. Smallmouth bass and northern pike are the most abundant top predators, while other important members of the fish community include yellow perch, rock bass, brown bullhead, and pumpkinseed. Other less abundant, but important, fish species inhabiting the St. Lawrence River include walleye, lake sturgeon and muskellunge. In the Lake St. Francis area, yellow perch are the focus of an important recreational fishery (Bendig 1994). In addition, yellow perch and eel support a commercial fishery in some areas (Chapter 7 in this report).

The waters of the St. Lawrence River, and the Great Lakes in general, have undergone dramatic changes over the past two decades. Nutrient levels have declined, zebra mussels have invaded, and water clarity has increased. Fish populations of the St. Lawrence River have also undergone changes in response to both environmental changes and fishing pressures. Fish population levels declined throughout the early 1990s, but in many cases have reached a new equilibrium, one that is consistently lower than that experienced in the 1980s. In Lake St. Francis, yellow perch populations have declined substantially from the levels observed during the early 1990s, despite implementation of a reduced angling season and bag-limit in 1997.

American eel spawn in the Sargasso Sea (Scott and Crossman 1973). Some of the larval eel are carried by ocean currents to the Gulf of St. Lawrence where they migrate up the St. Lawrence River and into Lake Ontario. The eels reside in Lake Ontario for several years before migrating back to sea. While in Lake Ontario and the upper St. Lawrence River, eels provide a highly valued commercial fishery (Stewart et al. 1997). Eel

populations show evidence of drastic decline in many areas of eastern Canada and particularly in Lake Ontario and the upper St. Lawrence River (Ritter et al. 1997, ICES 2001). Declines have been attributed to habitat loss, hydroelectric dam passage and mortality, contaminants, over-fishing and environmental changes in the northern Atlantic Ocean.

This chapter summarizes index-gillnetting catches in Lake St. Francis for all species during 2002 and updates trends in abundance for yellow perch, smallmouth bass, northern pike and American eels.

### Information Sources

Fisheries assessment activities on the St. Lawrence River have included standardized fall gillnetting, creel surveys, and monitoring the eels migrating over the ladder at the R.H. Saunders Hydroelectric Dam in Cornwall. The fall gillnetting program is designed to detect long-term changes in the fish communities and has been established in four distinct sections of the river; Thousand Islands, Middle Corridor, Lake St. Lawrence, and Lake St. Francis. These programs have been coordinated with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYDEC) assessment programs to provide 'river-wide' coverage of fisheries resources.

The 2002 netting in Lake St. Francis was conducted between September 9 and 19, 2002, using methods described by Morrison and Mathers (2002). This program maintained the database established in 1984 and represented the ninth netting program in Lake St. Francis section of the St. Lawrence River. The 2002 netting program differed from previous years in that a new gillnet standard was introduced. Due to insufficient stock from the supplier, monofilament nets were used during the 2002 field program in addition to the multifilament nets used in previous

years. A complete description of net construction details is provided in Edwards et al. (2002). In order to compare the catches of the new and old net designs, half of the gillnet sets were made with multifilament nets and the other half of the sets were made with monofilament nets.

An eel ladder was installed at the R.H. Saunders Hydroelectric Dam in Cornwall in 1974 to assist with the upstream migration of eel. Annual counts and a new index of recruitment, based on mean daily counts, was reported for the years 1974 to 1995 (Casselman et al. 1997). This report provides estimates for the total number of eels ascending the ladder and updates the recruitment index for 2002.

### Species Population Trends

Preliminary examination of the data indicated that for most species the monofilament gillnet catches were higher than those for the multifilament gillnets (Fig. 1). The limited amount of data precludes assigning species specific conversions at this time. Based on the analysis by Edwards et al. (2002), a correction factor of 1.58 was used to convert the historical multifilament catch rates to the new monofilament standard.

The overall catch during 36 gillnet sets in the 2002 Lake St. Francis project included 412 fish of 16 species (a complete summary of standardized gillnet catch-per-unit-effort is listed in Appendix 5.1). The average number of fish captured per standard net (13.8 fish) during 2002 was the lowest observed in the program. There has been a gradual decline in the number of fish caught per net from the start of the program in 1984 (Fig. 2).

#### Yellow Perch

Although yellow perch continued to be the most abundant fish captured in the Lake St. Francis gillnet program, the catches during 2002 showed a continuation of the trend of declining catch that started in 1990. In addition, the catch rate of large yellow perch (greater than 220 mm total length), which have been the focus of the angling fishery in Lake St. Francis, declined in 2002 to 0.16 fish per net. This level is less than 2 percent of the catch rates for large perch observed prior to the 1990s (Fig. 3).

Yellow perch catches in the Lake St. Lawrence area declined between 1985 and 1989 then catches were stable until 1998. Catches in recent years have been below the long-term average (Klindt and Town 2003). Catches of yellow perch in the

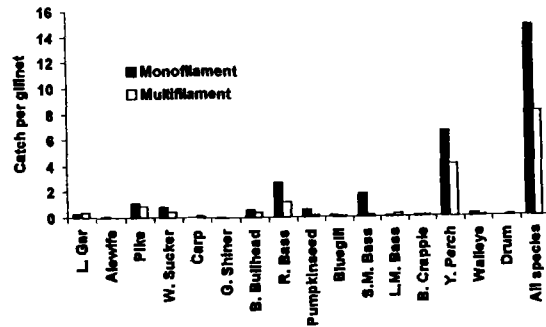


FIG. 1. Catch (number of fish) per standard multifilament and monofilament gillnets in the Lake St. Francis area, 2002.

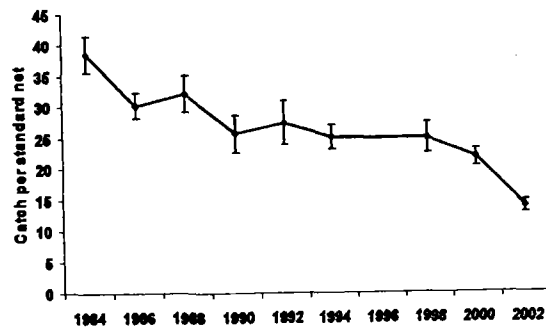


FIG. 2. Mean catch of all species of fish (number of fish  $\pm$  SE) in standard gillnets set in the Lake St. Francis area 1984 to 2002.

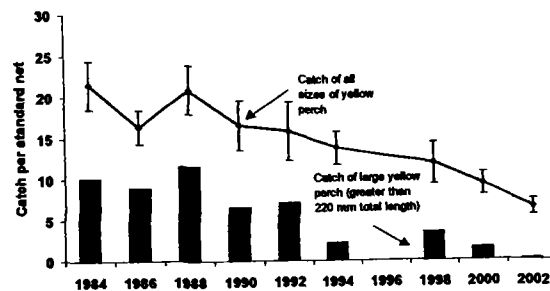


FIG. 3. Catches of large yellow perch (number of fish greater than 220 mm in length shown in bars) and all sizes of yellow perch (line  $\pm$  SE) in standard gillnets set in the Lake St. Francis area 1984 to 2002.

Thousand Islands area (McCullough et al. 2003, Edwards et al. 2002) and eastern Lake Ontario (Chapter 4 of this report) have remained relatively stable since the 1990s.

#### Smallmouth Bass

Smallmouth bass catches in gillnets set in Lake St. Francis during 2002 increased from those observed in 2000 but no clear trend in abundance is apparent in recent years (Fig. 4). Catches in

RC 187

**Substitute Language for Proposal 83.**

**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 Subdistricts: from June 25 until closed by emergency order;

(C) Upper Subdistrict:

(i) Kasilof Section: from June 25 through August 15[10], unless closed earlier by 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, but on or after June 20, the commissioner may immediately, by emergency order, open the fishery;

**(a) From August 11 through August 15 the fishery is restricted to regular periods only;**

(ii) Kenai and East Forelands Sections: from July 8 through August 15 [10], unless closed earlier by emergency order under (iii) of this subparagraph;

**(a) From August 11 through August 15 the fishery is restricted to regular periods only;**

(iii) Kenai, Kasilof, and East Forelands Sections: the season will close August 15 [10], unless closed earlier by emergency order after July 31, after 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; for

purposes of this sub-subparagraph, "fishing period" means a time period open to commercial fishing without closure;

**(a) From August 11 through August 15 the fishery is restricted to regular periods only;**

(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 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;

(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.

**5 AAC 21.353. CENTRAL DISTRICT DRIFT GILLNET FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN.** (a) 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,

(i) fishing during the two regular fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections and Drift Gillnet Area 1;

(ii) at run strengths greater than 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 2,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during the two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict and Drift Gillnet Area 1;

(ii) at run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during the two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict and Drift Gillnet Areas 1 and 2;

(iii) at run strengths greater than 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, there will be no mandatory restrictions during regular fishing periods;

(C) from August 16 [11] until closed by emergency order,

(i) Drift Gillnet Areas 3 and 4 are open for fishing during regular fishing periods;

(ii) [through the 2007 fishing season, Chinitna Bay may be opened by emergency order]

**(D) from August 11 through August 15 there are no restrictions to regular periods unless the Upper Subdistrict set gillnet fishery is closed under 5 AAC 21.310 (C) (iii), at which time regular periods will be restricted to drift gillnet areas 3 & 4. From August 11 through August 15 the fishery is restricted to regular periods only;**

(i) Drift Gillnet Areas 3 and 4 are open for fishing during regular fishing

(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.

**[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. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ALSO MANAGE THE COMMERCIAL PINK SALMON FISHERY TO MINIMIZE THE HARVEST OF NORTHERN DISTRICT AND KENAI RIVER COHO SALMON STOCKS.**

(B) IF THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINES THAT THE PINK SALMON STOCKS ARE SUFFICIENT TO CONDUCT A COMMERCIAL HARVEST, A COMMERCIAL FISHERY MAY OCCUR AS PROVIDED IN THIS SECTION.

(C) THE COMMERCIAL PINK SALMON FISHERY WILL BE MANAGED AS FOLLOWS:

(1) THE COMMISSIONER WILL OPEN, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, THREE FISHING PERIODS FROM 7:00 A.M. TO 7:00 P.M. AS FOLLOWS:

(A) THE FIRST FISHING PERIOD WILL BE ON THE FIRST MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, OR FRIDAY AFTER AUGUST 9;

(B) THE SECOND FISHING PERIOD WILL BE ON THE FIRST MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, OR FRIDAY AFTER THE FIRST FISHING PERIOD; AND

(C) THE THIRD FISHING PERIOD WILL BE ON THE FIRST MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, OR FRIDAY AFTER THE SECOND FISHING PERIOD;

(2) IN EVEN NUMBERED YEARS, AFTER AUGUST 10, THE COMMISSIONER WILL OPEN, BY EMERGENCY ORDER, THREE ADDITIONAL FISHING PERIODS;

(3) DRIFT GILLNETS MAY NOT EXCEED 150 FATHOMS IN LENGTH AND 45 MESHES IN DEPTH.

(D) TO PARTICIPATE IN THE COMMERCIAL PINK SALMON FISHERY, A CFEC PERMIT HOLDER MUST FIRST OBTAIN A PINK SALMON PERMIT FROM THE DEPARTMENT BY AUGUST 9 AT THE DEPARTMENT OFFICE IN SOLDOTNA OR HOMER. THE TERMS OF THE PERMIT MAY INCLUDE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS, GEAR RESTRICTIONS, AND ANY OTHER CONDITIONS THAT THE COMMISSIONER DETERMINES ARE NECESSARY FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND CONSERVATION OF THE PINK SALMON STOCK; FISHING MUST BE CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TERMS OF THE PERMIT.

(E) REPEALED.

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** FOR THE PURPOSES OF OBTAINING THE PINK SALMON PERMIT SPECIFIED IN 5 AAC 21.356(D), THE PHYSICAL LOCATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OFFICE IN SOLDOTNA IS 43961 KALIFORNSKY BEACH ROAD, SUITE B, SOLDOTNA, ALASKA AND THE DEPARTMENT OFFICE IN HOMER IS 3298 DOUGLAS PLACE, HOMER, ALASKA.]

# Commercial Season Extension Proposals

## Mixed Stock Fishery Concerns

*Extension of the commercial season is highly allocative in nature.*

### *Alternatives*

1. Use commissioner's existing authority to extend the sockeye season in years where appropriate.
2. Clarify end-of-season trigger for closure of the sockeye fishery based on a 2% season closure trigger.
3. If season is extended through August 15, place restrictions to regular periods from August 1-15.
4. Clarify definition of a fishing period as 4-24 hours of fishing time per day.
5. Share conservation burden on coho by placing a 125,000 coho cap on the Central District Commercial Fishery.
6. Share the conservation burden on Kenai and Kasilof kings by placing an abundance-based cap of 8,000, 10,000, and 12,000 Chinook on the Central District Commercial fishery at Kenai sockeye runs of under 2 million, 2-4 million, and over 4 million, respectively.
7. Require the use pink of gear in the pink fishery.

**Sockeye**

- ✓ Commissioner already has EO authority to extend the season.
- ✓ The Board cited the same EO authority as a rationale for not extending the PU fishery.

**Coho**

- ✓ Coho is to be managed as a sport fishery priority.
- ✓ The commercial coho harvest exceeds the sport harvest in many years.
- ✓ From 2002-2006, the average harvest of coho in the commercial fishery was over 200,000.
- ✓ Currently, after August 10, the commercial fishery already has a directed coho fishery on the west side of the inlet.

**Chinook**

- ✓ ADFG estimates 25% of the Kenai and Kasilof runs enter after August 1.
- ✓ The sport fishery ends August 1.
- ✓ The commissioner has EO authority to extend this season.

**Pink**

- ✓ Pink salmon management plan is already in place.
- ✓ It doesn't matter who catches fish.
- ✓ The place now allows a substantial harvest opportunity for pinks. When it becomes economical, the plan in place will work to harvest pinks.

**Chum**

- ✓ There is currently no assessment tool in place.
- ✓ Extending the season is inappropriate.

February 10, 2008

Board of Fisheries Members,

These are Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee (AC) comments to Committee <sup>B</sup> proposals. Our first comment is that our AC reps did not comment to all proposals in different Committees, because it was our belief that since the AC had taken votes and submitted minutes from AC meetings our positions on these proposals would already be recorded. From looking at the different Committee reports, it has become evident that AC positions were not recorded in Committee reports unless AC reps spoke during each Committee hearings, so we would encourage Board members to consider all AC positions on the various proposals -- and not just those contained in Committee reports.

The AC opposes Proposals 146, 147, 150 and 151 which would expand the Northern District set net king salmon fishery or create a drift fishery. King salmon stocks bound for Northern District drainages are already fully allocated, and expanding commercial harvest would require a reduction in allocation to sport fish users. At present harvest levels since the 2005 Board of Fish meeting (when Northern District set net time was increased by 100%) 52 - 62 set net permits are already harvesting about 10% of the total harvest of approximately 33,500 king salmon (see ADF&G fishery management report 07-64 page 6 and ADF&G fishery management report 07-65 page 40).

There are no clear numbers for sport king salmon anglers in Upper Cook Inlet, as anglers under 16 years of age, and resident anglers over 60 years of age are not required to purchase a king salmon stamp. In addition, anglers purchasing king salmon stamps in other parts of the state travel to this area to fish. In discussions with the ADF&G area sport fish biologist, he has estimated that the average sport king salmon angler catches less than one king salmon per year in Northern District drainage streams. If this is an accurate figure, then the total number of annual sport king salmon anglers would conservatively have to be near or greater than 30,000 people.

Stock Status. During the 2007 season of the 18 Northern District streams on which ADF&G has established king salmon escapement goal ranges, 6 streams had king salmon escapements that fell below the established goal ranges. Thus, the sport fishery is already facing possible emergency order closures or future regulations restrictions on some streams, and expansion of commercial king salmon harvest would only exacerbate this problem. Regulations are already quite restrictive in the sport fishery.

Economics. While king salmon are valuable to commercial fisheries, they are considerably more valuable to the sport fishery. There is a very limited supply of harvestable surplus king salmon, so from an economic standpoint, expanding the commercial fishery at the expense of the sport fishery would MINIMIZE benefit from this resource.

4 of the 5 Advisory Committees located in the Northern District (Anchorage, Matanuska Valley, Susitna Valley, and Mt. Yenlo) oppose expansion of the commercial king salmon fishery. These Advisory Committees represent over half of the state's human population. For these reasons please oppose Proposals 146, 147, 150 and 151.

over

Matanuska Valley AC would also comment in opposition to Proposal 142 which would increase Northern District set net time allowed to harvest coho salmon by 33% after August 10. Northern bound coho salmon have been identified as a stock to be managed primarily for sport or recreational uses. At the 2005 BOF meeting the Board removed the Northern District set net fishery from net restriction regulations contained in the Coho Salmon Conservation Plan, but kept most of the sport fishery limited to a 2 coho salmon bag limit which was also part of the plan. As a fairness issue, we believe the Board should first expand the priority sport fishery to its former 3 coho salmon bag limit, before even considering expanding the commercial fishery.

Directing ADF&G to allow the Northern District set net fishery to fish rather than face (even with reduced nets) a total closure during their two regular weekly periods throughout the month of July, would also allow set netters to harvest a higher number of coho salmon, at a time when such harvest more closely matches long term management objectives.

Economics. Once again, please consider economics in your decision. Similar to the king salmon issue, coho salmon are an extremely important salmon species for the sport fishery, and are available in relatively small numbers compared to the number of sockeye salmon available in Upper Cook Inlet. Allocating additional coho salmon to the commercial fishery, at the expense of the sport fishery, would significantly MINIMIZE the benefit derived from a valuable public resource.

Matanuska Valley AC, Susitna Valley AC, Mt Yenlo AC, and Anchorage AC have reached consensus to oppose expansion of the Northern District coho salmon fishery after August 10. Board members, please honor this position supported by 4 of the 5 Advisory Committees located in the Northern District area of Upper Cook Inlet by opposing Proposal 142.

Sincerely,



Andy Couch, Matanuska Valley Advisory Committee

Table. Late-run Kenai River sockeye inriver run and harvest data since 1981, with nearly all annual estimates from recent Sport Fish AMR.

PREPARED BY DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME.

Year	Harvest			Harvest							Total Escapement	Total Run Above Sonar	Exploitation	
	PU/EDU	SF-Below Sonar	Sonar	Inriver Return	Sonar to Bridge	Above Bridge	Unknown Reach	Skilak Lake	Late-run Russian River	Hidden SF/PU				Total Above Sonar
1981	0	3,116	407,639	410,755	2,154	14,451			23,720	0	40,325	359,344	914,073	9.9%
1982	0	6,922	619,831	626,753	4,784	38,397			10,320		53,501	566,034	2,542,027	8.6%
1983	7,562	13,577	630,340	651,479	9,384	48,306		0	16,000	0	73,690	556,652	3,642,386	11.7%
1984	0	2,613	344,571	347,184	1,806	11,283		0	21,970	17	35,076	309,514	1,049,790	10.2%
1985	0	8,835	502,820	511,655	6,106	42,272		0	58,410	149	106,937	396,032	2,151,191	21.3%
1986	0	12,522	501,157	513,679	8,655	51,221		13	30,810	0	90,699	400,302	2,691,791	18.1%
1987	24,086	50,274	1,596,871	1,671,231	34,746	155,799		2,029	40,580	689	233,843	1,333,136	8,607,829	14.6%
1988	16,880	29,345	1,021,469	1,067,694	20,282	103,124		382	19,540	583	143,911	838,851	5,749,515	14.1%
1989	51,188	66,162	1,599,959	1,717,309	45,727	165,336		1,654	55,210	331	268,258	1,333,687	5,861,429	16.8%
1990	3,477	19,640	659,520	682,637	13,573	85,074		670	56,180	107	155,604	439,052	2,686,257	23.6%
1991	13,433	31,536	647,597	692,566	21,795	108,271		2,411	31,450	77,060	240,987	376,149	1,663,248	37.2%
1992	30,394	47,622	994,798	1,072,814	32,913	161,956		1,044	26,101	468	222,482	752,239	7,719,862	22.4%
1993	35,000	27,717	813,617	876,334	19,156	90,306		825	26,772	133	137,192	669,758	3,905,243	16.9%
1994	15,368	17,954	1,003,446	1,036,768	12,409	63,253		213	26,375	102	102,352	894,646	3,386,698	10.2%
1995	15,720	29,451	630,447	675,618	20,355	75,622		177	11,805	83	108,042	520,778	2,292,131	17.1%
1996	104,110	39,810	797,847	941,767	27,514	118,967		307	19,136	225	166,149	578,927	3,154,091	20.8%
1997	116,107	43,642	1,064,818	1,224,567	30,163	103,328		312	12,910	274	146,987	872,041	3,873,499	13.8%
1998	105,497	33,980	767,558	907,035	23,484	107,072		158	25,110	81	155,905	551,891	1,473,600	20.3%
1999	150,993	46,043	803,379	1,000,415	31,822	122,709		0	32,335	859	187,725	582,907	2,497,608	23.4%
2000	99,571	57,978	624,578	782,127	40,070	132,935		377	30,229	190	203,801	393,276	1,441,083	32.6%
2001	152,580	51,374	650,036	853,990	35,506	113,882		24	18,550	142	168,104	457,927	1,819,558	25.9%
2002	182,229	46,693	957,924	1,186,846	32,271	143,211	3,742	1,509	31,999	308	213,040	728,535	2,954,000	22.2%
2003	227,207	60,722	1,181,309	1,469,238	41,967	173,068	10,168	96	28,085	302	253,686	927,623	3,700,000	21.5%
2004	266,937	62,397	1,385,981	1,715,315	43,124	182,722	5,795	276	22,417	437	254,771	1,131,210	4,931,347	18.4%
2005	300,105	58,017	1,376,452	1,734,574	40,097	182,704	13,469	45	18,503	0	254,818	1,121,634	5,505,200	18.5%
2006	130,486	30,964	1,499,692	1,661,142	21,400	113,972	7,089	98	29,694	385	172,638	1,327,054	2,533,975	11.5%

Averages

2002-2006	221,393	51,759	1,280,272	1,553,423	35,772	159,135		405	26,140	286	229,791	1,047,211		18.4%
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ALL SUMMARY ESTIMATES BELOW ARE AVERAGES FOR 1996-2006

Summary by total run for current 3-tier and proposed 2-tier total run size:

Total run <3											183,536		2,119,971	22.7%
Total run >=3											254,425		4,712,182	19.5%
Total run <2											175,937		1,578,080	26.3%
Total run 2-4											206,772		2,921,396	19.6%
Total run >4											254,795		5,218,274	18.4%

Summary by sonar estimates within different bins:

Sonar 500-700K		637,307									185,953		1,630,321	29.2%
Sonar 700-900K			789,595								169,926		2,375,100	21.5%
Sonar 900-1100K			1,011,371								180,014		3,413,750	18.0%
Sonar >1100K			1,360,859								233,978		4,167,631	17.5%

DRAFT

RC 190

RC 191

Board of Fisheries Members,

My name is Howard Riley, Life time Alaskan, owner and guide of Alaska Guides Inc. which offers guided salmon fishing trips in the Matanuska - Susitna Valley. I guide primarily on the Big Susitna drainage, but have also guided for salmon on the Little Susitna River, and would like to support the passage of two proposals that were discussed in subcommittee G.

I support Proposal 338 which would allow 24 hour per day fishing for king salmon on the Deshka River. For the past several years this regulation has been in place by emergency order running throughout almost the entire king salmon fishing season. King salmon escapements have remained more than six thousand fish over the minimum escapement goal with this regulation in all years that it was in effect. A 24 hour fishery spreads out fishing pressure throughout each day creating a more enjoyable experience, and also allows people who camp along the Deshka River to fish whenever king salmon start jumping in front of their camp. Please pass this proposal. It seems highly unlikely that this liberalized regulation could cause too many king to be caught, however, ADF&G has a weir on this river and if the Department observed low escapement numbers of king salmon it could quickly make an in season adjustment to correct the situation through emergency order.

I support Proposal 339 which would extend the Deshka River king salmon season through July 31 below the escapement counting weir on years when 20,500 king salmon had already passed the weir. This would simply allow an extra opportunity to harvest king salmon on years when large king salmon escapements had already occurred and those escapements would remain safe above the weir.

While these proposals may only affect a relatively small number of people compared to the overall population of the Upper Cook Inlet area, these slightly expanded opportunities are significant to the people who fish the Deshka River and other Matanuska - Susitna Valley streams.

Sincerely,

Howard Riley

Po Box 874383

Wasilla AK 99687



RC 192

Board of Fisheries Members **Committee B**,

My name is Howard Riley life time Alaskan resident, and I am a fishing guide in the Matanuska - Susitna Valley.

Yentna River sockeye salmon have failed to reach their minimum escapement goal in 4 of the past 6 years, and in 2005 the first year after the Board of Fisheries authorized a more liberal fishing pattern for the Central District commercial drift fleet the all time record low escapement of only 37,000 sockeye was recorded by the Yentna River sonar counter.

I would suggest the Board of Fisheries return to a drift fleet fishing pattern that allowed larger spawning escapements of sockeye salmon to reach the Yentna River. The pattern I refer to would require the drift fleet fish within the Kasilof and Kenai sections of the Upper Sub district for 3 regular periods during the month of July. This fishing pattern has been proven over several years time to allow larger numbers of sockeye salmon to pass through the Central District and then swim past the Yentna River sonar counter. At the same time this fishing pattern has allowed the drift fleet to participate in their fishery, and catch approximately half of the entire commercial salmon harvest in Upper Cook Inlet. Therefore, this seems like a reasonable approach to address the problem of low sockeye salmon escapements to the Yentna River.

Sincerely,

Howard Riley

Alaska Guides Inc.

PO Box 874383

Wasilla, AK 99687

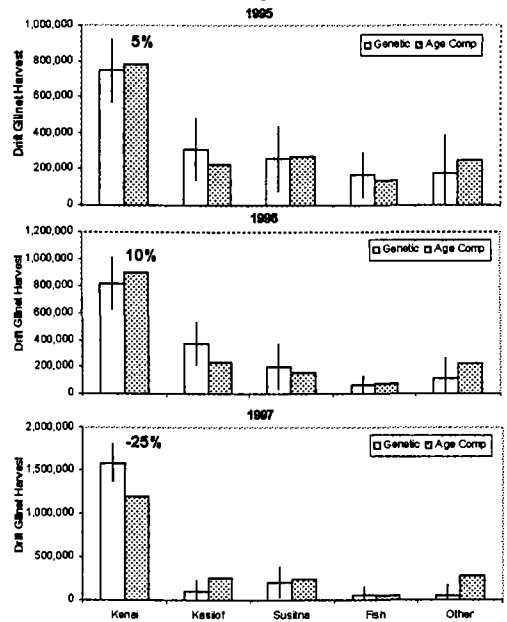
## **Late-run Kenai sockeye salmon escapement goal review (from ADFG)**

- **a qualitative review of the sources of error in the data used to evaluate the escapement goal,**
- **evaluation of the fit of several possible spawner-adult recruit models to the original and DIDSON adjusted data,**
- **examination of mechanisms underlying the spawner-adult recruit relationship,**
- **application of methods used in earlier escapement goal reviews, i.e. simulation modelling and Markov yield analysis,**
- **evaluation of changes in lake productivity on production**

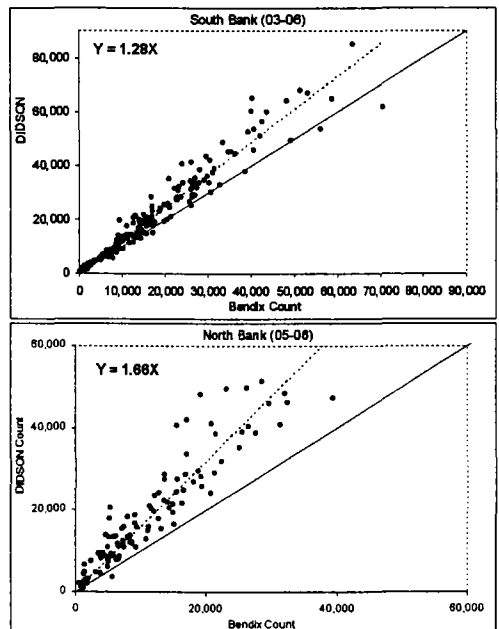
## **Sources of Error**

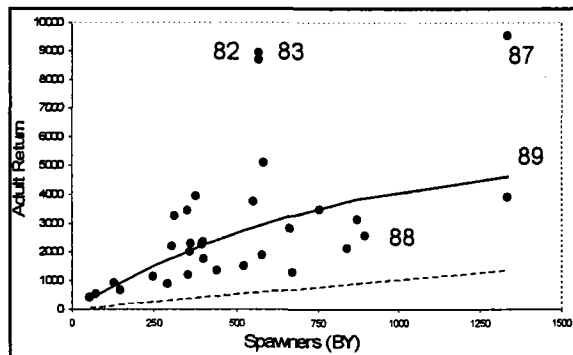
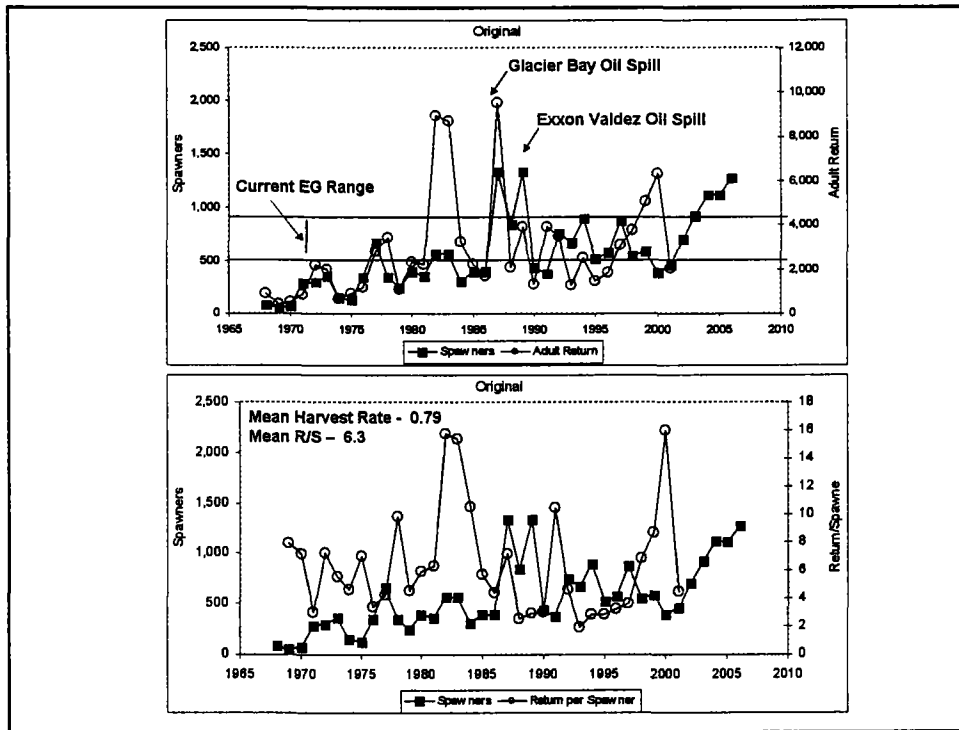
- **Age composition catch allocation model used to construct brood tables assumes equal exploitation among stocks within age classes.**
- **Side-looking sonar was used to estimate escapement on 4 major river systems after 1978.**
- **Before 1979, escapements were estimated using uplooking sonar arrays in Kasilof and Kenai and aerial or ground survey counts in Crescent and Susitna drainages.**
- **Yentna sonar escapement estimates expanded to Susitna drainage based upon 5 years of sonar/mark-recapture studies.**
- **Escapements into unmonitored systems is assumed to be 15% of the total escapement into monitored systems.**

### Comparison of age-composition catch allocation and genetic stock composition estimates



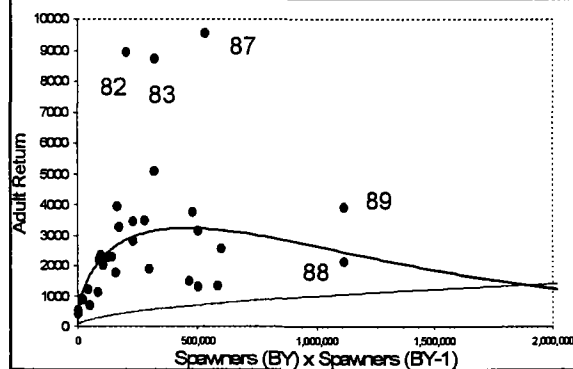
### Relationship between Bendix and DIDSON sonar estimates of Kenai River sockeye salmon passage at RM 19





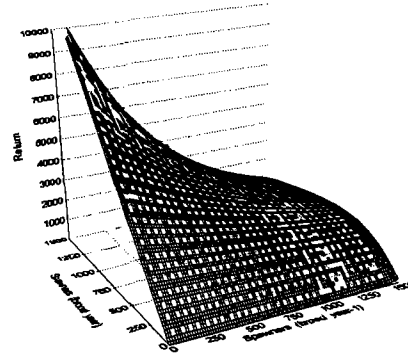
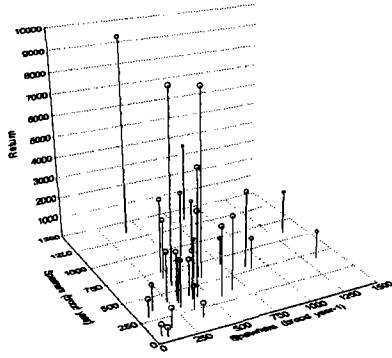
### Spawner-Recruit Models

#### Ricker Model



#### Brood Interaction Model

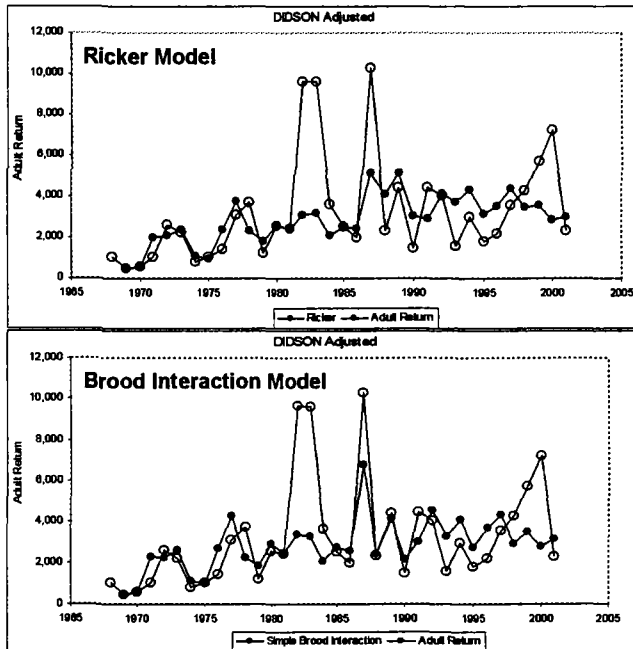
# Brood Interaction Model



Comparison of spawner-recruit model fits using original and updated brood tables

Model	Parameter	Brood Years 1969-1999 (Original)					Brood Years 1969-2001 (DIDSON Adjusted)						
		Estimate	P-value	R <sup>2</sup>	AIC	White noise	Estimate	P-value	R <sup>2</sup>	AIC <sub>c</sub>	w <sub>1</sub>	White noise	
General Ricker model	$\alpha$	2.34	<0.001	0.567	51.4	0.416	1.88	<0.001	0.548	57.7	0.02	0.438	
	$\beta$	3.33E-04	0.627				2.90E-04	0.496					
	$\gamma$	0.92	0.771				0.95	0.874					
Classic Ricker model	$\alpha$	1.92	<0.001	0.105	0.567	49.4	0.457	0.077	0.547	55.0	0.08	0.471	
	$\beta$	5.10E-04	0.105				3.50E-04	0.077					
Cushing model	$\alpha$	2.92	<0.001	0.564	49.6	0.334	2.77	0.003	<0.001	0.541	55.5	0.06	0.264
	$\gamma$	0.79	0.116				0.78	<0.001					
Classic Ricker model with brood interaction	$\alpha$	2.04	<0.001	0.106	0.595	49.4	0.471	0.086	0.575	55.7	0.05	0.478	
	$\beta_1$	2.96E-04	0.407				2.10E-04	0.322					
	$\beta_2$	4.65E-04	0.170				2.80E-04	0.180					
General Ricker model with brood interaction	$\alpha$	1.69	0.092	<0.001	0.618	47.5	0.633	1.28	0.236	0.603	53.4	0.17	0.676
	$\beta$	9.02E-07	0.055				4.04E-07	0.039					
	$\gamma$	1.04	0.818				1.06	0.748					
Simple brood interaction model	$\alpha$	1.91	<0.001	0.012	0.618	45.5	0.608	0.008	0.602	50.9	0.62	0.639	
	$\beta$	8.27E-07	0.012				3.61E-07	0.008					

## Comparison of Model Fits



### Evaluation of Model Fits using Jackknife Procedure

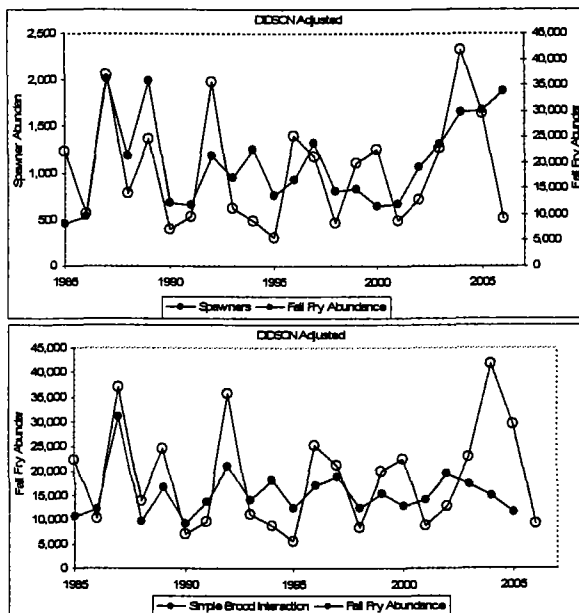
Model	Percent of all Cases $p > 0.10$
Ricker	81%
Cushing	69%
Brood Interaction	0%

Year	Classic Ricker Model		Cushing Model		Brood Interaction Model	
	$\beta$	$p$	$\gamma$	$p$	$\beta$	$p$
Omitted						
1968	-5.10E-04	0.105	0.79	0.116	-	-
1969	-5.61E-04	0.082	0.74	0.070	-8.07E-07	0.018
1970	-5.75E-04	0.074	0.74	0.051	-8.19E-07	0.017
1971	-6.30E-04	0.040	0.75	0.040	-9.22E-07	0.005
1972	-5.69E-04	0.070	0.76	0.037	-8.15E-07	0.016
1973	-5.82E-04	0.064	0.76	0.055	-8.35E-07	0.014
1974	-6.25E-04	0.049	0.73	0.039	-8.63E-07	0.011
1975	-5.75E-04	0.072	0.76	0.055	-8.22E-07	0.016
1976	-6.07E-04	0.050	0.75	0.049	-8.98E-07	0.007
1977	-5.72E-04	0.086	0.76	0.060	-8.34E-07	0.013
1978	-5.55E-04	0.072	0.76	0.033	-8.13E-07	0.014
1979	-6.08E-04	0.054	0.75	0.048	-8.57E-07	0.012
1980	-5.79E-04	0.063	0.76	0.055	-8.32E-07	0.014
1981	-5.77E-04	0.066	0.76	0.055	-8.24E-07	0.015
1982	-6.07E-04	0.036	0.73	0.022	-7.89E-07	0.011
1983	-6.07E-04	0.037	0.73	0.023	-8.40E-07	0.007
1984	-5.46E-04	0.076	0.76	0.037	-7.98E-07	0.015
1985	-5.81E-04	0.064	0.76	0.055	-8.33E-07	0.014
1986	-5.89E-04	0.059	0.76	0.055	-8.45E-07	0.012
1987	-8.62E-04	0.013	0.71	0.028	-8.79E-07	0.009
1988	-5.12E-04	0.099	0.78	0.081	-8.00E-07	0.041
1989	-5.33E-04	0.132	0.78	0.092	-8.71E-07	0.027
1990	-5.91E-04	0.054	0.76	0.034	-7.88E-07	0.020
1991	-5.57E-04	0.069	0.76	0.050	-7.96E-07	0.016
1992	-5.79E-04	0.061	0.76	0.038	-8.28E-07	0.014
1993	-5.24E-04	0.076	0.78	0.073	-7.52E-07	0.019
1994	-5.22E-04	0.099	0.78	0.079	-7.79E-07	0.021
1995	-5.74E-04	0.060	0.77	0.039	-7.93E-07	0.017
1996	-5.67E-04	0.066	0.77	0.064	-8.26E-07	0.013
1997	-5.55E-04	0.082	0.77	0.069	-8.08E-07	0.017
1998	-5.85E-04	0.061	0.75	0.049	-8.58E-07	0.011
1999	-5.96E-04	0.033	0.74	0.040	-8.34E-07	0.012

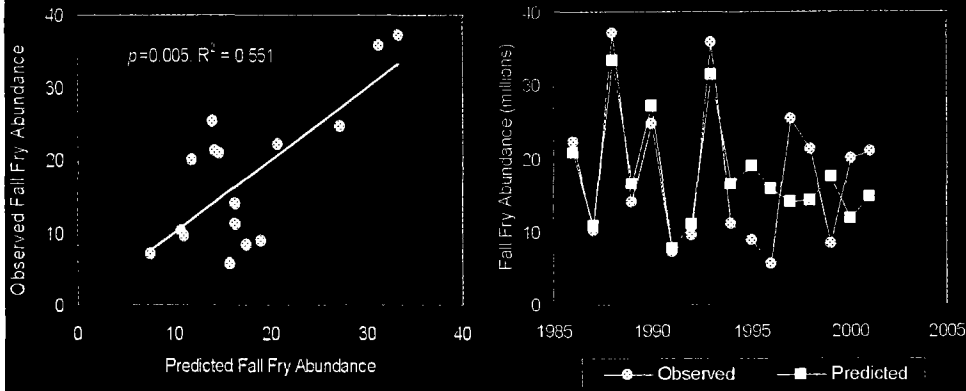
### Comparison of spawner-fall fry recruit model fits using original and updated brood table (1985-2003)

Model	Parameter	Brood Years 1985-2003					Brood Years 1985-2005 (DIDSON adjusted)						
		Estimate	p-value	R <sup>2</sup>	AIC	White noise	Estimate	p-value	R <sup>2</sup>	AIC <sub>c</sub>	w <sub>1</sub>	White noise	
General Ricker model	$\alpha$	14.68	0.019	0.062	0.294	30.59	0.098	0.137	0.137	47.04	0.01	0.898	
	$\beta$	2.64E-03	0.142					14.82	0.133				
	$\gamma$	-1.04	0.065					1.41E-03	0.547				
Classic Ricker model	$\alpha$			0.182	0.147	32.53	0.529		0.226	0.094	45.55	0.03	0.282
	$\beta$	-6.13E-04	0.182					3.11	<0.001				
Cushing model	$\alpha$			0.063	0.188	31.08	0.329		0.133	0.115	44.86	0.04	0.141
	$\gamma$			0.001				6.07	0.014				
Classic Ricker model with brood interaction	$\alpha$			0.024	0.394	27.86	0.15		0.020	0.359	41.31	0.21	0.046
	$\beta_1$	4.14	<0.001					3.69	<0.001				
	$\beta_2$	-4.32E-04	0.279					-2.27E-04	0.421				
General Ricker model with brood interaction	$\alpha$			0.013	0.419	26.89	0.074		0.017	0.384	41.15	0.23	0.037
	$\beta_1$	6.01	0.001					5.29	0.016				
	$\beta_2$	-9.27E-04	0.023					-7.20E-04	0.024				
Simple brood interaction model	$\alpha$			0.022	0.292	28.55	0.036		0.010	0.325	39.66	0.48	0.010
	$\beta$	3.72	<0.001					3.25	<0.001				
				0.022				-4.78E-07	0.010				

### Fall Fry Brood Interaction Model Fit

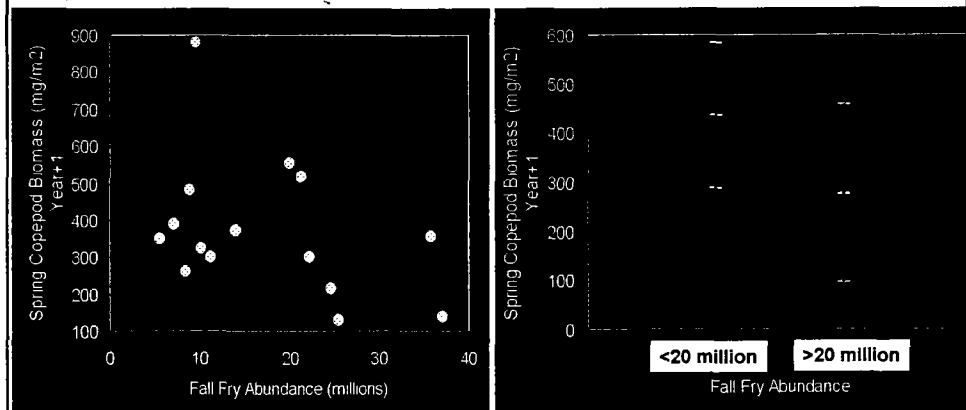


## Brood Interaction – Mechanisms Fry Abundance Model



Results of multiple regression analysis of the model fall fry abundance =  $\alpha + \beta(\text{female spawners}) + \delta(\text{spring copepod biomass})$ . (A) Predicted versus observed values. (B) Temporal pattern in predicted and observed abundance of fall fry.

## Brood Interaction – Mechanisms Spring Copepod Model



Results of analysis of variance model where spring copepod biomass =  $\beta(\text{fall fry abundance})$ . (A) Scatter plot of copepod biomass vs. fall fry abundance. (B) Mean spring copepod biomass when fall fry abundance is greater or less than 20 million.



# Markov Table

BY 1979-1999

Escapement Interval	n	Mean Spawners	Mean Returns	Return-per-Spawner	Yield	
					Mean	Range
100-300	1	246	1111	4.5	865	865-865
200-400	6	347	2525	7.2	2177	865-3550
300-500	7	383	2444	6.6	2062	895-3550
<b>400-600</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>4111</b>	<b>7.5</b>	<b>3586</b>	<b>895-8364</b>
<b>500-700</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>4443</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>3867</b>	<b>617-8364</b>
600-800	2	711	2378	3.3	1667	617-2716
700-900	4	839	2818	3.4	1979	1281-2716
>800	5	1054	4247	3.8	3192	1281-8197

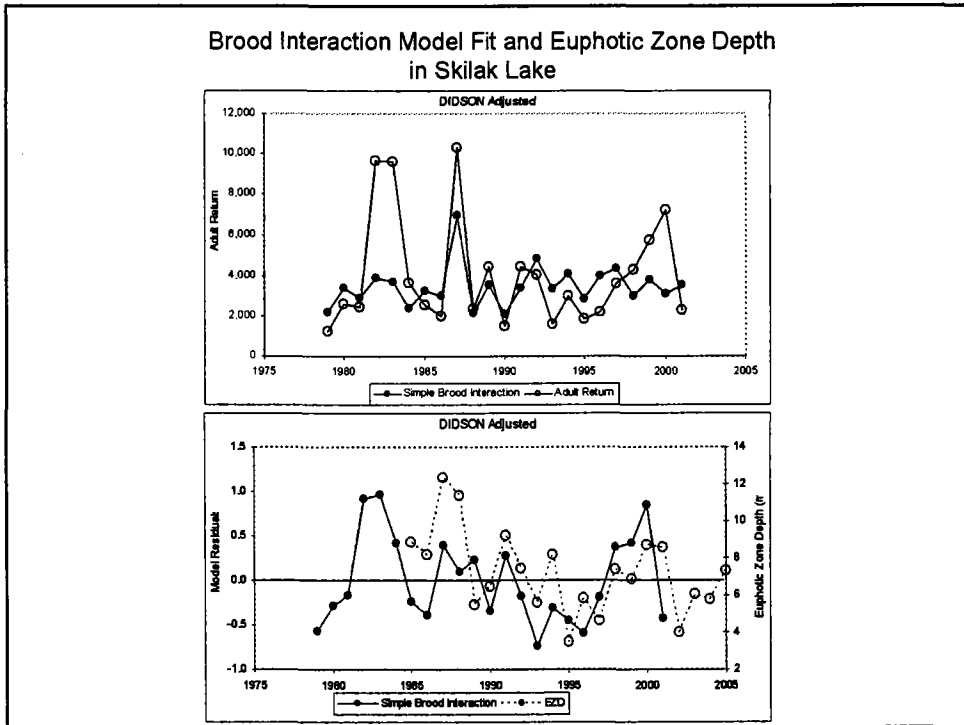
# Brood Interaction Simulation Model

Number Spawners	1969-1993				1969-1999				1979-1999			
	Mean Yield	Yield CV (%)	P<1000		Mean Yield	Yield CV (%)	P<1000		Mean Yield	Yield CV (%)	P<1000	
100	709	61	0.850		698	59	0.858		847	58	0.713	
150	1,042	55	0.556		1,026	54	0.563		1,241	54	0.425	
200	1,362	53	0.353		1,339	52	0.355		1,613	53	0.239	
250	1,665	53	0.223		1,634	51	0.225		1,957	53	0.140	
300	1,948	53	0.142		1,906	51	0.146		2,266	53	0.090	
350	2,207	53	0.097		2,153	51	0.100		2,536	53	0.065	
400	2,439	53	0.072		2,371	52	0.074		<b>2,782</b>	53	0.053	
450	2,642	53	0.060		2,558	52	0.063		<del>2,944</del>	54	0.043	
500	<del>2,814</del>	53	0.053		<del>2,712</del>	52	0.056		3,078	54	0.040	
550	2,954	54	0.048		2,832	53	0.050		3,164	55	0.039	
600	3,061	54	0.044		2,918	53	0.050		3,203	55	0.041	
650	3,134	55	0.043		2,969	54	0.050		3,196	56	0.044	
700	3,174	55	0.045		2,985	54	0.051		3,146	57	0.052	
750	3,182	56	0.049		<b>2,988</b>	55	0.058		<b>3,055</b>	58	0.059	
800	<b>3,158</b>	57	0.055		2,920	56	0.064		<del>2,827</del>	59	0.072	
850	3,104	58	0.060		2,842	57	0.071		2,768	61	0.091	
900	3,022	59	0.070		<del>2,737</del>	59	0.085		2,581	63	0.123	
950	<del>2,914</del>	60	0.075		2,607	60	0.106		2,372	65	0.156	
1000	2,782	62	0.096		2,457	62	0.134		2,147	68	0.207	
1050	2,631	63	0.124		2,288	64	0.169		1,911	72	0.270	
1100	2,462	66	0.150		2,104	67	0.212		1,673	77	0.346	
1150	2,278	68	0.190		1,909	70	0.262		1,446	83	0.421	
1200	2,083	71	0.238		1,710	75	0.326		1,236	92	0.493	
1250	1,883	75	0.288		1,513	80	0.397		1,059	102	0.577	
1300	1,684	80	0.351		1,325	86	0.461		921	116	0.644	
1350	1,493	85	0.418		1,153	94	0.526		829	132	0.703	
1400	1,312	93	0.470		1,006	104	0.592		775	149	0.729	
1450	1,155	101	0.539		890	117	0.651		757	163	0.734	
1500	1,022	112	0.599		804	131	0.705		765	171	0.736	

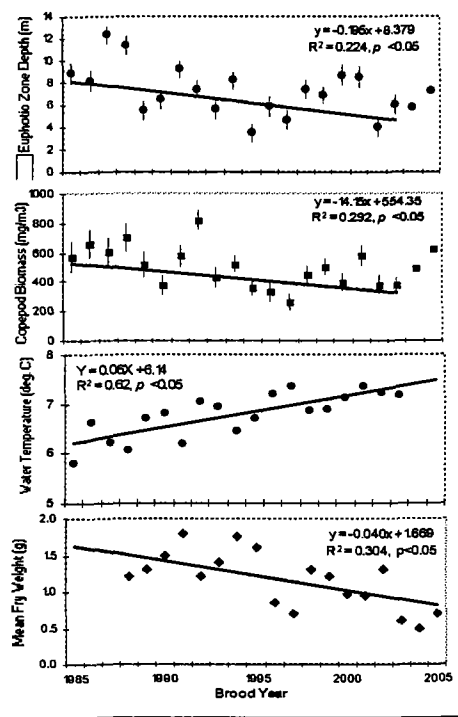
Mean Yields (assuming alternating escapement goal policy)													
Spawners (brood year)	Spawners (brood year -1)												
	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200	1300
100	777												
200	1128	1541											
300	1562	1852	2215										
400	1925	2178	2484	2693									
500	2278	2504	2800	2809	2946								
600	2603	2740	2880	3000	3024	2866							
700	2931	3088	3093	3037	3089	3182	2933						
800	3282	3273	3157	3114	3182	3002	2947	2866					
900	3611	3513	3421	3342	3147	2944	2759	2578	2336				
1000	3917	3791	3548	3450	3114	2864	2692	2602	2210	1980			
1100	4231	3904	3643	3440	3276	2910	2594	2340	2180	1781	1433		
1200	4720	4060	3701	3466	3146	2819	2440	2090	1826	1564	1327	1089	
1300	4889	4316	3913	3352	3039	2738	2241	2029	1704	1358	1086	915	700

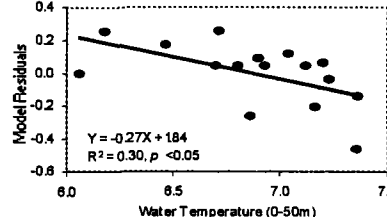
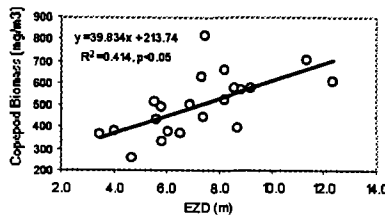
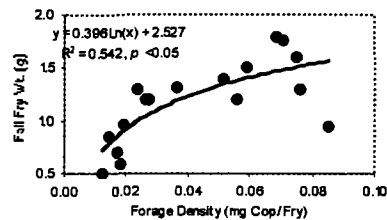
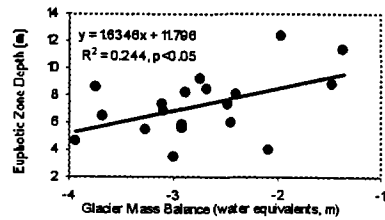
Probability of Harvest < 1000 (assuming alternating escapement goal policy)													
Spawners (brood year)	Spawners (brood year -1)												
	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200	1300
100	75												
200	55	31											
300	43	25	16										
400	42	21	14	10									
500	40	21	13	9	7								
600	41	23	13	8	8	11							
700	40	22	14	12	8	9	11						
800	38	21	13	10	11	12	12	12					
900	40	23	14	11	12	13	16	16	17				
1000	46	22	13	14	16	16	18	19	25	29			
1100	40	28	17	15	15	16	20	22	27	35	43		
1200	41	26	18	16	17	18	23	28	34	42	51	59	
1300	42	26	20	19	19	21	26	34	41	48	60	65	74



# Declining Productivity in Skilak Lake



# Declining Productivity in Skilak Lake - Mechanisms



## Overwinter Mortality Model

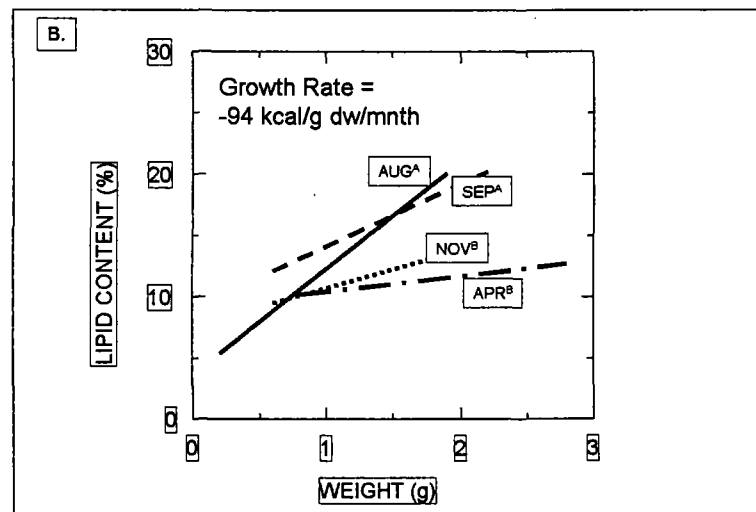
### Inputs:

- Fall fry size and energy content (kcal/g dw)
- Fall growth rate (Sept – Dec)
- Duration of ice cover
- Overwinter metabolic rate (Jan – Apr)
- Threshold fry energy content of starved fry

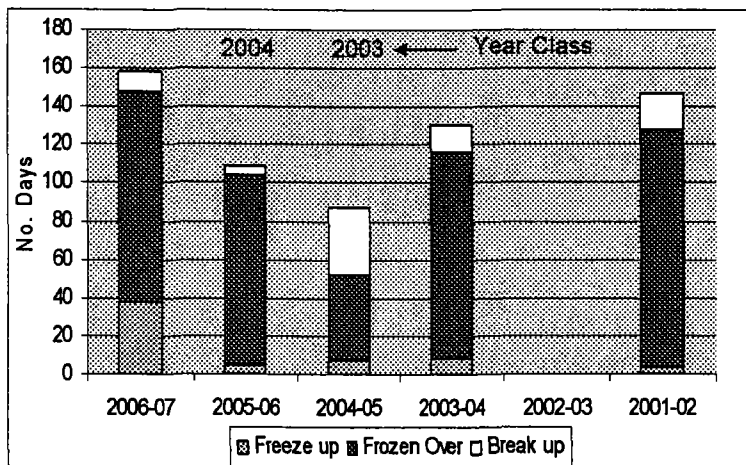
### Output:

- Overwinter survival
- Spring size and energy content of survivors

## Fall Decline in Energy Content



## Duration of Ice Cover on Skilak Lake



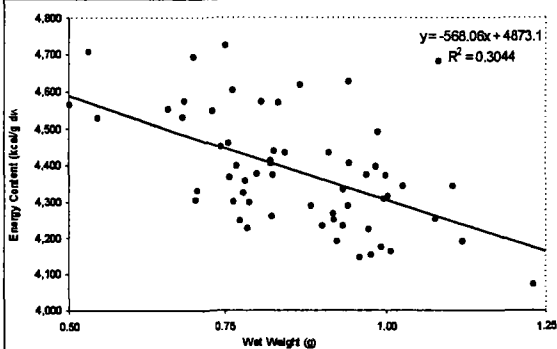
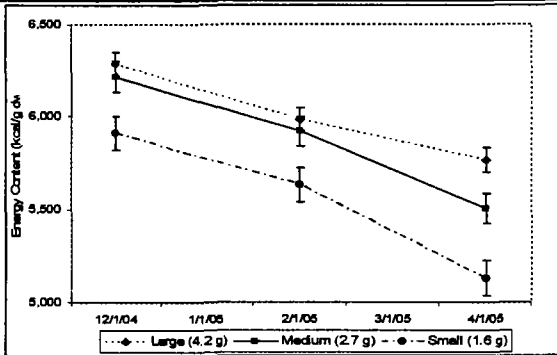
Data provided by Page Spencer, NPS

## Overwinter Mortality Laboratory Study

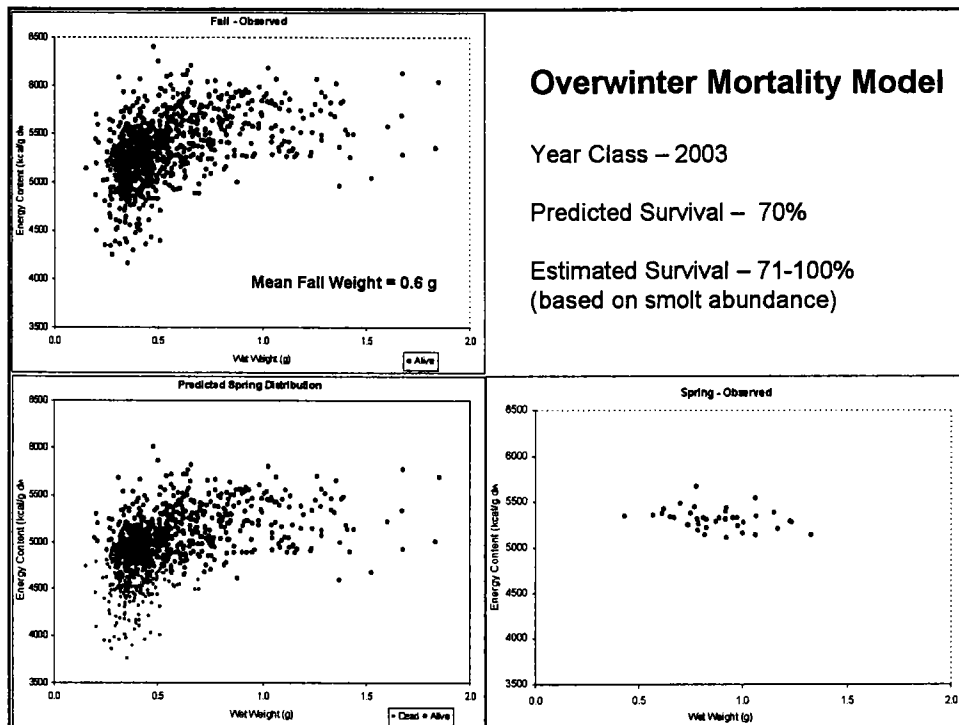
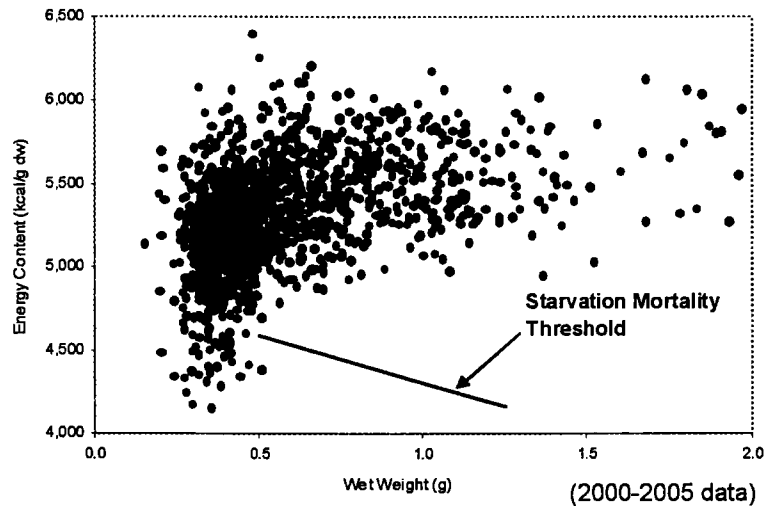
Metabolic Rate – Body Size

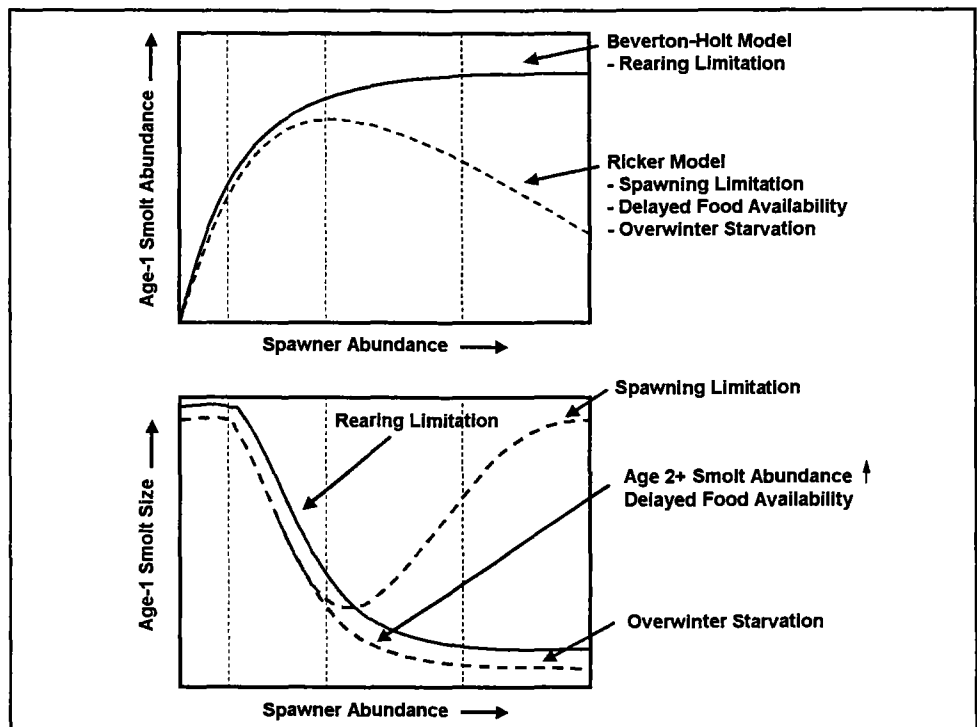
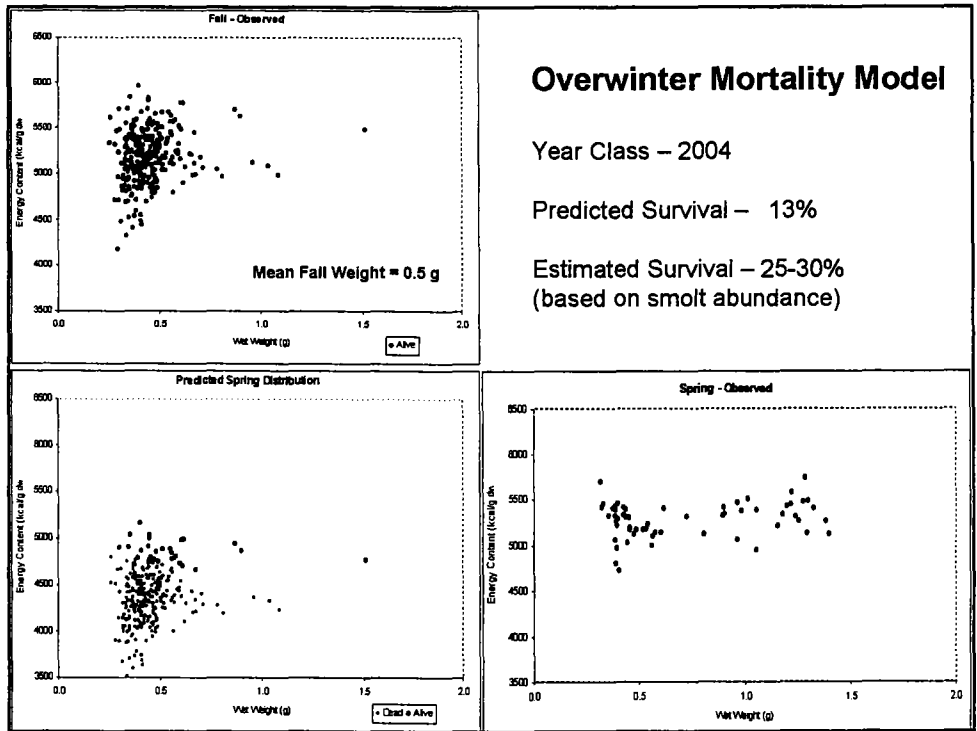
$$M_{\text{day}} = -0.79 \text{ BW} + 7.35$$

Threshold Energy Content at Starvation – Body Size



# Fry Energy Content and Weight





## Declining Fall Fry Size & Overwinter Mortality

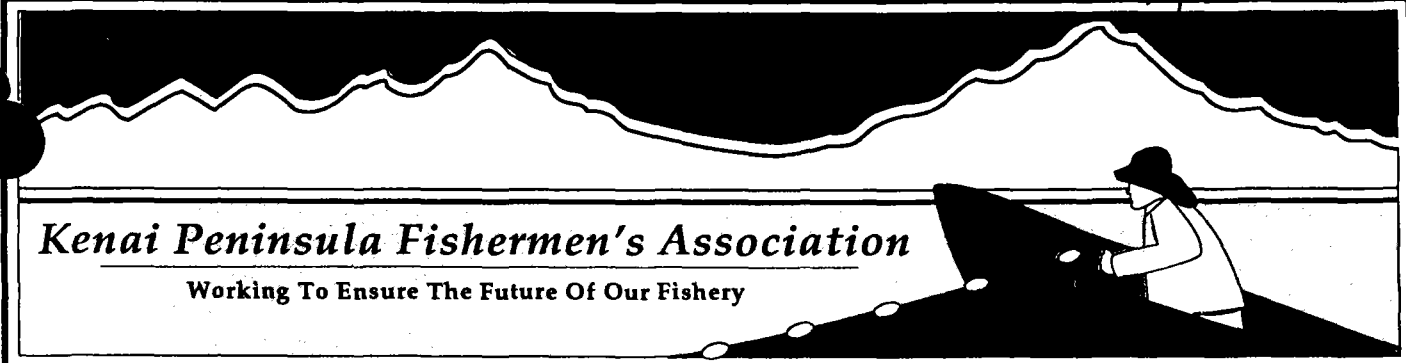
Brood Year	Spawner Abundance	EZO	Copepod		Fall Fry Weight (g)	Fall Fry Abundance		Return Year	Adult 1.3 Return
			Biomass			Age 0	Age 1		
1985	396	9.0	570		1.7	17,877	2,384	1990	1,402
1986	405	8.3	657			9,029	0	1991	719
1987	1,334	12.4	608		0.9	30,883	78	1992	6,709
1988	841	11.8	703		1.2	12,660	9,190	1993	1,310
1989	1,339	5.7	517		1.3	21,850	862	1994	2,177
1990	448	6.7	375		1.5	6,347	365	1995	693
1991	377	9.6	578		1.8	8,427	95	1996	2,522
1992	753	7.7	816		1.2	31,347	1,727	1997	2,985
1993	670	5.9	431		1.4	8,354	1,156	1998	674
1994	898	8.3	521		1.7	7,378	467	1999	1,534
1995	517	3.4	363		1.6	4,830	361	2000	861
1996	585	5.8	334		0.9	23,000	240	2001	1,338
1997	878	5.1	260		0.7	15,332	2,460	2002	1,928
1998	559	7.6	448		1.3	5,908	514	2003	2,336
1999	563	6.9	504		1.2	18,663	435	2004	3,547
2000	393	9.2	395		1.0	20,416	515	2005	4,620
2001	458	8.7	581		1.0	6,802	3,325	2006	1,084
2002	700	4.3	380		1.3	10,521	432	2007	2,743
2003	921	6.0	377		0.6	20,390	582	2008	2,592
2004	1,120	5.8	489		0.5	39,500	107	2009	-
2005	1,113	7.3	625		0.7	27,548	7,856	2010	-
2006	1,270	5.7	-		0.9	7,939	8,936	2011	-
2007	718	-	-		-	-	-	2012	-

## Conclusions

1. Fall fry weighing <0.5 g are less likely to survive over winter.
2. The 2003 year class will likely produce an average adult return.
3. The 2004 year class may have experienced significant overwinter mortality, and about 20% of fall fry held over in the lake for an additional year. Age 1.2 adult returns in 2008 will help resolve the level of overwinter mortality.
4. The 2005 year class may not have experienced significant overwinter mortality, but about 25% of the fall fry held over in the lake for an additional year.
5. The 2006 year class competed with age 1 fry from the 2005 year class and produced a relatively small fall fry population (7.9 million).
6. We have low confidence in smolt abundance estimates, adult returns in 2008-2011 are needed to determine the actual production from the 2003-2006 year classes.



KC 194



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February 8, 2008

State Of Alaska  
 Department of Fish and Game  
 Board Support Section  
 Chairman Mel Morris  
 Attn: Board Comments  
 P.O. Box 115526  
 Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Chairman Morris,

**Committee E**

**Proposal 227**

Support - The importance of providing an opportunity to the general public while protecting the valuable spawning Kings requires discipline within the Division of Sport Fisheries. If you decide to keep a King salmon or mortally injure a fish while catching or releasing, then you should quit that day of fishing . The King should count for your bag and possession limit. This proposal would relieve congestion in what is becoming a very crowded situation and gives an opportunity for the next person which further enhances their experience.

**Proposal 228**

Support - We do not support the amended language. This will not protect the stocks that spawn in the mainstem. Lack of enforcement and prescribed land use rules will take toll on the long term health of the resources in this reach of the river. The crowding that is increasing in the lower ranges will continue to overflow above the bridge. Preservation guidelines established now will make changes or restrictions in the future more easily accepted in the future. The department needs to submit a long term plan relative to the principles of the SSFP in conjunction with a habitat report. Decisions that are made without this are not based on the *best available science*.

**Proposal 229**

Oppose - Access for others not fishing and in the upper reaches should not be impeded.

**Proposal 232**

Oppose - We highly agree with ADF&G on the negative ramifications of power boat use . We question why the department does not support the same logic for the more intensively used Kenai River?

**Proposal 234**

Oppose - This will continue to impact the habitat of the river in unknown ways. Observation of the “*dunes*” at the mouth of the Kasilof River is a poor example of responsible management. 5 AAC 21.360 (d) should apply to any system that has roadside access.

**Proposals 255, 256, 257, 258, 261, 263, 266, 267, 268**

Oppose - We have reviewed RC’s 131, 178 associated with these proposals and find them unacceptable.

Previous board meetings and special meetings addressed the declining 1.5 age class. Information tables supplied do not address the % of females in this age class. Current 44” slot limit assures 60% of the females are in the protected age class will statistically have a chance to survive. The SSFP directs caution to managers when dealing with exploitation on stocks with limited scientific data. KPFA does not believe that sufficient time has gone by since the introduction of this plan to conserve this genetic component of the Kenai Early Run King Salmon.

The 21” - 28” slot is a viable component to the genetic integrity of the run as a whole. We do not know how the interaction takes place but it is understood that the genetic characteristics that anglers are targeting are in every fish that returns. Dramatic liberalizations in the retention of this age class may affect the brood year interaction in the fresh water and at sea.

We support the extension in time and area to protect the in river/stream spawners. Reducing stress on these returning Kings to there natal areas can only improve the survival of the larger more aggressive fish which may in the future return stronger genetic classes.

Our suggestion:

**Retain the slot limit at 45” to 55”** This moves one inch to statistically allow 750 more fish in the harvest while offering some protection to the 1.5 females.

**Allow the retention of one 28" or under king salmon that does not count against the limit of two Kenai kings but will count against the area wide limit of 5. This King must be recorded on the back of the sport license as normal.** This will liberalize the harvest and reduce loss to mortality. Commercial fishermen harvest Kings of all sizes but almost 50% of the harvest of late run Kings are 28" or under. We are not interested in excluding any relevant data that would help us to evaluate the size and health of the early run. We do not want non-reporting to become the normal practice of the late Kenai run or of any other system. These Kings must be counted to assure sustainability and to determine accurate harvest exploitation.

**Anglers must discontinue fishing after they have retained any King that day.** This reduces the chance of over harvesting a segment of the run and gives other anglers a reasonable opportunity to harvest stocks when they are abundant.

**Extend the bounds of the sanctuary and adjust the dates to July 31<sup>st</sup>.**

**Restrict the use of bait until the department is assured of run strength, then open by emergency order.** The effects of bait on a weak resource could be devastating. Angler pressure with changes that increase expectations of angler success can cause the return to fall under it's sustainable range.

#### **Proposal 259**

*Oppose* - This is a rare event at best and cannot hurt the gene pool. Straying is a natural occurrence in nature and helps to strengthen the genetic integrity of the stock. This rule could be abused by those that would wish to subvert the rules.

#### **Proposal 265**

*Support* - This is necessary for conservation concerns associated with 1.5 age class early Kenai Kings.

#### **Proposal 270, 271**

*Oppose* - The department has the authority to extend the season by EO. Could restrict the season early in July some years as a precautionary approach. May affect balance in allocation with commercial fisheries.

#### **Proposal 272**

*Oppose* - The current BEG or estimate of Maximum Sustained Yield by definition is retuning the highest yield to escapement ratio practicable. Goal has been established for several cycles and is sustainable.

**Proposal 273**

Support - Simplifies management plan and incorporates the KRSFA within the plan.

**Proposal 274**

Oppose - This would create another "terminal harvest area" in the mouth of the Kenai River. We are opposed to this idea as the example of the KRSFA has not been at all positive. Conflicts with different resource users would abound, sustainable fisheries principles would be violated, traditional and historic commercial fishing practices would be disrupted.

**Proposal 275, 276, 277**

Support - KPFA does not believe that one proposal here is better than the rest. It is our desire to establish a way to limit the flow of our resources out of the state. Illegal sales contradicts the "sports" mantra and denies the purchase of seafood from Alaskan commercial fishermen. Accurate evaluations of the amount of seafood leaving our state are not available. Limitations are already in place for guided non-residents in Southeast Alaska. The residents of the state receive little revenue from privately exported seafood to assist with fisheries management within the state. This problem will continue in small communities across the state. A reduction in Halibut IFQ's as a direct result of accedence's of the Guideline Harvest Levels by the non resident public will eventually cost many Alaskan villages their economic stability.

**Proposal 278**

Oppose - We appreciate the desire to honestly define sockeye fishing as a "snag fishery" . However, the benefits of allowing "snagging" as a method of fishing is neither sporting nor safe. Overzealous fishermen might continue to fish without consideration of the utilization of their harvest. This will turn the "sport fishery" into a "meat fishery".

**Proposal 279**

Support - Data from the division of sports fishing indicate no concern with the sustainability of Coho stocks. We agree that a liberalized bag limit should be a tool in the departments tool bag. KPFA believes in the practice of "adaptive management" which allows the fisheries managers to raise or lower the bag limits in season using the "Commissioners" emergency order authority.



Paul A. Shadura II  
Executive Director

RC 195

UNITED COOK INLET DRIFT ASSOCIATION

Proposals 187 Committee C  
160 Committee B

Escapement Goal Management and Windows suggested wording

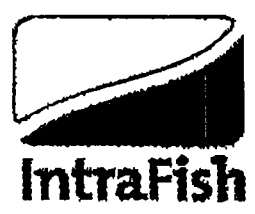
5 AAC 21.360 KENAI RIVER LATE - RUN SOCKEYE SALMON MANAGEMENT  
PLAN

"It is the intent of the board that additional fishing time may be allowed and that the windows may be reduced in duration, if necessary, to meet escapement goals and to distribute the escapements within the escapement goal range."

(e) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, [IT] it is the intent of the board that, while in most circumstances the department will adhere to the management plans in this chapter, none of the provisions within the [NOTHING IN] the management plans is intended to limit [OVERRIDE] the commissioner's emergency order authority under AS 16.05.060 which will be used to achieve established escapement goals contained within the specific management plans as the primary management objective. [ SHOULD SIGNIFICANT NEW INFORMATION ARISE THAT IN THE COMMISSIONER'S JUDGMENT, WARRANTS DEPARTURE FROM THE PROVISIONS IN THE MANAGEMENT PLANS].

Salmon bycatch could limit Alaska pollock harvest

1) Why restrict fishing in East Foreland & Salamat of beach to save 200 Kings when we loose these numbers in Bering Sea? Should attack the source problem! TRY TO GET A CAP ON TRAWLERS FOR CHINOOK CATCH.  
Print  
www.intrafish.no [Published 11.02.2008 - 15:02]



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RC. 197

# Salmon bycatch could limit Alaska pollock harvest



Seattle Times

The Bering Sea trawl fleets last year set a new and unwelcome catch record: Their vessels accidentally snared more than 120,000 chinook salmon as they dropped their nets in pursuit of pollock in North America's biggest seafood harvest.

The chinook are the largest of Pacific salmon, a prized catch in coastal and river harvests in Alaska, Canada and the Pacific Northwest. Last year's big accidental haul by the pollock fleet has prompted Alaska native groups, the Canadian government and conservationists to push for new restrictions on Bering Sea trawl operations.

"It's unbelievable that there is not a cap on the amount of salmon the pollock fleets can kill," said Jon Warrenchuk, a marine scientist with Oceana, a fisheries conservation group. "It's time for action."

The pollock-harvest rules are shaped by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, a group of state, federal and industry officials who are meeting this week in Seattle. Today, they are scheduled to consider several options to reduce the chinook catch, including placing a limit on the chinook harvest that -- if reached -- would terminate the annual Bering Sea pollock harvest.

It's a high-stakes decision. The pollock harvest yields more than \$1 billion worth of fish processed into fillets and other seafood products, and it is a mainstay for Seattle-based trawlers in the Bering Sea.

Seattle trawl operators are hoping they can fend off a cap in favor of other options such as temporary closures of salmon hot spots in the Bering Sea or avoiding fishing in October, when salmon catch rates increase.

"We feel we can achieve the same objectives without that high cost of potentially shutting down the harvest," said Brent Paine, executive director of United Catcher Boats, which represent some Northwest trawlers. "But the pressure is on. This is a really emotional issue."

Chinook form a small fraction of the fish that wind up in the trawl nets, and to discourage fisherman from targeting them, they cannot be sold. Some are given to food banks.

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"For these fish, it does not appear that the trawl harvest is a major factor impeding recovery," said Bill Tweit, a Washington state representative to the Federal Fishery Council. "But that doesn't let us off the hook. You have to address every source of mortality in order to get recovery."

During weekend sessions, the council is expected to select several possible options for limiting the trawl fleet's salmon harvest. A final decision is expected this year.

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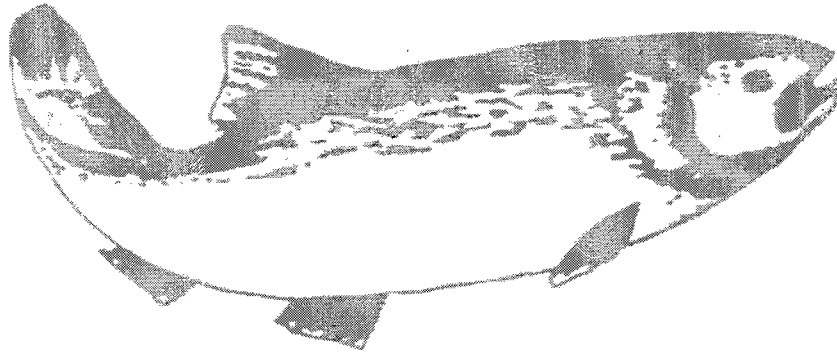
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# NORTHERN DISTRICT SET NETTERS ASSOCIATION OF COOK INLET

P.O. Box 101480 ♦ Anchorage, Alaska 99510-1480

Est. 1954



RC 198

11 February 2008

Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Anchorage, Alaska

**SUBJECT:** Northern District Set Netters Proposal No. 146

This proposal requests to remove the three period limit for the Northern District king salmon fishery.

In the Committee B meeting, it was indicated that an additional Monday period for this fishery would result in approximately an additional commercial harvest of 1,000 king salmon.

As noted by the Department, these fish would come from a run that averages 150,000 to 200,000 annually, and the 1,000 harvest is relatively small compared to the run size.

The Department has authority to close this fishery by E.O. if escapement indicators warrant such an action. This has occurred in the past with the support of the Northern District Set Netters.

Concerns related to specific streams missing goals for index counts are addressed in several ways:

- The section of beach from the Susitna River to one mile south of the Theodore River only has one period. It is not a part of this proposal to extend the rest of the Northern District to the fourth king salmon period. Impacts to the escapements to the Lewis, Ivan, and Theodore rivers should be minimal as the areas around those streams would not be open.
- The king salmon Northern Cook Inlet escapement index counts are based on single aerial counts conducted annually and likely are undercounting. In several cases, the counts are under goal by a relatively few number of fish. One aerial survey a year may not be adequate to ascertain accurate escapement numbers. We urge the Board to review a similar situation with Anchor River king salmon where aerial surveys proved to be a fraction of sonar and weir counts (ADF&G Fishery Manuscript No. 07-05).

A longer king salmon season provides an opportunity for the Northern District set netters to harvest a relatively modest number of king salmon from a stock of 150,000 to 200,000 with no disproportionate harvest of small stocks (e.g., the harvest is spread out over the entire run and does not focus on any specific stock) early in the season to fill custom markets.

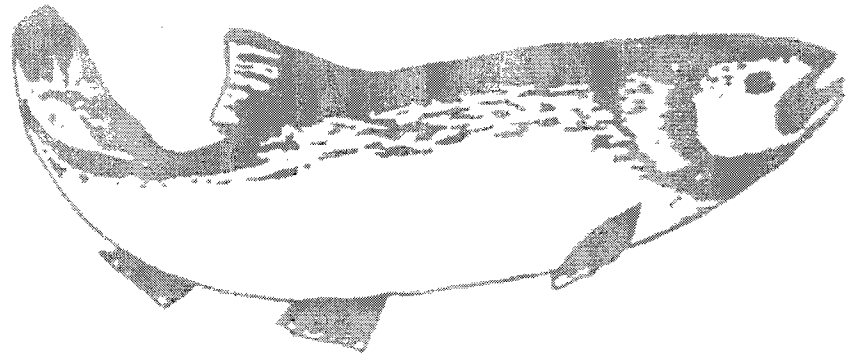
Under current regulations, the last king salmon period in 2008 will be June 9 well before the end of the run.

The annual average harvest in this fishery (three openings) in the last three years (2005, 2006, 2007) was 3,400 king salmon in a fishery with a commercial cap of 12,500. An average of 58 fishers fished in this fishery in the last three years. Area registration will continue to work to not attract additional fishers to this fishery.

**NORTHERN DISTRICT SET NETTERS ASSOCIATION OF COOK INLET**

P.O. Box 101480 ♦ Anchorage, Alaska 99510-1480

*Est. 1954*



RC 199

11 February 2008

Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Anchorage, Alaska

**SUBJECT:** Comments on Preliminary Draft of Susitna Sockeye Salmon Action Plan

**Central District Drift Gillnet Fishery management Plan**

Our overarching comment is that any meaningful management effect on Yentna/Susitna sockeye passage through the commercial fishery requires management actions in the Central District. In our view, the current draft does not adequately do that.

Through years of trial and error, the Department concluded that a meaningful way to assist passage of northern bound sockeye through the Central District was to put the drift fleet in the east side corridor for one period between approximately July 9 and 15. The Department did this routinely for so many years that the Board codified this action into regulation.

Then, in 2005, the Board chose to add Drift Areas 1 and 2 in addition to the corridor. The results of this action are evident in the Yentna River low sockeye escapements since that time.

In our view, putting the drift fleet in Area 1 during the July 9-15 time period does too little to pass sockeye to the Northern District.

We are opposed to Areas 1 and 2 being used as alternatives to the east side corridor restrictions in an effort to allow sockeye to pass into the Northern District as fishing in those areas reduces the chances for northern bound sockeye to pass.

**Potential Modification to 5 AAC 21.358 Northern District Salmon Management Plan**

Section (c) (2) begins "From July 20 through August 7..." While we endorse this management modification and appreciate the opportunity it would provide for Northern District to fish, we believe extending the date to August 7 is too late in the season. In our proposal No. 141 that requested for the Department to have E.O. authority to reduce gear, we proposed August 6. Selecting this date was the result of past E.O. closures that at the time we considered beyond the sockeye season. We believe that the August 8 date is too late as the bulk of sockeye have already passed by this time, and this date serves to reduce our historic opportunity to harvest coho in August. The coho fishery is an important fishery to us.

Coho mark and recapture data (Regional Information Report No. 2A03-20: Table 23) indicate that the following percentages of radio tags were in recovered in freshwater by August 11:

Westside	88%	Little Susitna River	73%
Susitna	95%	Knik Arm	65%
Yentna River	96%	Turnagain Arm	34%

5 AAC 57.120(2)(C) is amended to read:

(C) a person, after taking and retaining a king salmon 28 inches or less from the Kenai River may continue to sport fish from a boat in the Kenai River downstream from Skilak Lake for any species of fish on that same day;

**NORTHERN DISTRICT SETNETTERS ASSOC.**

RC 201

**PROPOSAL 148** -5AAC 21.366(4) NORTHERN DISTRICT KING SALMON MANAGEMENT PLAN.

The Northern District Setnetters Assoc. respectfully request the withdrawal of this proposal 148, in reference to page 13 of RC 102.

THE NORTHERN DISTRICT SETNETTERS ASSOC.

Steve Braund, President

RC 202

UNITED COOK INLET DRIFT ASSOCIATION  
&  
KENAI PENINSULA FISHERMEN'S ASSOCIATION

**KENAI RIVER LATE-RUN SOCKEYE SALMON MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**5 AAC 21.366 Run Strengths and Escapement Goals.**

C (1) Runs less than **2,000,000** sockeye

Inriver goal range **600,000 [650,000] - 850,000**. This inriver goal provides for a minimum sport harvest allocation of **100,000** sockeye above the sonar. There is an additional **30,000 to 50,000** sport harvest below the sonar.

The **600,000 [650,000] - 850,000** inriver goal provides for a **130,000-150,000** minimum sport allocation , which is well above historical sport fish harvests.

**Any increase to the 600,000 [650,000] to 850,000 will cause commercial fishermen serious economic devastation.**

C (2) Run Strengths of **2,000,000 to 4,000,000** sockeye

Inriver goal range of **750,000 to 950,000**. This inriver goal provides for a minimum sport harvest allocation of **250,000** sockeye above the sonar. There is an additional **30,000 to 50,000** historical sport fish harvest below the sonar.

**The 750,000 to 950,000 inriver goal provides for a minimum sport fish allocation of 280,000 - 300,000, which is well above any historical sport fish harvests. See RC 190**

C (3) Run Strengths greater than **4,000,000** sockeye

Inriver goal range of **850,000 to 1,000,000 [1,100,000]**. This inriver goal provides for a minimum sport harvest allocation of **350,000** sockeye above the sonar. There is an additional **30,000 to 50,000** historical sport fish harvest below the sonar.

**The 850,000 to 1,000,000 [1,100,000] inriver goal provides for a minimum sport fish allocation of 380,000 to 400,000 sockeye, which is well above any historical sport fish harvests. See RC 190**

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Runs below 2,000,000: inriver goal 600,000 [650,000] to 850,000 (change).**

**Runs from 2,000,000 to 4,000,000: inriver goal 750,000-950,000 (unchanged).**

**Runs above 4,000,000: inriver goal 850,000 to 1,000,000 [1,100,000] change upper end of inriver goal to agree with OEG of 500,000 to 1,000,000.**

Proposals Committee C118, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 196, 197, 198, 199, 201

"We feel we can achieve the same objectives without that high cost of potentially shutting down the harvest," said Brent Paine, executive director of United Catcher Boats, which represent some Northwest trawlers. "But the pressure is on. This is a really emotional issue."

Chinook form a small fraction of the fish that wind up in the trawl nets, and to discourage fisherman from targeting them, they cannot be sold. Some are given to food banks.

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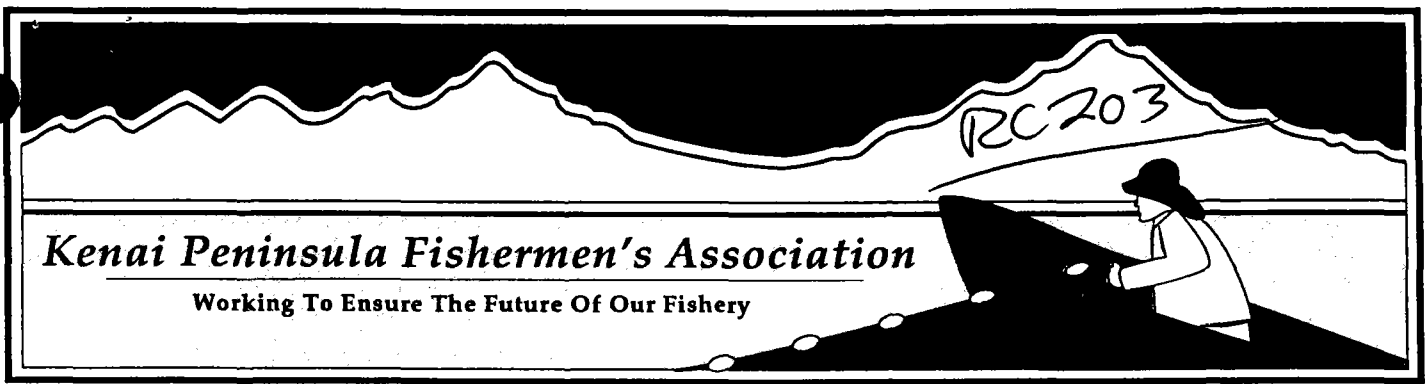
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(907) 262-2492 • Fax: (907) 262-2898 • E Mail: kpfa@alaska.net

February 11, 2008

State Of Alaska  
Department of Fish and Game  
Board Support Section  
Chairman Mel Morris  
Attn: Board Comments  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Chairman Morris,

**Committee B**

Support 5 AAC 21.363 Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan (e) , RC 196, PC 63

KPFA supports the revised language in RC 196.

It has been the goal of our organization to improve clarity in the inseason management of commercial prioritized stocks within the waters of Upper Cook Inlet.

This KPFA proposal is our sincere request to have the Board of Fisheries specify their intent in actuating management plans and to further guide the Commissioner and his authority in achieving the escapement goals using the 5 AAC 39.222 Policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries.

Please review the documents attached on the DOL and Judge Brown's ruling in regards to the validity of emergency order restrictions.

Please review the issues paper submitted to the public that addresses the concerns of the department.

Respectfully,

  
Paul A. Shadura II

Executive Director

Enclosed:

KPFA/UCIDA vs. ADF&G 3KN - 02 - 524 CI, May 28, 2003

Alaska Board Of Fisheries, Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plans and Issues  
March 09, 2007



IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRD JUDICIAL DISTRICT AT KENAI

KENAI PENINSULA FISHERMAN'S )  
ASSOCIATION and UNITED COOK )  
DRIFT ASSOCIATION, )

Plaintiffs, )

v. )

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND )  
GAME and KEVIN DUFFY, Acting )  
Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish )  
and Game, )

Defendants. )

MAILED  
MAY 30 2003  
COURT CLERK  
OF THE SUPERIOR COURT  
OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

Case No.: 3KN-02-524 CI

Order Regarding Motions for Summary Judgment

Both parties have moved for summary judgment in the above captioned case. The parties agree directly or by implication that there are no issues of material fact in dispute in this case. Defendants have also moved to strike certain exhibits attached to Plaintiffs' Motion for Summary Judgment and argue that Plaintiffs have brought this action against the wrong state entities.

Defendants argue that Plaintiffs should have named the Board of Fisheries ("Board") or the State of Alaska as a defendant rather than the Commissioner of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game ("Commissioner"). The Board is hereby joined as a party pursuant to ARCP 19(a). This joinder need not delay consideration of the pending motions for summary judgment. Had the Board been a party to this action from the beginning, the arguments advanced in support of the parties' respective positions would be same, the attorneys involved in the case would be the same and presumably the result would be the same.

Defendants challenge several exhibits attached to Plaintiffs' Motion for Summary

Judgment. Plaintiffs argue that Exhibits B and C are relevant to the issue of standing. Because lack of standing is not argued by the state, that issue is considered waived. Exhibits B and C will not be considered by the court in its analysis of the parties' motions. Rather, the court will rely on the record and on the existing statutory and regulatory scheme in its decision. Exhibits D, H, I and J supplement but do not contribute significantly to the court's understanding of the issues and the facts framed by the record. While they will not be stricken they are not relied upon by the court in its decision.

Plaintiffs in their complaint ask the court to declare the Optimal Escapement Goal adopted by the Board for the Kasilof River invalid. In their motion, Plaintiffs argue that the Board's adoption of an OEG was made contrary to procedures set out in 5 AAC 39.223 because the Board did not conduct a formal Yield Analysis during its consideration of the new escapement goal. But the decision of the Board was reasonable based upon the information that was available. It would have been impracticable to conduct such a Yield Analysis given the circumstances surrounding the adoption of the OEG. The Board's decision was primarily motivated by a desire to meet the lower boundary of the escapement goal for the Kenai River even if this possibly resulted in a loss of yield in the nearby Kasilof Fishery. The Board received and considered evidence that the relationship between escapement and yield was not strong in the Kasilof River, at least within the ranges contemplated by the proposed OEG. It was unlikely, under these circumstances, that a more formal Yield Analysis for the Kasilof River would produce data helpful to the Board's decision. Accordingly, Defendants are entitled to summary judgment on this issue.

Plaintiffs also seek a court ruling invalidating certain restrictions imposed by the Board on the power of the Commissioner of the Department of Fish and Game to issue Emergency Orders in

the Kasilof Fishery. In the alternative they ask the court to interpret the disputed provisions as not affecting the power of the Commissioner to issue Emergency Orders inconsistent with the Board's restrictions. The court elects the latter remedy, finding that the regulation can be subjected to a saving construction.<sup>1</sup>

AS 16.05.060 authorizes the Commissioner to issue Emergency Orders opening and closing seasons and areas to fishing. The Alaska Supreme Court delineated the outer bounds of this power in *Peninsula Marketing Ass'n v. Rosier* when it upheld the decision of the district court that an Executive Order cannot be used to implement a management plan which has been considered and rejected by the Board absent new information which had not been available to the Board at the time of its decision.<sup>2</sup>

Here, the issue is whether the Board's regulation should be read as further limiting the power of the Commissioner to issue Emergency Orders to particular times and places of the Board's choosing. The court holds that it should not. Although the Board of Fisheries is granted wide ranging power to regulate the fishery under AS 16.05.251, the Board cannot place limits on the Legislature's delegation of authority to the Commissioner.

The court does not know and the parties did not address the level of information available to the Board when it promulgated that part of its regulation imposing temporal limits on Emergency Orders issued by the Commissioner. It would be inappropriate for this court to speculate what kind of information would justify the Commissioner entering an EO affecting these limits. But the court can say that to the extent that 5 AAC 21.360 can be read to prohibit the commissioner from entering an Emergency Order affecting the time limits set out in the regulation no matter the

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<sup>1</sup> Defendants suggest that a judgment interpreting the language of the challenged regulation would constitute an advisory opinion. The court disagrees. Plaintiffs are "interested persons" under AS 44.62.300 and may seek declaratory judgment on this issue.

circumstances, it is invalid.

Summary judgment is therefore granted in favor of Defendants regarding the issue of the necessity of a Yield Analysis during the Board's contemplation of an Optimal Escapement Goal, and in favor of Plaintiffs regarding the effect of the Board's regulations on the Commissioner's Emergency Order authority.

DATED at Kenai, Alaska, this 28<sup>th</sup> day of MAY 2003.



HAROLD M. BROWN  
Superior Court Judge

CERTIFICATION OF DISTRIBUTION	
I certify that a copy of the foregoing was mailed/faxed to the following at their address of record: <i>Bauer</i>	
<i>Saltry</i>	
Date: <i>5/29/03</i>	Clerk: <i>ZPZ</i>

RC43

**Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Upper Cook Inlet Committee**

**Upper Cook Inlet Salmon  
Management Plans and Issues**

**March 9, 2007**

**Upper Cook Inlet Management Plans Issue Paper  
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## Introduction

The fishery management plans for salmon in Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) are, arguably, the most complex in the State. This complexity has evolved over the years as the Board of Fisheries has struggled to balance the allocation needs and desires of the various user groups. Over half of the State population resides within the UCI watershed. In most years, UCI is second only to Bristol Bay in terms of average commercial sockeye salmon harvests in the State, and also produces significant runs of chinook salmon, with the notable Kenai River known around the world as a premier sport fishing destination for monster kings. These factors and more, arguably, also combine to make the allocative tension in UCI the highest in the State's fisheries.

At the Board of Fisheries worksession in October 2006, the Board received numerous Agenda Change Requests (ACRs), mostly from commercial fishery interests, that asked the Board to re-evaluate many aspects of the UCI salmon fishery management plans. While the Board declined to accept the ACRs, it created a committee of three Board members (Nelson, Campbell, and Heyano) to begin a comprehensive review of the management plans in preparation for the regular, in-cycle meeting for UCI during the winter of 2007/2008. With input from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the committee prepared an initial "issues paper" on the UCI management plans. This initial draft was made available to the public for written comment and was not intended to be all-encompassing in the issues it presented, just merely a kick start of the discussion and to solicit the additional comments that were sure to come from the various users. The committee received 12 written comments, which have been incorporated into this re-draft of the issues paper, which the committee now presents to the full Board.

Based on the comments received, the committee strived to include as many additional issues as possible, not wanting to necessarily "screen" anything at this time. The committee also wishes to state that inclusion of any issue into this document does not necessarily imply an endorsement by the committee, or the full Board. This document is also not intended to be an all-encompassing issues paper. There are most likely other issues that may be brought forward through the proposal process. Even with the additional comments that the Committee incorporated, readers may wish to refer to the individual comments for further justification. For the sake of completeness, the Committee wishes to incorporate, by reference, all the timely comments that were received on the initial draft. Copies of these comments have been posted on the Board of Fisheries website at:

<http://www.boards.adfg.state.ak.us/fishinfo/uciissues.php>

The comments that the committee received addressed the complexity of the management plans, the competing nature of their intent and goals (or the lack of guidance in balancing those competing goals), and aspects of allocation across the user groups and the region. Some comments addressed the management plans in a general nature, stressing organization, purpose, and simplicity; other comments went into great specificity regarding aspects of each regulatory management plan.

Other comments referenced previous requests for Board action, particularly the ACRs that were submitted at the worksession, and also requested that the Board return the management plans to the more simple and flexible plans that existed prior to 1995 (Comment #5, Central Peninsula Fish and Game Advisory Committee).

Many comments focused on the management plans as being overly-prescriptive and "tying the hands of managers", limiting their ability to react in-season and allow commercial harvest opportunity on available surpluses of fish. They argued that the plans have resulted in serial over-escapement of sockeye into the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers that meant, at best, lost harvest and income for the commercial fishermen and, at worst, biologically jeopardized the future yield potential of these systems (Comment #9, Jeff Beaudoin). While some comments took issue with the actual numbers that are the escapement and/or in-

river goals, many comments generally stated that the management plans should be liberalized to allow the department to better manage for those goals. This theme recurred throughout many of the comments on the management plans.

Other comments expressed concern about low sockeye escapements to the Sustina drainage, particularly to the Yentna River which has failed to meet the lower end of its escapement goal in many recent years. It was argued that the intensive commercial fishery effort that focused on the abundant Kenai River sockeye salmon also caught significant numbers of Yentna sockeye. Some other comments raised questions about other (non-fishery) possible causes for low sockeye productivity in the Susitna drainage.

Yet other comments arose in defense of the current management plans. They argued that the plans' complexities are simply the result of years of work and the balancing of the needs of various users and goals. They stated that changes to increase commercial fisheries "flexibility" will only exacerbate current in-river fishery and chinook escapement problems. They also stated that the plans have largely been successful, providing for above-average commercial harvests in many recent years as well as strong in-river returns for sport and personal-use harvest opportunity and spawning escapement. (Comment #6, Kenai River Sportfishing Association)

Some comments mentioned the need for clear purpose/goal statements within each of the management plans, and that this may help to clarify priorities when the purposes and goals of each plan may be in conflict with one another. They also spoke of the need for a better organizational structure for all the plans.



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

### Management Plan:

Sometimes referred to as the "Umbrella Plan", this plan provides general management principles for all UCI salmon plans, rather than specific management directives. Many of the comments that the committee received focused on section (e) that the Board inserted in 2005:

(e) It is the intent of the Board that, while in most circumstances, the Department will adhere to the management plans in this chapter, nothing in the management plans is intended to override the commissioner's emergency order authority under AS 16.05.060 should significant new information arise that, in the commissioner's judgment, warrants departure from the provisions in the management plans.

### Issue 1:

Paragraph (e) provides no guidance as how this should be interpreted and has created conflict with the Department and the public (Comment #2, Kenai Area Fishermen's Coalition). Another comment suggested that some guidance should be provided regarding "significant new information" (Comment #10, Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association)

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

### Management Plan:

The department shall manage the Central District commercial drift gillnet fishery as follows:  
Weekly fishing period are Monday and Thursday from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, except that these fishing periods may be modified by emergency order.

The fishing season will open the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later, and from July 9 through July 15, (i) fishing during the two regular fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections and Drift Gillnet Area 1; (ii) at run strengths greater than 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.

From July 16 through July 31, (i) at run strengths of less than 2,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during the two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict and Drift Gillnet Area 1; (ii) at run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during the two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict and Drift Gillnet Areas 1 and 2; (iii) at run strengths greater than 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, there will be no mandatory restrictions during regular fishing periods.

### Issue 1:

In medium to larger sockeye salmon runs, the drift gillnet fishery is a necessary tool to harvest salmon in excess of escapements. However, in recent years, restrictions to the drift gillnet fishery have been taken in an attempt to achieve the Yentna River escapement goal. The Yenta River EG has been exceeded once, within the range twice, and below the range 5 times since 1999 while the Kasilof and Kenai River goals have often been exceeded. (Issue from initial Committee draft)

The committee also received comments that management for "weak stocks" (Yentna sockeye) is wasteful. (Comment #3, Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee)

AK 204

**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 to **provide personal use, sport, and guided sport fishermen with a reasonable opportunity** to harvest salmon resources. 5 AAC 21.360**

**Prior to raising the lower limit of the OEG and providing additional recreational opportunity for Kenai River Sockeye, the Board must:**

- **Consider the factors** enumerated in 5 AAC 39.222 – including the impact of expanding fisheries on the economic viability of commercial fisheries, data uncertainty as it pertains to over-escapement and habitat degradation, as well as existing harvest patterns.
- Is the new escapement goal within a range that **provides optimum yield over time** and considers the incidental mortality caused by releasing foul-hooked fish and other human induced mortality?
- What management systems have been **established and applied** to regulate human activities that affect salmon?
- Is this board action causing **excessive fishing capacity through the economic dislocation** of commercial permit holders?
- Has this board taken the precautionary approach regarding human induced mortality? **What about social, cultural and economic risks?** What undesirable outcomes may need to be mitigated as a result of this regulation?
- Was priority given to **conserving the productive capacity of the resource?**
- Was a precautionary approach applied to activities **that may affect essential fish habitat?**
- Are the **principles and criteria for sustainable salmon fisheries based on the best available science?** Or the best available politics?
- How does this regulation promote **maximum or optimum sustained yield?**
- Has a mitigation **Action Plan been implemented** for new or expanding fisheries?
- Has the board met its **obligation to consult** with other affected agencies, authorities, or committees to identify issues and recommend appropriate action?

**SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE FOR PROPOSAL 146**

**5AAC 21.366. Northern District King Salmon Management Plan**

The department shall manage the Northern District for the commercial harvest of king salmon as follows:

(1) except as specified in (8) of this section, the season will open for [THREE] commercial fishing periods with the first fishing period beginning on the first Monday on or after May 25, except when May 25 falls within a closed period, in which case the season opens the next following open period and **continues through** [CLOSES] June 24, unless closed earlier by emergency order;

**SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE FOR PROPOSAL 141**

**5 AAC 21.358. Northern District Salmon Management Plan**

(c) From July 20 through August 6 [JULY 31], if the department's assessment of abundance indicates that restrictions are necessary to achieve the escapement goal, the commissioner may, by emergency order, restrict the number of set gillnets in [CLOSE] the commercial [SET GILLNET] fishery in the Northern District [AND IMMEDIATELY REOPEN THE SEASON DURING WHICH THE NUMBER OF SET GILLNETS THAT MAY BE USED IS LIMITED] to the following options selected at the discretion of the commissioner:

- (1) three set gillnets that are not more than 105 fathoms in aggregate length;
- (2) two set gillnets that are not more than 70 fathoms in aggregate length;
- (3) one set gillnet that is not more than 35 fathoms in length.

**SUGGESTED REGULATORY LANGUAGE FOR PROPOSAL 142**

**5 AAC 21.320. Weekly fishing periods**

(a) In the set gillnet fishery,

(1) **from June 25 through August 10**, salmon may be taken in the Northern District from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday; **and from August 11 until closed by emergency order**, salmon may be taken in the Northern District from 7:00 a.m. Monday until 7:00 p.m. Monday and from 7:00 a.m. Thursday until 7:00 p.m. Thursday, **and from 7:00 a.m. Saturday until 7:00 p.m. Saturday;**

## **KENAI AREA FISHERMAN'S COALITION**

PO Box 375 Kenai, Ak. 99611 \* (907) 283-1054 \* [dwimar@gci.net](mailto:dwimar@gci.net)

**Ref. Proposal 312 - This proposal seeks to address concerns by private anglers that some guides are taking advantage of the non-guided hours to fish non-revenue trips with sponsors, business associates, trade offs, etc. under the guise that they are fishing with "FRIENDS".**

We specifically designed this proposal so that guides who wanted to fish with themselves or family were protected.

The current regulation is difficult to enforce in this regard, however we believe the 2nd degree of kindred clause would provide definitive language that would be enforceable. Enforcement officer's familiarity with individuals in the guide industry would facilitate identification issues.

Some guides have continued to expressed an interest in having time to fish with friends outside of their working time.

The private angler's main concern is with the Sunday non-guided days in July. The Sunday non-guided fishery is when this conflict is most prevalent.

To address these concerns we offer the following compromise language:

"Nobody registered with the State of Alaska as a Sport Fishing Guide may participate in fishing from a boat on the Kenai River downstream of Skilak Lake on Sundays during the month of July when non-guide hours are in affect, except for themselves or with relatives within the second degree of kindred. Participating in fishing would include the act of fishing, assisting in fishing, or operating a boat where fishermen are actively fishing. Second degree of kindred is defined as your father, mother, brother sister, son, daughter, spouse, grandparent, grandchild, brother/sister-in-law, son/daughter-in-law, father/mother-in-law, stepfather, stepmother, stepsister, stepbrother, stepson or stepdaughter."

Dwight Kramer - KAFC Chairman

## **Racking the Rod on a under 28" Kenai Early Run King**

### **Rationale for reconsideration**

1. Subsequent Board action on related proposals has bearing on whether it still makes sense to require an angler to cease fishing.
  - a. Board extended sanctuary protection at the mouth of the Killey.
  - b. Board also tied the use of bait to run strength.
  - c. Both of these provide added escapement of the early run and allow for additional fishing opportunity.
2. Additional information on how many additional fish an angler might catch.
  - a. It takes 18 hrs on average to harvest a fish.
  - b. Fish under 28" make up only 6% of the run.
  - c. Based on these numbers, it will take an average of 300 hours to catch a small fish.
  - d. Most anglers will not harvest a fish under the regulation. A few might harvest two or three.
  - e. According to RC 139, only about 300 fish are projected to be harvested under this regulation in an average run year.

### **Action**

1. Amend regulation to allow an angler to continue to fish after retaining a fish 28" or less.
  - a. Requiring an angler to cease fishing after taking a fish smaller than 28" will have a marginal effect on harvest of these small fish.
  - b. Most anglers will not harvest a fish under 28" if they have to rack their rod. The few that do take one of these small fish probably would have anyway.
  - c. This small level of harvest is not adequate to address the under-exploitation of the small fish.
  - d. Allowing an angler to continue to fish after harvesting a fish under 28" will increase fishing opportunity particularly including opportunity for local anglers.
  - e. This regulation will likely reduce harvest of fish larger than 28". If a person decides to retain a fish under 28" (food fish), there is less of chance that an angler will retain a larger fish.

Early Run King Data (from Committee E Deliberation Material)

TL<=	Cumulative % by age (1986-2007)					Avg number by age (1998-2007 run & age comp)				
	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	total	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	total
18										
19	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3	0	0	0	3
20	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	12	0	0	0	12
21	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	18	0	0	0	18
22	1.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	35	0	0	0	35
23	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	73	0	0	0	73
24	3.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	108	0	0	0	108
25	6.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	181	0	0	0	181
26	10.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	315	0	0	0	315
27	18.5%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	540	5	0	0	546
28	31.8%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	6.0%	929	21	0	0	950
29	54.4%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	10.3%	1,589	59	0	0	1,648
30	74.8%	2.4%	0.1%	0.0%	14.6%	2,185	128	7	0	2,320
31	90.7%	4.4%	0.1%	0.0%	18.1%	2,649	234	7	0	2,891
32	96.7%	8.2%	0.2%	0.0%	20.6%	2,825	436	15	0	3,275
33	98.8%	15.7%	0.3%	0.0%	23.5%	2,886	835	22	0	3,743
34	99.5%	25.2%	0.5%	0.0%	26.9%	2,906	1,340	37	0	4,283
35	99.6%	38.1%	1.0%	0.0%	31.4%	2,909	2,027	73	0	5,009
36	99.7%	51.9%	2.2%	0.0%	36.6%	2,912	2,761	161	0	5,834
37	99.8%	66.9%	4.9%	0.0%	42.9%	2,915	3,558	358	0	6,832
38	99.8%	79.3%	8.4%	0.0%	48.6%	2,915	4,218	614	0	7,747
39	99.9%	86.2%	12.2%	0.4%	52.7%	2,918	4,585	892	2	8,396
40	100.0%	91.8%	19.5%	1.3%	57.9%	2,921	4,883	1,425	5	9,234
41	100.0%	95.1%	26.6%	1.9%	62.3%	2,921	5,058	1,944	7	9,931
42	100.0%	97.7%	38.4%	3.9%	68.6%	2,921	5,197	2,806	15	10,939
43	100.0%	98.8%	48.2%	7.1%	73.6%	2,921	5,255	3,522	28	11,726
44	100.0%	99.3%	57.3%	11.9%	78.0%	2,921	5,282	4,187	46	12,437
45	100.0%	99.6%	67.0%	19.2%	82.8%	2,921	5,298	4,896	75	13,190
46	100.0%	99.7%	73.9%	28.2%	86.2%	2,921	5,303	5,401	110	13,734
47	100.0%	99.8%	82.5%	42.8%	90.5%	2,921	5,308	6,029	166	14,425
48	100.0%	99.9%	87.7%	52.5%	93.2%	2,921	5,314	6,409	204	14,848
49	100.0%	99.9%	91.9%	63.1%	95.4%	2,921	5,314	6,716	245	15,196
50	100.0%	100.0%	95.1%	73.0%	97.1%	2,921	5,319	6,950	284	15,474
51	100.0%	100.0%	97.8%	85.5%	98.6%	2,921	5,319	7,147	333	15,720
52	100.0%	100.0%	98.8%	89.8%	99.2%	2,921	5,319	7,220	349	15,810
53	100.0%	100.0%	99.5%	94.8%	99.6%	2,921	5,319	7,271	369	15,880
54	100.0%	100.0%	99.8%	96.1%	99.8%	2,921	5,319	7,293	374	15,907
55	100.0%	100.0%	99.9%	96.8%	99.9%	2,921	5,319	7,301	377	15,917
56	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	98.1%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	382	15,930
57	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.1%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	385	15,933
58	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.6%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	387	15,935
59	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	389	15,937
60	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	389	15,937
61	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	2,921	5,319	7,308	389	15,937



## Talking Points Regarding RC 124

### Proposals (283-290)

- Due to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) passage of the package (4 stroke boat size limits, 50 horsepower) and the board's actions regarding the extension of those regulations below the Warren Ames Bridge, the hydrocarbon issues on the Kenai River have been addressed.
- Lack of existing infrastructure in lower Kenai River. Example: Ask staff about 1) state facility at Pillars (river mile 12.5) and practical take-outs below this facility.
- These proposals would take away opportunity (less participation) from existing user groups. Also, would deny participation among the elderly and physically impaired.
- These proposals are contradictory to the sustainable salmon policy:
  - 1(B)-increased anchor usage in existing spawning areas, lack of bathroom facilities, shared habitat intrusion
  - 1(E)-Shift from traditional harvest patterns
  - 2(E)-Due to the nature of drift boating, world-class Kings are often played to the point of exhaustion.
  - 4(B) Same as 1(B)
- Huge potential cost (\$6,000 to \$15,000) for the private person to participate in this fishery.

RC211

From: "ccpwow" <ccpwow@gci.net>  
Date: Sunday, February 10, 2008 8:14 AM  
Subject: I request that Proposal 83 be rejected.

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME  
Boards Support Section  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526  
(907) 465-6098 or 465-4110  
(907) 465-6094 FAX

Dear Alaska Board Fish Members,

I understand that you are currently reviewing and "deliberating" Proposal 83, (N. Kenai Peninsula Fishermen's Association) which proposes opening back up the Cook Inlet Commercial fishing season from Aug. 10 to Aug. 15.

The proposal attempts to justify the request so that the commercial fleet can catch more pink salmon. This request is being made even as there are no pink salmon to catch every other year. Sportfish worked very hard to get the commercial fleet off Cook Inlets silver salmon during this time period but now the Board is again seriously considering allowing them access to those silvers again.

I strongly reject the idea that the commercial fishing fleet is actually desiring to catch pink salmon during these dates. At the very least the proposal should have been correctly written to only address odd years when pink salmon are dominant during this time period. I claim that the reason the proposal does not request access for only every other year is because the true harvest target is Cook Inlets silver salmon. Since the commercial fleet currently has no way to prevent the interception of non-targeted silver salmon, I request that Proposal 83 be rejected.

Thank you.

Don Johnson  
ccpwow@gci.net  
P.O. Box 876  
Soldotna, Alaska 99669  
907-262-7893

2/10/2008

Dragging an anchor while sport fishing is not permitted on the Kenai River.

“Anchored vessel means a vessel on which any device other than oars, paddles or motor is used to stop the downstream drift of the vessel.”

“Drifting downstream in a vessel while anchor is deployed without making an attempt to stop the downstream movement of vessel.”

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Andy Dzygala", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

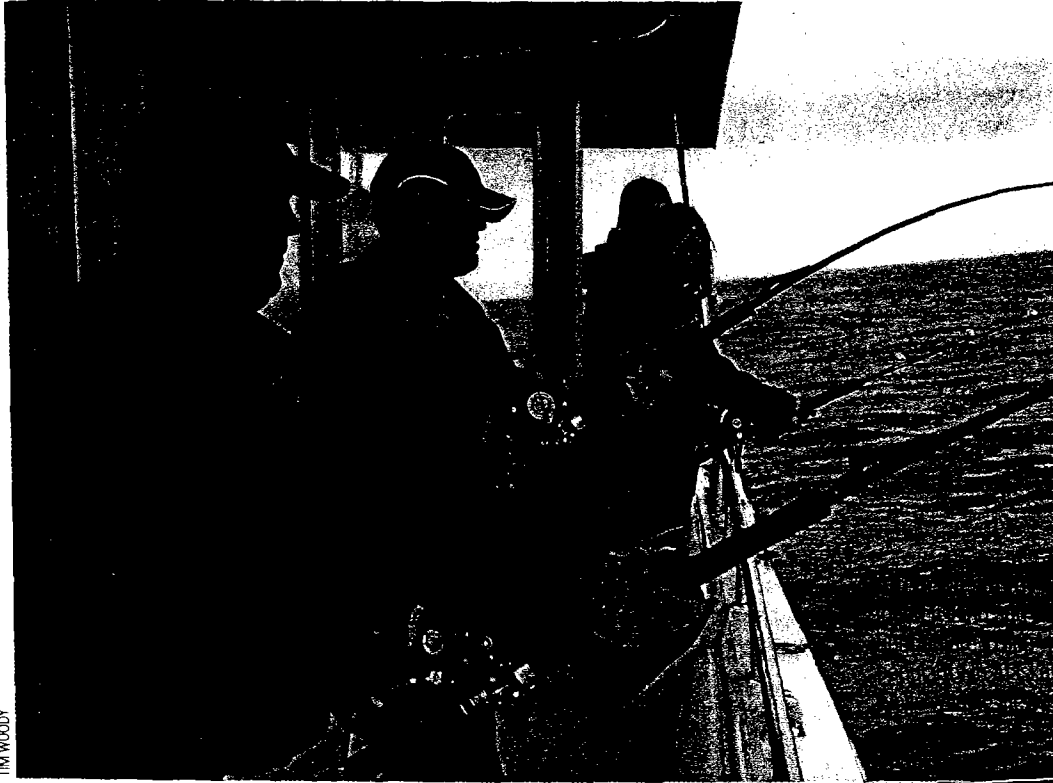
# Fewer Hunt and Fish in Alaska

**A** survey conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has found that the number of people in the United States who hunt and fish is declining, according to The Associated Press.

Nationwide, the number who fish has dropped 12 percent and the number of hunters has dropped 4 percent since 2001.

Alaska tied with Minnesota for the highest percentage of residents—nearly one-third—who fish, but recreational fishing here is down 26 percent and hunting has dropped 24 percent. In 2001, 421,000 people fished in Alaska, but in 2006, the number was only 310,000.

Instead, wildlife viewing is gaining in popularity, according to the study. Nationwide, activities involving wildlife viewing are up 8 percent, and in Alaska, are 22 percent more popular than they were five years ago. The study did not address specific issues for the declines in hunting and fishing or the growth of wildlife viewing activities, but some economists have suggested baby boomers are aging beyond the more physically demanding activities they used to enjoy. ■



TIM WOODY

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# Alaska



America's

RC 214

RECONSIDERATION OF PROPOSAL #74 - Prohibition on the use of Aircraft

RC 183

Strong exception was made to the suggestion that the spotter aircraft was actually reporting Enforcement location(s).

Call for reconsideration in order to at a minimum, straighten out the record.

Original vote: For - 2    Opposed: 4

RC 183 ATTACHED

RC #

183

February 10, 2008

Submitted by: United Cook Inlet Drift Association

**Subject:** Protest of Department Enforcement Comments on **Proposal # 74** "Prohibition on the use of Aircraft"

During deliberations on Proposal # 74 to prohibit the use of spotter aircraft, ADF&G Department Enforcement staff characterized the use of spotter aircraft as a means to frustrate enforcement efforts and aid in illegal fishing activity. This characterization appears to be based on conjecture and is factually incorrect. We request that the Department either substantiate these claims or correct the public record.

Whether intended or not by the Department, the Board was led to believe that enforcement was significantly impacted by the use of spotter aircraft. Board Chairman Mel Morris stated that he voted in favor of reauthorizing the use of spotter aircraft during the 2005 meeting and now "feels betrayed" by the fishermen after hearing of such abuse. This perception if left uncorrected could significantly impact present and future Board deliberations; and negatively impact public perception.

During the Committee "A" meeting, the Enforcement staff comments were challenged as not being factually correct. Public members of Committee "A" pointed out that since reauthorization of spotter aircraft in 2005, only three Radio Groups of fishermen elected to hire spotter aircraft. These three groups account for less than 15 percent of the fishing fleet. Typical radio group behavior is to only communicate within the radio group. It is highly improbable that pilots were "spotting enforcement patrols and informing the fleet." Claimed abuse of spotter aircraft during restrictive corridor fishing periods is also implausible. Due to the limited area of the east side corridor, spotter aircraft are ineffective and did not fly these openings. Typically the only aircraft in the sky during these periods is the Department's enforcement aircraft. It is also worthwhile to note that the two Board members that voted in opposition to prohibiting the use of spotter aircraft were Committee "A" Board members that were present during Committee "A" and had the benefit of those committee discussions on Proposal # 74.

We are not requesting that Proposal # 74 be reconsidered by the Board. The commercial drift boat fleet is split on this issue of whether spotter aircraft should be allowed. The issue as viewed by the fleet is the relative economic effectiveness of spotter aircraft as it relates to "fast" boats versus "slower" boats with the economic advantage going to the "fast" boats in the fleet. Board Member Vince Webster's deliberation comments in regard to the safety concerns are valid. Board Member Howard Delo's deliberation comments in regard to over capitalization and economic viability are also valid. The low utilization of spotter aircraft within the fleet during the previous three years would suggest that their economic viability is limited.

We respectfully request that the Department correct the public record or substantiate the claims of the alleged illegal activity.

RC 215

Board generated proposal:

5 AAC 61.112 (5)(E) in Alexander Lake, [the size and bag limit for northern pike are as follows:] **there is no size limit, possession or bag limit on northern pike.**

**Repeal 5 AAC 61.112 (5)(E)**

**[(i) northern pike less than 22 inches in length; no bag or possession limit**

**(ii) northern pike 22 inches in length to 30 inches in length may not be retained;**

**(iii) northern pike greater than 30 inches in length; bag and possession limit of one fish;]**

INTENT: that there be no bag limit on any Pike of any size, encouraging retention of whatever size has been caught.

Increase in the harvest of pike, particularly larger pike, will increase the stocks of salmon and other fishes.

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF FISH  
FEBRUARY 2008

RC 216

WHEREAS the Legislature of the State of Alaska is considering legislation (HB189) to codify the Sustainable Salmon Fisheries Policy contained in Fish and Game Regulations, and

WHEREAS the Legislature previously codified policies of the Board of Game into State Statutes, and

WHEREAS such codification of Board of Game policies has resulted in an exponential increase in filed lawsuits, and

WHEREAS the Department of Law anticipates that the direct consequence of entering into statutes the Sustainable Salmon Fisheries Policy will have an identical result, and

WHEREAS there is no identified problem, indicating that the Board of Fish is ignoring in any manner or fashion the policies which it struggled for four long years to craft with the aide assistance and participation of all concerned user groups,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Fish of the State of Alaska do oppose HB---- and strongly urge the Alaska State Legislature and the Governor of Alaska to oppose this legislation.



**5 AAC 21.353. CENTRAL DISTRICT DRIFT GILLNET FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN.** (a) 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,

(i) **one regular 12-hour fishing period is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict;** [FISHING DURING THE TWO REGULAR FISHING PERIODS IS RESTRICTED TO THE KENAI AND KASILOF SECTIONS AND DRIFT GILLNET AREA 1];

[(ii) AT RUN STRENGTHS GREATER THAN 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 2,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during [The] two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict and Drift Gillnet Area 1;

(ii) at run strengths of 2,000,000 to 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, fishing during [The] two regular 12-hour fishing periods is restricted to the Kenai and Kasilof Sections of the Upper Subdistrict and Drift Gillnet Areas 1 and 2;

(iii) at run strengths greater than 4,000,000 sockeye salmon to the Kenai River, there will be no mandatory restrictions during regular fishing periods;

**5 AAC 21.365. KASILOF RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT PLAN.**

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

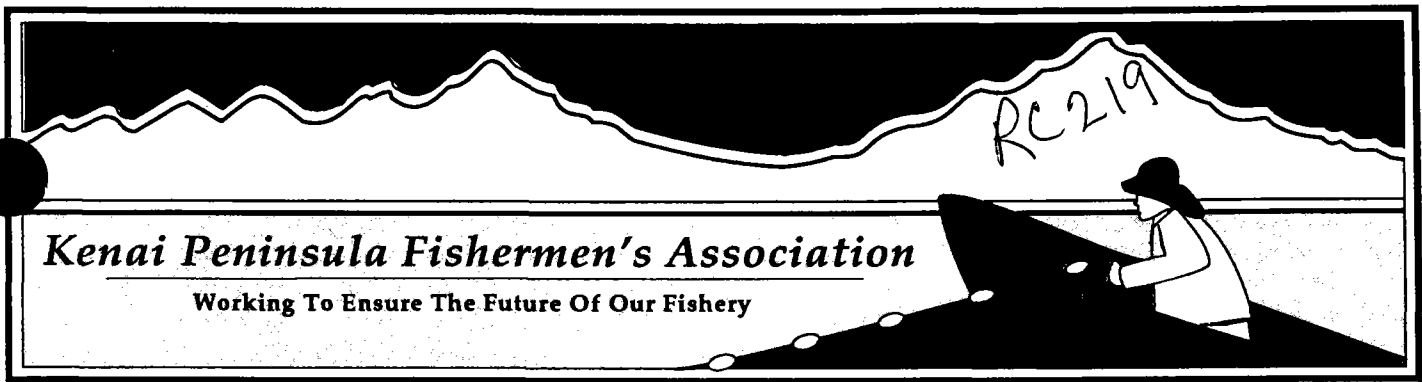
(A) the commissioner may, by emergency order, open additional fishing periods or extend regular weekly fishing periods to a maximum of 48 hours of additional fishing time per week;

**OPTION 1**

(B) the fishery shall remain closed for at least one continuous [48] 36-hour period per week beginning between 7:00 p.m. Thursday and 7:00 a.m. Friday;

**OPTION 2**

(B) the fishery shall remain closed for at least two [ONE] continuous [48] 24-hour periods per week;



43961 Kalifornsky Beach Road • Suite F • Soldotna, Alaska 99669  
(907) 262-2492 • Fax: (907) 262-2898 • E Mail: kpfa@alaska.net

February 11, 2008

State Of Alaska  
Department of Fish and Game  
Board Support Section  
Chairman Mel Morris  
Attn: Board Comments  
P.O. Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Chairman Morris,

**Committee C**

**Proposal 153**

**Support** - ADF&G housekeeping measure. This keeps the drift fleet off the beaches when the ESSN areas are closed. Area manager must now read the coordinates into the opening announcement each time. This was a new area designated in 2005 and evidently the points in the "zone" had not been checked.

**Proposal 155**

**Support** - This is a KPFA proposal. We appreciate the Board changing the ES closing date to August 15<sup>th</sup>. The authors are not clear on what provisions will be in place for high abundance returns of Pink salmon returning to the Kenai River on even years. A directed Pink salmon plan would detail to the manager what time and area could be used to afford the user a reasonable opportunity to harvest surplus stocks. KPFA members agree that this would be a "limited" fishery that would involve thirty to fifty permit holders at best.

**Proposal 189**

**Support** - This is a KPFA proposal. It is apparent by all users that the current management plan is cumbersome, confusing and growing. The department had changed the escapement goal from a BEG to an SEG in 2005. The Kenai River should be managed

for high sustained yields, not on *social/political* objectives.

KPFA with these changes manages for one SEG of 500-800K spawners. The in-river goal will be a range between 600-900K to allow for sport harvests. A liberalization to in-river harvesters will take place when it is apparent that the top end of the escapement goal is being met.

**Proposals 187, 118, 190, 195, 200, 194, 198, 199, 201**

Support - KPFA believes that the basis for all these proposals are for single goal management. Escapement goals of 400-700k, 450-750k and 500-800k are all simplified and attainable. The BEG range established by the Markov post season data table tells us that this range is the "*best available science*" that will return high consistent yields. Other points within these proposals discuss the need to release the restrictions on time and area. The limitations on the Commissioner of Fish and Game and his emergency order authority should be deleted from any management plan. The management plan of the mid 90's was easier to apply with less confusion. The in-river user still enjoyed a reasonable and meaningful experience. The commercial fishermen were able to harvest salmon when they were the most plentiful. The escapement into the river was calculated on what was best to achieve Maximum Sustained Yield (MSY).

The "*Abundance Based Tier System*" is a ten year experiment that has failed in the eyes of the commercial fisheries of CI. It is obvious to any participant to an UCI regulatory meeting that the industry continues to demand a departure from this flawed concept. The benefits of the tiers are short sided and all allocation based. Commercial fishermen, processors and others within the south-central commercial fishing community need stability if they are going to remain economically viable for the future.

**Proposal 202**

Oppose - The industry does not need any more restrictions that are static or floating. This proposal is unrealistic and non-productive. There is no "*science*" except that which is unproven and results driven that would support these additional closures. The information is not credible and is politically motivated. We ask the BOF to oppose the majority of the makers proposals as the Kenai/Soldotna Fish and Game Advisory Committee did. This group has been known to present unsubstantiated information to the public and Board members as well as coercive attacks on individuals. They say that they represent the general sports fishing public but in our opinion they represent only themselves. The guide industry is well represented on their board and membership and activities associated with the "*Classic*" have returned a letter to BOF members to not participate.

**Proposal 206, RC 153, RC 204**

Support - KPFA objects to a lenient bag limit and continued high minimum goal ranges. The compromise signed by three groups in RC 153 prescribes a change for under two

million. The minimum escapement goal should be 600k. The harvest percentage using a three fish bag limit or less as this proposal requests would also lower the in-river exploitation rate. The information that has been presented to the Board at this time has not reflected this correction. The lower rate will allow the commercial fisheries a small relief in distressed returns. With current fry/smolt data from Skilak Lake, this is a real possibility in the next three year cycle.

#### **Proposal 166**

Support - Achieving the established in-river escapement goal is the primary management objective. Maintaining a biological escapement goal of 150 - 250k with a 50k addition which is an OEG when the sockeye run to the Kenai is under two million. This proposal also adds additional time if needed and eliminates windows.

#### **Proposal 169, RC 155**

Oppose - We adamantly disagree with the addition of any "window" barriers within the Kasilof River management plan or the KRSHA. Goals have been exceeded with in the Kasilof River 90% of the time in the last ten years (abundance based - tier management). The escapement goal, OEG raise to 200k - 350k is not scientifically defensible. There is no data that would indicate a "concern" for Kasilof Kings for the early or late run.

The change in area that is requested would open commercial fishing in what is currently the mouth of the river terminal sanctuary. This would exclude setnet sites that have fished in the South K-Bch. area since 1983. This is the terminal area for harvesting surplus stock of Kasilof bound sockeye. The only other option managers would have if this area was closed is to use the terminal area.

The August 1<sup>st</sup> closer date does not have relevance to the continuation of daily escapements into the Kasilof river. On large returns sockeye continue to migrate in 5k groups past the counter in the first and second week of August. Out side nets in this stat area also harvest Kenai bound stocks when they are abundant.

#### **Proposal 171**

Support - Housekeeping measure. Puts language in proper section.

#### **Proposal 170, 173, 182, RC 150**

Support - The committee notes are incorrect! The authors of the these three proposals came to a consensus, the committee advisors all agreed that the changes were acceptable. Therefore a consensus of the Public Panel should have been noted. It is the intent of this new language that whenever the KRSHA is open that the Kasilof section will also be open to at least the minimum distance (currently 600ft) allowed in the terminal harvest area. Locations outside of the terminal area will remain 600 feet apart so as not to disrupt

the historical placement of the in place gear and allow transition to open water fisheries when regular fishing resumes. The department may extend that area out to .5 miles.

The group agreed that the terminal fishery had undesirable affects and this would alleviate some congestion at the mouth as well as lending opportunity to those commercial fishermen who were farther away from the terminus to participate.

**Proposal 172, 181, PC 63**

Support - We agree with the original intent of the proposals and the substitute language. Please note that the distance from the high water mark would now extend to 1,200 ft. from 600 ft. Distance now is too narrow and tends to concentrate the gear creating little passage of fish into the river. Safety issues would be diminished. Allow approximately 10% of the area for set netters versus 5% that is available for them now.

We urge the Board to review the suite of proposals that deal with the Kasilof River. They were not properly reviewed in 2005 after extensive changes took place in the Kenai River sockeye plan. We ask the board to lift the restrictions early and late season that continue to escape high numbers of sockeye into the Tustumena/Kasilof River system. We ask you to allow an orderly harvest to take place on these stocks.

Please consider that we agree that maintaining the low end of the goal for the Kenai River still remains paramount to exceeding the top end of the Kasilof OEG allowance.

Respectfully,



Paul A. Shadura II

RC 220

**COHO DATA – RC 83 – UPPER COOK INLET**

**COMMERCIAL HARVEST AFTER AUGUST 10: (PG. 41)**

Mean: 2606 1980-2007

Ave: 1717

**SPORT FISH HARVEST SUSITNA 1977-2006 PG.24:**

AVE 1977-96: 24,318

AVE 1997-07: 39,727 % INCREASE: 63.36%

**SPORT FISH HARVEST LITTLE SUSITNA 1977-2006 PG 25:**

AVE 1977-96: 11,426

AVE 1997-07: 13,937 % INCREASE: 21.97%

**SPORT FISH TOTAL UPPER COOK INLET HARVEST 1977-07 PG.26:**

AVE 1977-95: 112,451

AVE 1996-07: 164,159 % INCREASE: 45.98%

**DRIFTNET COMMERCIAL HARVEST 1966-2007 AFTER AUGUST 10: PG 47**

AVE YRS FISHED: 7,217 (YRS NOT FISHED: 8, INC. 1989)

AVE ALL YEARS: 5,813

Bonnie Williams

**GENERAL PROPOSAL CATEGORIES:**

1. **It's mine!**
  2. **Give me His!**
  3. **I want it!**
  4. **You can't! (I can.)**
  5. **If I can't have it no one can have it!**
  6. **NO!**  
(motor, boat, reel, rod, net, shackles, etc)
  7. **YES!**  
(bigger, smaller, more hours, more area...)
  8. **CLOSE THE DOOR!**  
(I got mine, I got here first, and there isn't  
any room for any more - it would ruin the  
"quality" of the fishery)
  9. **His success is (must be) hurting my habitat!**  
(Make him stop it.)
  10. **I have this really crazy idea.....(yes you do)**
- AND: 11. Sound ideas thoughtfully presented.**



## **New Information on Effects of Racking the Rod after taking a 28" Kenai Early Run King**

### **New Information**

1. **New information on how many additional fish an angler might catch.**
  - a. **It takes 18 hrs on average to harvest a fish.**
  - b. **Fish under 28" make up only 6% of the run.**
  - c. **Based on these numbers, it will take an average of 300 hours to catch a small fish.**
  - d. **Most anglers will not harvest a fish under the regulation. A few might harvest two or three.**
  - e. **According to RC 139, only about 300 fish are projected to be harvested under this regulation in an average run year.**

### **Action**

1. **Amend regulation to allow an angler to continue to fish after retaining a fish 28" or less.**
  - a. **Requiring an angler to cease fishing after taking a fish smaller than 28" will have a marginal effect on harvest of these small fish.**
  - b. **Most anglers will not harvest a fish under 28" if they have to rack their rod. The few that do take one of these small fish probably would have anyway.**
  - c. **This small level of harvest is not adequate to address the under-exploitation of the small fish.**
  - d. **Allowing an angler to continue to fish after harvesting a fish under 28" will increase fishing opportunity particularly including opportunity for local anglers.**
  - e. **This regulation will likely reduce harvest of fish larger than 28". If a person decides to retain a fish under 28" (food fish), there is less of chance that an angler will retain a larger fish.**

RC 223

**Miscellaneous Business**  
Alaska Board of Fisheries  
Feb. 1-12, 2008  
Upper Cook Inlet Finfish - Anchorage

Draft findings on Proposal 130 (RC 224) [Jensen]

Susitna Sockeye action plan (RC 154)

Habitat Committee report (RC 41) [Williams]

Tour fishing

BOF/BOG committee meeting Feb. 13

Adjourn

--- DRAFT ---

**ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES**  
**Finding in Regard to Upper Cook Inlet Salmon Management Plan**

2008-2\_\_-FB

At its 12-day February 2008 Upper Cook Inlet Finfish meeting the Board of Fisheries considered numerous changes to the Upper Cook Inlet salmon management plans. The Board heard department reports, public testimony, considered written public comments submitted before and during the meeting, considered reports of committee meetings where public panels presented additional information to the committees, and considered the application of the Board's Sustainable Salmon Fisheries Management Policy, 5 AAC 39.222, to current and proposed regulations for Upper Cook Inlet salmon fisheries. The Board adopted a number of revisions to the plans but determined that only minor adjustments were needed in the umbrella Upper Cook Inlet Management Plan which apply to all plans.

In the umbrella plan the Board determined that some additional guidance to the department was needed regarding the prioritization of conflicting plan goals and objectives, and that achievement of established escapement and inriver goals should be the primary management objective. The Board felt that it was important to avoid undue restrictions on the Department's flexibility in order to allow the department to attempt to meet these management objectives. The Board recognizes the importance that management windows have to sport and personal use fisheries, and that the department will adhere to its management plans, including the use of windows in most circumstances; however, it realizes that the management plans contain conflicting objectives and prescriptions, and that flexibility is needed to allow the Department to balance these factors as well as to respond to inseason variables that cannot be fully anticipated by the Board or the Department. Therefore the Board renewed its prior determination that nothing in the plans is intended to limit the Commissioner's emergency order authority under AS 16.05.060.

It is the Board's understanding that in attempting to meet its primary management objectives, the Department will manage for the appropriate inriver escapement goals first and attempt to distribute the escapements over time as appropriate. Where departures from commercial fishing plans are necessary to attempt to stay within escapement goal ranges, it is the Board's understanding that the Department will generally try to stay as close as practicable to plan guidelines, first attempting to use additional emergency order hours; second using reductions or elimination of discretionary closures, and finally, if appropriate and other measures are inadequate, reducing or eliminating prescriptive closures. However, nothing in the umbrella or individual plans or this finding is intended to limit the department to these options, to require the use of these options, or to limit the order of application of options.

ADOPTED this \_\_\_\_ day of February, 2008

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Mel Morris, Chair  
Alaska Board of Fisheries

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